

SCAMS AWARENESS UPDATE

Older Persons Scams Awareness & Aftercare Project

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Image courtesy of ifunny.co

Beware of cute duckings scams!

This month we focus on doorstep crime. Just like the ducklings in the picture, doorstep scammers use distraction and deception techniques to gain access to your money, personal details or your home. Turn to pages two and three for top tips of how to protect yourself.

In October there are several campaigns to keep safe against scams. Libraries across Cheshire East are gearing up for [Get Online Week](#), and Cheshire Police have a focus on romance fraud, something we featured in our July edition.

Friends Against Scams are celebrating their fourth birthday, so are asking as many people as possible to complete their online awareness session at FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk to help protect loved ones.

If you don't have access to the internet, why not ask family or friends to check it out and share with you?

As always, information about our Scams Awareness & Aftercare Project can be found on our [Age UK Cheshire East website](#) or by contacting Sally Wilson on 01625 612958/07932 999902 or at sally.wilson@ageukce.org

Scams on your doorstep encompass many crimes. Rogue trading includes poor quality work and high pressure sales, to organised crime gangs targeting the elderly and vulnerable. Rogue Traders often demand large amounts of money by threats and intimidation sometimes without even doing any work. They'll usually want cash and may even offer to drive you to the bank to get it.

Doorstep crime is when criminals pretend to be from legitimate companies (like the Council, utility companies or simply collecting for a 'charity') just so that they can sneak into your home.

Doorstep criminals may strike up a conversation with you about your home, family or pets. This is a tactic to find out where you keep money and valuables in the house and whether you live alone.

There are many types of doorstep scams, some of the most common ones include:

Rogue traders: A cold-caller or leaflet through your door may offer you a product or service you don't really need. This can be anything from home improvements and garden services to household cleaning items or cures for COVID.

Hard luck stories: Someone may come to your door and ask you to help them out with cash, ask to use your telephone or claim they're feeling unwell. The story is made up and intended to con you out of your money or gain access to your home.



Bogus officials: People claiming to be from your utility company or other agency as a way of gaining access to your home. It's always good to have a list of phone numbers for your utility companies, landlord etc. nearby so you can phone and check identities.

Fake charity collections: A fraudster may pretend they're from a charity and ask you to donate money, clothes or household goods. If you want to donate to a charity, contact them independently to see if they collect goods. Never give out your personal or bank details on the doorstep.

REPORTING DOORSTEP CRIME: If the person is still in your area, or you have transferred money to the doorstep scammer call the Police on 101.

If you feel threatened or unsafe, call 999.



Fit a security chain to your door and use it when answering.

Place a 'No cold calling' sticker near to the front door – these are available from your local Trading Standards Team.

Check the identity of the caller by asking to see an ID card and calling the company on a separate number you have for them.

Do NOT let unverified strangers into your home (no matter how friendly they seem).

Vulnerable residents can register with the **Trading Standards Nominated Neighbour Scheme**. A trusted friend, neighbour or relative puts their contact details on a specially printed card that the vulnerable person can hold up to the door or window.

The card advises the caller to go to the Nominated Neighbour's address or ring them, so that the caller's identity can be checked. If it's a genuine call the Nominated Neighbour can accompany them to the original address and supervise the visit.



Don't be tempted by 'today only' offers. Shop around for the best deal. Use a trader recommended to you or use the [Trading Standards Buy with Confidence scheme](#) to find a reputable trader.



Think: do you really need the work done immediately? Insist that the caller leaves you with information so that you can think about it and get advice.

Try to get three quotes to make sure you are being quoted a fair price, and make sure that you get the quotes in writing.

Remember - for most jobs in your home you have 14 days to cancel by writing to the trader. Don't be pressured into waiving this right.

Here are some recently reported scams for you to be aware of so as not to fall victim to them.



Doorstep sellers

We've had reports of people selling household

cleaning items door to door in Cheshire East, saying it's part of a scheme for rehabilitation of offenders. The Probation Service does not run such a scheme.

Anyone selling such items on the doorstep must produce a Pedlar's Certificate issued by the police. Any incidents where a certificate cannot be produced should be reported to the Police on **101**.



NHS Test & Trace

Still this scam continues. People are being asked by email or phone to

pay for a COVID-19 test as part of NHS Test & Trace. This is a way to get your bank details.

Remember, Test & Trace will never:

- ✗ Ask you to make any payment
- ✗ Ask any details about your bank account
- ✗ Ask for any passwords or PINs
- ✗ Ask you to download anything.

Fake penalty charge



HM Courts &
Tribunals Service

This email scam claims the recipient has driven on a road that has a charging scheme. It asks you to click a link to pay the penalty, but it's a way of stealing your personal and bank details.

Action Fraud received over 1,000 reports of this scam in 24 hours. Forward this or other any suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk

Grant applications

Criminals are offering their services to help you with your TV licence or home improvement grant applications, charging you a fee to complete the process.



If you need support, contact TV Licensing directly, your local authority or local Age UK services on known and trusted numbers.

COMING NEXT TIME...

- Current scams
- Focus on online scams

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