

Keep Your Money Safe



Surrey Police and Sussex Police Fraud Newsletter

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"Each month we see many incidents of fraudsters targeting our residents in an attempt to defraud them.

"We're working hard to prevent this and support vulnerable victims of fraud or scams.

"By following our tips and encouraging family, friends and colleagues to do so too, you can reduce the risk of becoming a victim."

- Temporary Detective Chief Inspector Simon Doyle, Surrey & Sussex Police Economic Crime Unit

Advance Fee Fraud

Advance fee fraud is when fraudsters target victims to make advance or upfront payments for goods, services and / or financial gains that do not materialise. Some examples of AFF may be lottery and prize draw scams, inheritance scams, fraud recovery fraud, career opportunity scams etc.







In one case, a male from West Sussex fell victim to a fake job advertisement.

The victim applied for a security job on 'Indeed' and was later emailed about the job stating that to start the role the victim would be required to pay an initial fee for training and a specialist licence. The victim was told he would need to act before the deadline given or he would not be hired. Due to lose his current job, the victim was keen to start this new role so attempted to pay the fee of £650. The victim was also asked for his passport and national insurance number for identification purposes.

Thankfully, the victims bank blocked this payment due to being suspicious of this which alerted the victim to the fact it was in fact a scam.



How to protect yourself:

-  Do not disclose your bank details or pay fees in advance
-  Be wary of potentially fake profiles on social media platforms offering jobs that do not exist
-  Question claims that you are due money for goods or services that you haven't ordered or are unaware of
-  Do not be put under pressure to pay a fee quickly
-  Be aware of recovery scams if you have been a victim in the past.
-  Genuine agencies never ask for fees to recover money lost to fraudsters.








Online Selling

Sussex and Surrey Police have seen several reports of online sellers falling victim to fraud.

One victim, a male from West Surrey was selling a watch on eBay when he was approached by an interested buyer. The buyer agreed on a price with the victim and asked the victim to request payment via PayPal. The victim then received an email appearing to be from PayPal confirming payment had been received.

The victim noticed the email address used looked suspicious so contacted PayPal before posting out the watch. PayPal confirmed the email received was fraudulent and the buyer had attempted to scam the victim. Thankfully, the watch was never posted out.

How to sell safely:

-  Ensure full payment has been received and cleared before delivering, posting or handing over items you are selling.
-  Do not be pressured into paying extra courier fees at the buyer's request.
-  Ensure you sell on a trusted selling site which may offer your sellers advice and protection should something go wrong.
-  If selling face to face, ensure the buyers is not left alone with the item without taking payment first.
-  Always check refund requests thoroughly, fraudsters may impersonate a buyer to claim a refund which isn't theirs.
-  Send items with reputable, well known courier companies to ensure it arrives safely and can be tracked.
-  Report and block any buyers you find to be suspicious.

Check a website

Get Safe Online has partnered with Cifas, the UK's leading fraud prevention service, to launch 'Check-a-Website'.

Check a website (<https://check.getsafeonline.org>) is an easy-to-use online tool which helps determine whether a website is likely to be legitimate or a scam ... before you visit it. Users simply type in the address of the website they want to check, and their results will appear within seconds.

Provided in the UK by Get Safe Online in conjunction with Cifas, ScamAdviser and our other partners, it cleverly uses an algorithm to provide a trust score based on more than 40 data sources as well as thousands of reports of malicious websites from law enforcement agencies, regulators, and consumer brands every week.

Digital Ambassadors

Would you like advice and support about how to be safe online? Are you interested in learning more about digital safety and current online scams?

West Sussex County Council has 24 volunteers (known as Digital Ambassadors) with a wealth of knowledge about digital safety and current online scams, who will be pleased to come into the community to share their knowledge and provide tips and guidance.

The Ambassadors can offer a number of options, such as:

- 1-to-1 bookable sessions at a local library,
- drop in events at a local library or community centre,
- presentations and informal chats at community groups
- attendance at community events.
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If you would like some free digital safety support from the Ambassadors or if you are interested in becoming a Digital Ambassador and help prevent people becoming victims of online crime, the Ambassadors can be contacted on 0330 222 3185 or by email at: DigitalAmbassadors@westsussex.gov.uk.

Have you been a victim of fraud?

If you or someone you know is vulnerable and has been a victim of fraud call:

- Surrey Police on 101 or visit www.surrey.police.uk
- Sussex Police on 101 or visit www.sussex.police.uk

Report fraud or attempted fraud, by contacting Action Fraud at http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud or call 0300 123 2040.