

# Ferring



## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



Quarterly Edition

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**What goes online, stays online.** Every time you use social media, buy or sell something online, visit any kind of website, send or receive an email, find your way using a mapping app or save a photo to the cloud, you add to your digital footprint. The same goes for downloading music, making Skype calls and using a voice assistant. Every time you post a photo of your children or your friends, you add to their digital footprint too. <https://getsafeonline.org/yourdigitalfootprint/>

**Your digital footprint is part of your online history** and can potentially be seen by other people, or tracked and held in a database ... or many databases. This is the case even if you are careful with your privacy settings. Here are just a few examples of what could, and does, happen as a result of your online history:

- Companies can target you with specific marketing content on social media and other websites. You could also receive emails, letters or phone calls from these companies.
- Advertisers can track your movement from site to site to gauge your areas of interest.
- Entertainment providers (such as music or films) could target you with unwanted recommendations for content.
- Prospective employers can look into your and family members' background.
- Your child's application for schools, colleges, universities, scholarships, clubs or even sports teams could be rejected.
- You, family members or friends could become the victim of fraud or identity theft.
- Your children could be at risk of criminal activity threatening their online or physical safety.
- Records of your online activity could fall into the wrong hands, including perpetrators of organised crime.
- Tech companies such as browser and search engine providers can track and record what you've searched and viewed. This, in turn, could be shared with other parties including law enforcement agencies.
- You could be refused life, medical, property or vehicle insurance based on information you have shared online.

### **How to minimise your digital footprint, or make sure it's a good one:**

- Don't overshare information about yourself, family members or friends that would be better kept private - on social media, on websites and apps requesting details and with texts and messages.

*continued ...*

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— AND READING —

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- Think before you post online. Even if your social media privacy settings are set up correctly, there's no guarantee that your posts or photos won't be shared.
- Be aware that every time you visit a website, it's visible to tech companies like website owners, browsers and search engines.
- Read terms and conditions and data privacy policies on websites and apps before providing any personal data or making transactions. What can the providers do with your data, and why would you agree to it? If you're not comfortable with the information being requested, don't provide it.
- Check geolocation settings on mobile devices, apps and cameras. If you don't want anybody to know where you are, or where you have been, disable them.
- Never stop enjoying the many excellent benefits of using the internet, but always bear in mind what digital trail you're leaving, who may be able to access it and how they may be able to use it.



**West Sussex County Council provide free online safety advice** to agencies and the public via their website **[www.westsussex.gov.uk/staying-safe-online](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/staying-safe-online)**.



**Age UK provides much useful information** about staying safe online - <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/work-learning/technology-internet/internet-security/#moreinfo>

### **What should I do if I think I've been a victim of an online scam?**

Scammers are constantly finding new ways to trick people and online scams are changing all the time. It's not unusual for people to get tricked, so don't suffer in silence and don't be embarrassed to report it. Contact the Police, then Action Fraud, if you're worried something might be a scam, or you think you've been scammed. The information you give to Action Fraud can help track down the scammer. If you're worried that your computer is not working properly or think that it may have a virus, then talk to a computer technician.

### **How can I protect my computer and stay safe online?**

- **Install security software** (e.g. anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall). Anti-virus software will look for and remove viruses before they can infect your computer. Anti-spyware software prevents unwanted adverts from popping up, tracking your activities or scanning your computer for personal information.
- **Keep your computer updated.** Every computer has an operating system (such as Windows or Mac) which is software that organises and controls all hardware and programs. Your computer can be better protected from viruses if you keep the operating system updated. You should receive notifications when new updates are available, but you can also update your system manually.
- **Protect your wireless network.** If you have a wireless router, check that your wireless network is secure so that people living nearby can't access it. It is best to set up your network so that only people with a wireless 'key' (i.e. password) can connect to your network. If your network is secured by a password, users will be prompted for a password when they try to access the network for the first time and there should be a padlock symbol next to your wireless network. If this doesn't happen, your network isn't protected and anyone can connect to your network. Read the instructions that came with your router to find out how to set up a wireless key and make your network more secure.

### **Some useful contact details:**

Police : Emergency	999	National Gas Emergency Svc	0800 111 999
Textphone (Type Talk)	18000	UK Power Network – cuts, danger	105
Police : Non-Emergency	101	Southern Water - leaks	0300 303 1263
101@sussex.pnn.police.uk	<- email	Action Fraud: report cybercrime	0300 133 2040
Coastguard Rescue Service	999	RSPCA: 24hr animal distress	0300 123 4999
Citizens Advice Bureau	0344 41 11 444	Trading Standards (WSCC)	03454 040506
CrimeStoppers (anonymous)	0800 555 111	Victim Support	0800 16 89 111
West Sussex Fire & Rescue	01243 786211	CRUSE Bereavement Care	01323 642 942