

Dear All

I have sent this Community Support Alert to all those on either the NhW or TWRA distribution list.

In view of recent increasing trend for COVID infections I have re-introduced my Health Bulletin section.

### **Health alert**

The COVID statistics relating to Surrey are now published fortnightly. You can see them in full here:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/coronavirus/local-outbreak-plan/figures-and-statistics/full-report>

The latest report dated 14<sup>th</sup> June actually included national data up to 2<sup>nd</sup> June showing 1.5% of the population having COVID. More recent News Bulletins on TV show a considerable increase with estimates of 2.7%. However when I last published the figures they included an estimate that over 5% of the English population had COVID in the week up to 16<sup>th</sup> April. Applying the current 2.7% to Tadworth & Walton would suggest that about 270 individuals in our 2 villages would have had the disease

Epsom & St Helier Hospital reported 25 new admissions with COVID in the week up to 5<sup>th</sup> June as compared with 48 new COVID admissions in the 7 days up to 17<sup>th</sup> April in my last health report.

### **Test Kits**

Please remember that Lateral Flow Test Kits are no longer freely available unless you belong to particular vulnerable groups or are employed with the Health Service or similar designated professions.

Note you can purchase Lateral Flow Test Kits from reputable suppliers such as Boots for about £2 each.

### **Road Closure Reports**

Shelvers Way is currently accessible throughout its length but there are temporary traffic lights on Epsom Lane North

Major maintenance work is due on Breech Lane

### **Crime Report**

#### **Police Burglary reports 5<sup>th</sup>- 16<sup>th</sup> June**

**05/06/2022 15:39. Coulsdon Lane, Coulsdon.** Residential Burglary. Method of Entry- Entry through the kitchen door, located at the rear of the property. Stolen: 2 Watches and Jewellery.

**07/06/2022 14:30. Spindlewoods, Tadworth.** Residential Burglary. Method of Entry- Forced entry through the front door. The suspects were disturbed by a concerned neighbour, and they left the property. Stolen: A Watch and Briefcase.

**14/06/2022 Between 02:00 to 02:05. Hempshaw Avenue, Banstead.** Attempted Residential Burglary. Method of Entry- Attempted forced entry through the front door of the property. Stolen: Nothing Stolen.

### **Catalytic Converter Thefts**

There have been no catalytic converter thefts in our vicinity but 3 in other parts of the borough in the last 3 weeks.

### **HMIC Report on Surrey Police – Comments by Chief Constable Gavin Stevens**

In May when I wrote to you with my quarterly Commitments update, I mentioned that we had recently been inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS, or HMIC for short).

The HMIC regularly inspects every Police Force in the UK, acting as an independent body to ensure that we are efficient and effective in the service we offer to our communities. These inspections are known as Police Effectiveness,

Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) assessments and today, following our inspection in January, our PEEL assessment report has been published. I am writing today to share our results.

The assessments look at several thematic areas of activity across the Force. These are:

Engaging with and treating the public with fairness and respect

Providing a service to victims of crime

Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour

Responding to the public

Investigating crime

Protecting vulnerable people

Managing offenders and suspects

Building, supporting and protecting the workforce

Strategic planning, organisational management and value for money

I'm delighted to be able to share that we were graded as "outstanding" at *Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour*. Our teams across the Force have been working incredibly hard, adopting a problem-solving approach to crime prevention and this has had a significant impact that has been recognised by HMIC and reflected in its assessment.

The Force was also graded as "good" for *Engaging with and treating the public with fairness and respect; Investigating crime; and Protecting vulnerable people* with the majority of the remaining categories being assessed as adequate.

On a less positive note, we have been assessed as "requires improvement" in our management of offenders and suspects, and I am committed to addressing this, it is integral to the delivery of our own Force Commitments to ensuring that Surrey is, and feels, safe. Activity is already underway to address the recommendations in the report, which relate to the need to proactively monitor sex offenders, ensuring that there is purpose in lines of enquiry, and the prioritisation of safeguarding relating to indecent images of children online.

We have maintained or improved in all other areas, but as ever there is always room for us to do better in Our Force, for Our People and Our Communities. You can read the full report [here](#) and I would welcome any suggestions you may have as to where we can improve. I'd also be happy to answer any questions or address any concerns that you may have, so please don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

## **SCAM Reports (LONG READ SO PLACED AT END OF REPORT)**

### **Upcoming Events**

**Saturday June 25<sup>th</sup> Coffee Shop, from 10.30am–12noon in the Good Shepherd Church**, and every subsequent Saturday.

**June 25<sup>th</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> - the Horticultural Society's Gardeners' Delight** provides an opportunity to visit several members' gardens for one fee of £7.50 - it will be taking place on June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. See link by my signature for list of gardens or visit KWT Horticultural Society web site.

**July 2<sup>nd</sup> 7.30pm Music for Everyone – a concert by the Band of the Surrey Yeomanry in the Church of the Good Shepherd. Tkts £12 (accompanied children free) from 01737 556219 or [www.ticketsource.co.uk/goodshepherdadworth](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/goodshepherdadworth)**

**July 3<sup>rd</sup> Good Shepherd Parish Lunch** – note you must pre-book on the list in the Church

**July 9<sup>th</sup> 12 – 4pm Church of the Good Shepherd Summer Fete with BBQ.**

**The Village Kitchen** light lunch events will continue on the second Saturday of each month in Christchurch Hall, Walton Street, the next one being **July 9th**

**July 17<sup>th</sup> 2 – 5.30pm Open Garden at 41 Shelveys Way as part of the National Garden Scheme admission Teas sold by TWOAT.**

**For details of the many Group Activities and Events organised by Banstead u3a visit here <https://u3asites.org.uk/banstead/home>**

Please let me know if you have an event taking place in the next 2 months.

### **SCAM REPORT (LONG READ)**

*"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."*

**T/Detective Chief Inspector Rob Walker, Surrey Police & Sussex Police Economic Crime Unit**

#### **What is investment fraud?**

This is often initiated by a cold call, attempting to sell investments in an emerging market, e.g. wine, diamonds, bitcoins, cryptocurrency, carbon credits, time-share etc. Fraudsters may also target victims by fake advertising online using well-known brands or celebrity names claiming they endorse the fake investment.

The fraudsters will claim this will lead to financial gains above the usual projections, high returns or get rich quick schemes. In reality the item offered may not exist or is worthless. They will also use 'fraud recovery fraud', where a victim of a previous fraud is re-contacted and advised on ways to get some of their lost money back. This usually involves parting with further money i.e. the firm has gone into liquidation etc.

So far this year, Sussex Police and Surrey Police have seen 130 reports of investment fraud relating to vulnerable victims. Sadly, investment frauds often see high losses, the loss to those victims was £9.97 million with an average loss to victims being £110,800.

Most victims were male and aged over 75. However, anyone can fall victim to an investment fraud.

Whilst many investment fraud victims are contacted by telephone, a new emerging way of contact is on social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp where often victims are persuaded to invest in cryptocurrency investments.

#### **Case studies**

One victim, a 64-year-old man from East Sussex sadly lost £35,000 to an investment fraud. The victim saw an advert on Facebook for investing into Bitcoin. The victim signed up to this opportunity and paid an initial fee of £250.

The victim was then called by a woman claiming to be his 'trading assistant' who will help the victim with his investment. The victim was told that his investment had already made money and was encouraged him to invest further funds by buying Bitcoin and sending it to the woman to handle. Believing his investment had risen in value, the victim asked to withdraw his funds. The victim was told that to do so he had to send further money. The victim in total sent £35,000 believing he was investing and making money.

In another case, a 78-year-old woman from East Surrey received a call from a supposed investment firm offering an opportunity to invest into a company and was persuaded to transfer £8000.

The victim was later told the company she invested in had risen in value and she had made £100,000 - to receive the funds made she would need to pay £18,000 in tax fees. The victim believing, she was due a large return, made this payment. The victim was again asked for further funds without receiving any return which made her grow suspicious. After seeking advice from a friend, it became clear the victim has been victim to an investment fraud.

Signs to look out for:

- Are you being rushed into deciding on an investment?
- Are you being offered unrealistic high returns on an investment?
- Does the investment firm and offer have reviews? Can you search the company online to see what others say?
- Some fraudsters will attempt to build a friendship with you to gain your trust.
- Fraudsters may clone a genuine investment firm's website to make themselves appear to be from a genuine company. View the website carefully and look out for mistakes. Search the company separately and contact them to check they are in contact.
- Be wary of follow up calls offering to help recover any investment losses.

How to protect yourself:

- Use the [Financial Conduct Authority's \(FCA\) register](#) to check if the company is regulated by the FCA. If you deal with a firm (or individual) that isn't regulated, you may not be covered by the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) if things go wrong and you lose your money.
- Before making significant financial decisions, speak with trusted friends or family members, or seek professional independent advice.
- Don't be rushed into making an investment. Remember, legitimate organisations will never pressure you into investing on the spot.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- If you receive a cold call offering you an investment opportunity, hang up. Take Five and verify via a trusted method, not via numbers given to you in the call.
- Remember, most cryptocurrencies are not regulated by the FCA which means they are not protected.

For further advice on investment fraud please visit the [Take Five website](#).

### **Phishing texts**

Fraudsters use lots of clever tricks to try and convince victims they are genuine and persuade victims to part with personal details or money. One trick to be aware of is 'Smishing'.

If you already have an existing SMS thread relating to a number how do scammers then insert fake texts onto the same thread?

The fraudster will have their own phone number and will register for a 'Sender ID', usually using a business, organisation or building societies name. This allows the fraudster to have this name appear as the Caller ID instead of their own phone number when texting or calling victims. This is a trick used to make their contact to a victim appear to be coming from a genuine business or organisation.

If the victim already has a text thread from the genuine business, organisation or building society the fraudster's fake text message will now appear on that same thread which was once completely genuine as the device cannot tell the difference.

### **Anti-virus scam**

We have seen several reports of fake security emails and computer pop-ups targeting victims to persuade them to part with personal and banking details.

In one case a 65-year-old woman from Sussex received a message on her laptop about anti-virus software, saying that her computer has been comprised and that they could help her make it safe. The fraudster then called the victim and convinced her to download remote access software onto her laptop. The fraudsters then gained access to the device

and started to download files to her laptop, including software that they claimed was anti-virus. The fraudsters tried to persuade the victim to pay £69.99 using her online banking while they had access to her laptop, claiming it was for the software. Thankfully the victim did not do so and recognised this as a scam.

How to protect yourself:

- Never allow anyone remote access to your computer or device.
- Do not download software on the request of a caller.
- If you are having issues with your computer or device, contact the retailer you purchased it from.
- If you receive a call like this, hang up. Verify using a trusted method, not numbers or contact details given in the call.
- A genuine service provider will never contact you 'out-of-the-blue' regarding issues with your device.

If you have spotted a suspicious email, forward it to the Suspicious Email Reporting Service at [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

### **Social media hacking**

We have received reports of fraudsters hacking social media profiles and then requesting payment to unlock the account.

One victim, a 36-year-old woman from East Sussex, reported that her Instagram account had been hacked. The victim received a 'follow' request from a man which she accepted, and the pair began chatting. The man later sent the victim a link claiming it was for jewellery. The victim clicked this link and was then locked out of her Instagram account, soon realising that her email address and password on Instagram had been changed and the fraudster had taken over her account.

The victim then received demands from the fraudster claiming that if she made payment to him, she would get her account back. The fraudster asked for iTunes vouchers or Bitcoin to be sent or he would continue to use and control her Instagram account.

Thankfully, the victim did not part with any money and reported the incident to both Instagram and the police.

How to protect yourself:

- Have strong passwords; do not use personal words to you, ensure you have separate passwords and never share passwords with anyone.
- Do not click on links or attachments unless you can verify where they came from. Call the sender to check it's genuine. If in doubt, keep them out.
- Do not share everything on social media; be careful who can see what you share online. Ensure your privacy settings on social media are set to a high level.
- Always report suspicious activity to the social media platform.

Messages from friends and family

We have seen several reports of text and WhatsApp messages being sent to victims claiming to be from a family member or friend. The message claims that the supposed family member or friend is contacting them from a new number as their phone has broken. The fraudster will then claim to be in urgent need of money and ask the victim to send funds to help. Sadly, many victims have lost money to this scam believing they are helping a family member or friend in need.

How to protect yourself:

- Always contact the family member or friend on a genuine contact method you have recorded for them to check they are in need.

· Is the family member or friend asking you to pay into a new bank account? Do the account details match up with a bank account you have paid into before?

· If you are unsure on a transaction made, please contact your bank immediately.

**Have you been a victim of fraud?**

If you or someone you know is vulnerable and has been a victim of fraud please [report online](#).

Report fraud or attempted fraud on the [Action Fraud website](#) or call 0300 123 2040.

Keep well

Mike Fox

For Community Support & Neighbourhood Watch

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