



Keep your money safe

Sussex Police fraud newsletter – December 2017

As a general reminder, your bank or the Police will never ask you to withdraw cash, transfer money, provide PIN details for any of your bank cards or offer to collect any cash or cards from you. The caller may even say they are undertaking a fraud investigation or alleged corruption within the bank itself.

Fraudsters will attempt to get you to take out cash from the bank or transfer money to another bank account online. Another area of concern are cold callers trying to persuade you to carry out remedial building repairs. Put them off, speak to someone in your family, a friend and if work needs doing - get a quote elsewhere.

Romance fraud is also on the increase. If a person you have never physically met is asking for money, the best advice is not to part with it. Speak to your family or a trusted friend to make sure that you do not become a victim and lose substantial sums of money.

By its very nature, fraud is constantly evolving and taking on new forms. By following our tips and encouraging family, friends and colleagues to do so too, you can reduce the risk of becoming a victim.

This month's *Keep your money safe* highlights a Royal Mail fake delivery note, a new anti-virus scam and welcome news about Western Union's refund to victims of fraud.

Stay alert and have a very Happy Christmas.

Acting Detective Inspector Peter Billin, Operation Signature & Economic Crime Unit, Sussex Police

Royal Mail fake delivery note



Residents are warned about 'something for you' cards arriving through letterboxes that are designed to look like they have come from Royal Mail. The cards **do not show the Royal Mail logo** but look almost identical to the 'something for you' slips that are posted through homes when a delivery cannot be made.

To organise a re-delivery the cards urge recipients to call a 0208 number, this is a premium rate number that results in a very large charge for the caller. After ringing the number the automated message asks for your details and consignment number.

Be cyber safe – be Cyber Aware

CYBER AWARE 

is a Government-led initiative to help individuals and small businesses to take the necessary steps to make their homes and workplaces safe from cyber criminals. It contains examples of tactics that fraudsters use, as well as quick tips on how to protect yourself. There are also useful video guides illustrating the steps that you can take. <https://www.cyberaware.gov.uk/>

New anti-virus activation scam

With the number of new devices around the home at Christmas, reports suggest that fraudsters are exploiting victims who are unfamiliar with activating or renewing antivirus software. Those with new computers have reported being unable to activate their antivirus software subscription, which has led them to follow links to fake antivirus websites. After entering contact information, victims have been called by fraudsters who ask for payment to install the anti-virus. This method has also been used by fraudsters when victims have attempted to renew their antivirus subscription.

Refund for fraud victims through Western Union



Victims of fraud who lost money to fraudsters through Western Union wire transfers between 2004 and January this year can now apply for a refund after the company admitted it had failed to maintain an effective anti-money-laundering programme and had aided and abetted wire fraud.

The US Department of Justice has now confirmed that victims of fraud who live anywhere in the world – including the UK – can apply for a refund if they lost money transferred via Western Union between January 2004 and January 2017. There are limited funds to cover a significant amount of victims so you may only receive a partial refund.

We would therefore urge you to look at the link to www.westernunionremission.com that is useful and should answer most questions on this issue.

Government Grant fraud

Individuals and businesses are being warned about cold calls and online contact from fraudsters who offer victims the opportunity to apply for Government grants for an advance fee. Bogus companies and convincing looking websites claim to be operating on behalf of the UK Government. If you receive one of these calls, hang up immediately and report it to Action Fraud. We are working with Companies House to combat this issue and one bogus website has already been taken down. Be wary of unsolicited callers implying that you can apply for grants.

If you suspect someone you know may be vulnerable to fraud, please share this newsletter with them and encourage them to look at the 'Little Book of Scams', available on the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/z8khtgh>.

If you or someone you know is vulnerable and has been a victim of fraud call Sussex Police on 101 or visit www.sussex.police.uk



If you need to report fraud or attempted fraud, you can do so by contacting Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud or by calling 0300 123 2040. You can also read the latest Action Fraud alerts at www.actionfraud.police.uk/news or by following @actionfrauduk on Twitter. Check latest information online at www.getsafeonline.org.