



# Alresford and District Neighbourhood Watch Association



## **SCAMS**

Scams affect the lives of millions of people across the UK and it appears the number of people affected is growing, as the criminals develop more ingenious ways to scam the population. People who are scammed often experience shame and social isolation as a result.

- Scams come in many forms; uninvited contact is received by email, letter, and telephone or in person, making false promises to con victims out of money.
- There are many scams, but the most common are fake lotteries, deceptive prize draws or sweepstakes, clairvoyants, computer scams, and romance scams.
- The criminals attempt to trick people with flashy, official looking documents or websites, or convincing telephone sales patter, with the aim of persuading them to send a processing or administration fee, pay postal or insurance costs or make a premium rate phone call.
- Doorstep Scams are crimes carried out by bogus callers, rogue traders and unscrupulous sales people who call, often uninvited, at people's home under the guise of legitimate business or trade.

Nearly half of people in the UK have been targeted by a scam. One of the ways that scammers commonly contact people is through the post. The most common sorts of scam letters are scam lottery letters, fake prize draws and misleading clairvoyant letters. Once somebody has responded to one letter they get added to a list and their details are sold onto other criminals, who will then target them and send more letters.

To be clear, scams are FRAUD and fraud is a CRIME! People who fall victim to scams are victims of crime and financial abuse within their own homes.

## **WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT THIS**

When we come into personal contact with any of the above scams we should always ignore them, whilst reporting them to the police and Action Fraud - <https://actionfraud.police.uk> . However, we can't act in isolation, and to make a real difference to this issue and help those at risk of being targeted we need to work in partnership. To achieve this we need to increase scams awareness with our families and friends, especially those more vulnerable to this criminal activity.

We need to look out for our neighbours and our local people and check for the tell-tale signs of scams. When people suffer from a scam we need to take away the loneliness, the shame and the stigma from victims and talk about scams so we can all learn from these terrible events.

If you would like further information please visit the website: [www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk](http://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk)

'Friends Against Scams' is a National Trading Standards (NTS) Scams Team initiative, which aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims of scams by empowering communities to "Take a Stand Against Scams".

Thank you for your support!