



Keep your money safe

Surrey and Sussex Police Fraud Newsletter May 2019

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.

Detective Chief Inspector Andy Richardson, Surrey & Sussex Police Economic Crime Unit.

'Text message' dating service scam



A 55-year-old woman from West Sussex was using a dating service which allowed service users to match another person on the dating site. However, when they matched with another person, the service user was required to pay £30 for a pack of 50 text messages to their matched person via the dating site.

The dating service sends an alert to service users when they are running low on text messages, encouraging them to buy more texts in order to continue the conversation with their match.

The victim believes she has spent £250-£500 on this service after developing a close relationship with her match on the site.

The company behind the dating service is thought to be 'Telebilling Ltd', which also appears to have links to adult chat line scams. These scams are initiated by a text sent to a potential victim's mobile, encouraging them to phone a dating chat line. If they do so, they are then billed for these services.

Remember: If you're using online dating services, don't be too trusting straight off the bat. Be cautious when getting to know people or signing up to use one of these services. Never send any money to people you haven't met, or share your personal details with them. If you think you have been a victim of fraud, please report it to Action Fraud. [You can do so online](#) or by calling 0300 123 2040.

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Attempted phone scam involving caller named 'Alex Robinson'

Two elderly victims have been targeted by fraudsters within the space of two weeks, with both calls involving a person by the name of 'Alex Robinson'.

In the first case, an elderly man received a call from 'Alex Robinson' at around midday on 26 March. The caller asked him to buy Google play cards to the value of £3600. Fortunately, when he went to buy these at WH Smiths, staff intervened and stopped the sale, so there was no financial loss to the victim.

In the second case, an elderly woman received a number of phone calls. She was asked to purchase Steam cards, which are video game vouchers, and give them to a solicitor as a form of payment so that money could be released to her.

On Wednesday night, she received a call from a male caller who stated his name was 'Michael Madhew', who claimed they were trying to get hold of her as they were looking into twenty years of bank charges. She was told that someone would give her a call back in the morning.

On Thursday morning, the victim received a number of calls from international numbers. She picked the phone up to stop them from calling and spoke to a male caller on 00223310203 who did not give his name. He stated that he was from 'Claims Advisory Group'. He said that they had been sitting with her bank manager finalising a deal and that there was a large amount of money waiting for her. They asked what bank she was with, then gave her a passcode of M1600TT11004896. The number was to check 20 years of bank charges she had allegedly paid.

On the Friday morning, she received a call from the number 01573223582. The caller claimed his name was 'Alex Robinson' and told her a cheque for £3600 would be arriving for her. He said that she had to pay the solicitor in Steam cards, which could be bought from Tesco or Argos, but when she said she could not afford it, he asked her to buy just one Steam card. She replied that she could not get to the shop, so the caller suggested that the solicitor could pick her up and bring her there. When she replied that she could not afford it, he then hung up.

Remember: Always be wary of the identity of a person you don't know when speaking to them on the phone, even if they give you a name or a phone number. If a call you've received 'doesn't seem quite right', it's better safe than sorry – report it to Action Fraud immediately [online](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/) or by calling 0300 123 2040.

Your bank and police will NEVER:

- 1) Phone and ask for your PIN or full banking password.
- 2) Ask you to withdraw money and hand it to them for safekeeping.
- 3) Ask you to transfer money out of your account.
- 4) Send someone to your home to collect cash, bank cards, PINs or cheque books.



For more: <https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>

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How you can help us

If you suspect someone you know may be vulnerable to fraud, please share this newsletter with them and encourage them to look at the '[Little Book of Scams](#)'

If you or someone you know is vulnerable and has been a victim of fraud call:

Surrey Police on 101 or visit www.surrey.police.uk

Sussex Police on 101 or visit www.sussex.police.uk

Report fraud or attempted fraud, by contacting Action Fraud at

http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud or call 0300 123 2040