

SCAMS

The vision of the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board is that all adults in Surrey live a life free from fear, abuse and neglect.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SCAMS AND DOORSTEP CRIME?

Scams and doorstep crime can take many forms, including unscrupulous tradespeople, phoney get-rich-quick investment cons, bogus competitions and email scams.

People with care and support needs may be more at risk than others, and scammers may deliberately target:

- » Older people, and those with dementia

- » Adults with learning disabilities or cognitive impairments
- » People with other support needs, such as mental illness or physical disability

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF SCAMS?

Fraudsters use lots of different techniques to cheat people out of money, and some are more sophisticated than others. Scams can occur online (via email or on the internet), by phone or on a person's doorstep.

The most common types of scams are:

- » Email scams offering a share of a large sum of money in return for an upfront fee.
- » Pension scams that offer to convert pension benefits to cash. The victim pays a high fee and may face a large tax bill, too.
- » Bank scams where victims are kept on the phone to someone reporting to be from the bank and tricked into disclosing their account details.
- » Investment scams that promise huge returns on dodgy investments. The assets either don't exist or aren't worth much, and victims can lose many thousands of pounds.
- » Bogus workmen. After knocking on the door and claiming that urgent repair work is needed, dishonest tradespeople may overcharge, not carry out the work, or do a shoddy job.
- » Doorstep theft. Criminals can work in pairs, with one distracting the victim at the front door while the other sneaks in the back and steals money.

SPOTTING AND AVOIDING SCAMS

Be vigilant and look out for the following warning signs:

- » Being asked to give out bank details or a pin number
- » Being asked to pay a fee to claim winnings
- » Being promised big cash sums – if something seems too good to be true, it probably is
- » Being told that repairs are urgently needed – if work is genuinely needed, find a reputable tradesperson through word-of-mouth recommendations
- » Being told something is a 'one-time offer' or 'expires quickly' – trustworthy companies don't pressure people to decide on the spot

Other precautions include:

- » Using a chain on the front door
- » Keeping the back door locked at all times
- » Putting money and other valuables out of easy reach of the front and back doors

GETTING HELP

If you're worried that someone with care and support needs is at risk of being targeted and taken advantage of, contact the the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

- » Call on **0300 470 9100**
- » Text on **07527 182861**

- » Email ascmash@surreycc.gov.uk
- » Out of hours, call **01483 517898**

Trading Standards (www.tradingstandards.uk) and Citizens Advice (www.citizensadvice.org.uk) also offer advice in this area.

In an emergency, or if you believe someone is in immediate danger, always dial 999 for the police.