

Beware of “advance fee fraudsters”

Scam warning

2 Nov 2017

We are issuing a warning to be aware of criminals who try to persuade victims to pay in advance for services or goods that don't exist or are never received.

Across the Humberside Police force area, these so-called “advance fee fraudsters” are currently targeting elderly people and residents living in rural areas. During August and September 2017, 45 such crimes were reported to police. The oldest victim was 88 years old. The youngest 19.

The fraudsters use a number of scams to try and con money out of potential victims. These include:

- Career opportunity scams
- Clairvoyant or psychic scams
- Cheque over-payment fraud
- Dating or romance scams
- Impersonation of officials
- Inheritance fraud
- Loan scams
- Lottery, prize draw and sweepstake scams
- Racing tip scams
- Rental fraud
- “West African” letters
- Work from home and business opportunity scams
- Vehicle matching scams

Detective Inspector Kev Foster, Humberside Police's head of Cyber Crime, said: “These criminals are becoming more sophisticated in their attempts to con money out of people. They're extremely plausible, and the goods or services they are “selling” seem real but often never exist.

“We are urging everyone to help protect themselves from these scams and from financial fraud by being more aware and to follow some simple advice.

“Listen to your instincts and if something feels wrong then it's usually right to question it. Never disclose security details such as passwords or PIN numbers. Don't assume an email request or caller is genuine as people aren't always who they say they are.

“Don’t rush into things. A genuine bank or organisation won’t mind giving you time to stop and think, and will not ask for your details. Stay in control. Have the confidence to refuse unusual requests for your personal details. If in doubt, don’t give any of your financial details away.

“Please report anything to us that you think may be a scam as we will robustly pursue any complaint.”

