

# Ferring



Ferring Neighbourhood Watch  
c/o Ferring Parish Council  
1 Elm Park  
Ferring, BN12 5RN

Tel: 01903 249449  
Email: nhweditorial@gmail.com

## ***Autumn 2020 Newsletter***

---

**Welcome to your new look Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter which we hope you will find informative and useful. If there are any relevant topics/issues you'd like to see in a future edition, please do write or email (see contact details above) and we will try to cover them if possible.**

With the USA Presidential Elections out of the way (apparently?), the 2 big things on most people's minds are probably **Covid** and **Christmas**. Unfortunately, both provide unscrupulous people with opportunity to take advantage of others. Here are some tips to keep yourself and your families safe from callous criminals.



### **A NUMBER OF COVID-19 SCAMS ALREADY IN CIRCULATION INCLUDE:**

#### **Doorstep crime**

- Criminals targeting older people particularly on their doorstep and offering to do their shopping. Thieves take the money and do not return.
- Doorstep cleansing services which offer the cleaning of drives and doorways to kill bacteria and help prevent the spread of the virus. Don't fall for it!

#### **Online scams**

- Email scams that trick people into opening malicious attachments, which put people at risk of identity theft with personal information, passwords, contacts and bank details at risk. Some of these emails have lured people to click on attachments by offering information about others in the local area who are allegedly affected by coronavirus.
- Fake online resources – such as false Coronavirus Maps – that deliver malware, an information stealing program which can infiltrate your computer to capture personal data. Criminals distribute spam emails, which typically contain deceptive text to trick users into opening attachments, thereby gaining access to your system.
- Refund scams - Companies offering fake refunds for individuals who have been forced to cancel holidays. Be wary of any websites set up to claim holiday refunds.
- Counterfeit goods including fake sanitisers, face masks and swabbing kits sold online and door-to-door. These products can often be dangerous and unsafe. There are reports of some potentially harmful sanitisers containing products banned for human use in 2014.

#### **Telephone scams**

- As more people self-isolate at home there is an increasing risk that telephone scams will rise, including criminals claiming to be your bank, mortgage lender or utility company.

SYMONDS  
— AND READING —

## Tests and Donation scams

• There have been reports of thieves extorting money from by selling fake tests and/or claiming they are collecting donations for a COVID-19 vaccine.

\*\*\*\*\*  
***With long-awaited but welcome news of coronavirus vaccines, reportedly becoming available relatively soon and allegedly able to prevent over 90% of people from catching Covid-19, don't be tempted by 'out of the blue' special offers of a vaccine.***  
\*\*\*\*\*



## HOW TO SHOP ONLINE SAFELY THIS CHRISTMAS

With the pandemic still very much with us, it's anybody's guess what the festive season will bring. Two things are certain: Many of us will buy presents and seasonal goods online, almost certainly more than ever before. And it will still be a favourite time of year for scammers, who always regard Christmas and Black Friday shoppers as perfect targets for fraud. With a lot on our minds at this time of year, right now we have the added consideration of our own and loved ones' health and well-being. That's why it's especially important to safeguard yourself, your family and finances when you're online.



**Get Safe Online**, a useful source of information on online safety, has come up with some tips to help protect you from falling victim to seasonal scams.

- ◆ When you're shopping online, make sure websites are authentic by carefully checking the address is spelled correctly. Ideally, type it in rather than clicking on a link in an email, text or post. It's easy for scammers to set up fake websites that are very similar to the real thing.
- ◆ When you're paying, make sure the page is secure by checking that addresses begin with 'https' ('s' is for secure) and that there's a closed padlock in the address bar.
- ◆ However desperate you are to buy that late gift or an item that's in short supply, don't pay for anything by transferring money directly to people or companies you don't know. If it's a fraud, it's doubtful the bank will be able to recover or refund your money. If you can, pay by credit card. The same goes for holidays, travel and tickets.
- ◆ Log out of the web page or app when payment is completed. Simply closing it may not log you out automatically.
- ◆ Fake or counterfeit goods are often of inferior quality, contravene copyright law and can affect the livelihoods of workers who make the real thing. They can also be dangerous to users. Don't buy them intentionally – however cheap or 'authentic' they appear.
- ◆ Avoid 'free' or 'low-cost' trials – whether for the latest handset or slimming pills – without thoroughly reading the small print and trusted reviews. You could be signing up for large direct debits which may prove very hard to cancel.
- ◆ If a winter holiday or short break is on the cards, check that what you're booking online is genuine by doing thorough research. Look for independent reviews, and make sure travel agents / tour operators are genuine by checking for an ABTA/ATOL number. Pay by credit card for extra protection.
- ◆ Christmas is a favourite time for scammers to send fraudulent emails, texts or Direct Messages, or to post fraudulent offers on social media.
- ◆ At this time of year fake parcel firm delivery notifications are commonplace attachments or links, as are emails and other messages featuring 'special offers' and 'prizes'. Don't click on links in unexpected emails, texts or posts, and don't open attachments.



## Finally, don't forget a couple of simple things to help avoid car crime.

- Don't leave valuables in the car. If you absolutely have to, put them in the boot.
- Recently, there have been local thefts from cars which have been left unlocked. It's all too easy to walk away from the car and use the remote 'plipper' to lock it and think the doors are secured but if a door or window is even very slightly open that may not be the case.

**Lock it and check it.**

<b>Some Useful Telephone Numbers</b>	<b>CrimeStoppers (anonymous) 0800 555 11</b>
<b>Action Fraud 0300 133 2040</b>	<b>Citizens Advice Bureau Consumer Helpline 0808 223 1133</b>
<b>Police (emergency only) 999</b>	<b>Police (non emergency) 101</b>