

SCAMS AWARENESS UPDATE

Older Persons Scams Awareness & Aftercare Project

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Stronger together

Organisations unite to combat scammers

Each year, Citizens Advice encourages organisations to raise scams awareness with local residents, and this year is no different. With Scams Awareness Fortnight running from 14th to 27th June, our Scams Awareness and Aftercare Project, with our partners Cheshire East Council Trading Standards, are happy to be supporting the campaign. Read on to find out the focus of the campaign and how you, your loved ones and community can benefit.

This month, we're also taking the opportunity to bring you up to date with recent news stories on scams and how, by working together, the public and organisations can continue to fight back against scammers to protect our communities.

As always, we have a round-up of current scams affecting our older residents, so we can all be forewarned and confident to spot and avoid them.

For more information about any of the features, or about the Scams Awareness and Aftercare Project, you can contact Sally Wilson, at sally.wilson@ageukce.org or on 01625 612958 / 07932 999902.

Citizens Advice are a key national player when it comes to raising awareness of scams, collating information about reported scams and working with Trading Standards Teams across the country.

With this expertise, they've highlighted these current trends in their [Scams Awareness Fortnight campaign](#).

I'm staying ahead of scams. Are you?

Think twice before you act. #ScamAware



SIGNIFICANT RISE IN FINANCIAL SCAMS - from adverts offering fake "Get Rich Quick" investment schemes to free pension reviews from out of the blue.

- Never be rushed into making a decision.
- Seek professional advice before investing.
- Use the Financial Conduct Authority's register and warning list to see if the company is genuine.

ANYONE CAN FALL VICTIM TO A SCAM - Which? recently published information about how [different personalities](#) are more vulnerable to different scams.

- If you're sociable and outgoing, usually sympathetic and happy to help, you may be more vulnerable to romance and befriending fraud
- If you're inclined to worry, you may be caught out by authority based scams e.g. HMRC scam threats.
- If you're quiet and reserved, you could be more susceptible to investment, including fake bitcoin, scams.

The trick is to be aware of scams, whatever your personality, so you're prepared to spot and avoid them.

ACT QUICKLY if you think someone is trying to scam you.

- Protect yourself by contacting your bank to let them know, changing relevant user names and passwords and (if scammed online) running a virus check.
- Check with the payment card company if you can get your money back.
- Report the scam: Call Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133 and report the fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or on 0300 123 2040.

KEEP TALKING ABOUT SCAMS you've seen to family and friends. This empowers others to avoid scams and breaks down the stigma of being scammed or what leads people to being scammed e.g. loneliness or financial hardship.



Here's a few updates on stories from previous bulletins and what to look forward to.

In our [April bulletin](#), we warned against a Royal Mail text scam, encouraging you to report it by forwarding suspicious texts to 7726. Following a [nationwide investigation](#), a man has been charged with offences relating to this scam, which defrauded people out of thousands of pounds.



The launch of our Age UK Cheshire East Scams Awareness & Aftercare Project happened to coincide with the launch of the [National Cyber Security Centre's Suspicious Email Reporting Service \(SERS\)](#) in April 2020. If you've followed our recommendation of forwarding suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk, you have contributed to the 6,100,000 reports they've received, which have supported the removal of more than 45,000 scams and 90,000 suspicious websites. Keep up the good work!

Throughout our project, we have been delivering scams awareness sessions to groups of older people. Due to the pandemic, this has been mainly online, through the Zoom or MS Teams platforms. Even with the delay in lifting of restrictions, we are working towards more face-to-face sessions this autumn. If your group would like a session, either online or face-to-face, please contact Sally Wilson (see page 1 for details). Book soon, so as not to be disappointed.



We have been sharing scams awareness information through this bulletin for over a year now, and it reaches over 5,000 older people every month. We would really like to know what you think about the bulletin, how it is useful and if there's any articles you'd like to see. Therefore, it would be great if you could take a few minutes to complete [a survey](#) to share your thoughts. For those who receive a printed copy of the bulletin, we will include a paper copy of the survey next month. So get your thinking caps on!

This month, all our current scams alerts have been sent to us by readers of this bulletin :

Rogue trader alert



One of our readers wanted to remind others about the importance of doing your research before employing traders to

carry out repairs on your home.

Always get a range of quotes, preferably from those who are members of an appropriate trade body, or use the Trading Standards [Buy with Confidence](#) online scheme.

Make sure you get detailed written confirmation of the exact work to be carried out, full costs and any planning permissions required etc.

Complaints about rogue traders should be made to [Citizens Advice](#) online or by calling 0808 223 1133.

Scam upgrade could leave you phoneless



Consumers are being cold called by criminals impersonating legitimate mobile network operators and suppliers.

Victims are persuaded to sign up for early upgrades, or new contracts, and then asked to hand over their mobile account credentials.

When the new phone arrives, it's not the one they ordered, so the criminals instruct them to 'return' the handset to a different address not affiliated to the mobile company.

This leaves victims stuck with no phone and liable for the entirety of a new contract taken out in their name.

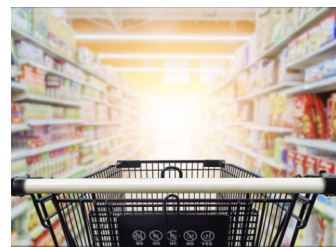
You've got (voice)mail - or have you?



In this scam, you get a text to say you have a new voicemail, and to click on a link to access the new message.

In reality, there is no new voicemail message, and it is likely that the link could infect your device or send you to a scam website where you are asked for personal or financial details.

Online supermarket shopping scam emails



After completing their supermarket online shopping order, one reader received an email listing some of their groceries, saying they were being saved,

with links to update their order. However, on independent investigation, their basket was rightly empty, as they had checked out correctly.

If you suspect any of your online accounts have been compromised, contact the genuine company and your bank, and change account passwords.

COMING NEXT TIME...

- Current scams

- Copycat websites

Though we don't like to see you leave, you can unsubscribe from these bulletins by emailing sally.wilson@ageukce.org

The Older Persons Scams Awareness & Aftercare Project is brought to you by