



## Keep your money safe

### Surrey and Sussex Police Fraud Newsletter February 2019

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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.

**Detective Chief Inspector Andy Richardson, Surrey & Sussex Police  
Economic Crime Unit.**

#### Hang up on courier fraud



We told you in the last newsletter about a recent spate of so-called courier frauds, and since then we have had further cases reported. Courier fraud is where a fraudster first makes contact with their victim over the phone, frequently claiming they are a police officer investigating a crime like counterfeiting, and telling the victim that they need them to withdraw money and provide that money, often alongside their bank cards, to the police to help with the investigation. The victims are advised that a courier will arrive to collect the envelope using a safe word to confirm they are a part of the operation.

Recent cases include fraudsters taking out a £25,000 loan and conning a victim to hand over approximately £20,000 in cash and £45,000 worth of jewellery. These crimes have left victims feeling frightened, upset and embarrassed, and they now have difficulties trusting others.

Look out for the warning signs. These crimes generally follow the same methods:

- A phone call comes out of the blue from someone claiming to be from the police or a bank
- The victim is told they need to withdraw a significant sum of money from their bank
- A courier is sent to collect this money from the victim's address

# Keep your money safe

**Remember:** The police or your bank will never ask for money, your bank card or PIN. Be extremely wary of unexpected phone calls from your bank or the police. End the call, and call the bank (using the phone number on your bank card and ideally using a different phone line to the one you were called on) or the police on 101 to check that you received a genuine call. Speak to friends or family before doing anything, and never hand over your money following an unexpected call.

This type of cruel crime preys on the most vulnerable, who simply think they are helping the police. Please share this information with your friends and family to help us to beat these criminals.

## Courier fraud criminal jailed and doorstep scammers arrested

A man was recently jailed for his part in just this kind of crime, using exactly the criminal methods we want you to be aware of and alert to.

The scam took place in 2015 when a woman, in her 70s, received a call from a man pretending to be a police officer. He told her he was leading an undercover investigation into a fraud at a local bank and that he needed her help. The man persuaded the victim to withdraw £10,000 from her account and made arrangements for someone to collect the money from her address. The victim later realised she had been duped and alerted police.

Speaking after the sentencing, Guilford Detective Inspector Pete Howgate said “We will simply not tolerate these despicable and cowardly conmen who target vulnerable victims with the sole intention of stripping them of their life savings. The fact that the fraudster has been brought to justice today will bring enormous relief to the victim, who has been massively affected by what has happened to her.”

A further two men have been arrested after pressurising and attempting to scam a 90 year old woman. The men knocked on the victim’s door and told her that tiles on her house needed replacing. The woman was quoted £550 for the job which she did not want done but felt pressured into agreeing to. She gave the fraudsters £50 and went to the bank to withdraw the rest. However, the bank raised the alarm to the police as they thought the victim might be being scammed by the men for the repair work. Police found the suspects waiting for the victim to return from the bank and later arrested them.

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## How you can help

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’](#)

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](http://www.surrey.police.uk)

Sussex Police on 101 or visit [www.sussex.police.uk](http://www.sussex.police.uk)

Report fraud or attempted fraud, by contacting Action Fraud at [http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report\\_fraud](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud) or call 0300 123 2040