

Fraud is now the most commonly reported crime, and anyone can become a victim, regardless of age, sex or income.

WHAT IS FRAUD?

Fraud happens when somebody lies or deceives you in order to cause harm, usually by costing you money.

You may know fraud better as: scams, cons, cheat, swindle, hoax, hoodwink or confidence trick.

Fraud and cybercrime cost the UK nearly £11bn in 2016

WHAT IS CYBERCRIME?

There are many forms of cybercrime and we are uncovering new cases all the time, including:

- 'Phishing' emails containing links to fake websites to trick people into entering personal details or account information.
- Fraudsters pretending to be from Microsoft needing remote access to your computer to 'fix' a problem.
- Criminals who attack your computer with a virus or spyware and try to steal personal information such as user names and passwords.
- Online auction scams where the seller asks you to pay by money transfer or direct to their bank account.

USEFUL INFORMATION



If you or someone you know is vulnerable and has been a victim of fraud call Hampshire Police on **101** quoting **Operation Signature**.

Stay safe online by visiting these websites:

- www.getsafeonline.org
- www.thinkjessica.com
- www.hampshire.police.uk
- www.actionfraud.police.uk

For consumer advice contact:

Citizens Advice Consumer Service

- ☎ Call 03454 040506
- www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer

They will give you advice on behalf of your local Trading Standards and pass on your query to them.



OPERATION
SIGNATURE

Protecting vulnerable victims of fraud

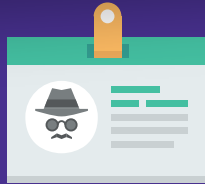
A guide to common
types of fraud



HAMPSHIRE
CONSTABULARY

The following scenarios describe how you could fall victim to different types of fraud and what you can do to prevent this happening.

FRAUDSTERS POSING AS OFFICIALS



You are contacted by telephone and told one of the following:

1. You owe money to a bailiff or the Inland Revenue (HMRC).
2. You are owed money in compensation, but you need to pay a large administration fee to receive it.
3. Your help is needed with a bank or police investigation.

All of the above will involve you either handing over your bank card/large amounts of cash or buying vouchers/an item of jewellery. Threats will be used to intimidate you, you will be told to hurry, and not to tell anyone.

Protecting yourself

Your bank, the police or other organisations will NEVER call you in this way. NEVER give out personal information, and if you are in doubt, hang up and call **101** from another phone. Alternatively, call a friend/relative so you know you can dial out safely (fraudsters can stay on the line). If you receive a call like this, contact the police immediately.

INVESTMENT SCAMS



You receive a telephone call, offering you an amazing investment opportunity. You may be directed to a glossy looking website and be sent a brochure in the post. Investments can be for wine, land, stocks/shares, gems, carbon credits and timeshares. They will be pushed by professional sounding people using pressure tactics.

Protecting yourself

Do your own research and DO NOT be pressured into signing anything. Talk to people you trust, and if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

COMPETITION SCAMS



You receive a letter stating you have won a large amount of money, but you need to send a significant amount of cash first to claim your winnings. This is known as 'advance fee fraud' or 'mass marketing fraud'. People who fall victim then find their details are sold to other fraudsters, and can end up getting hundreds of letters, phone calls and emails every week.

Protecting yourself

Never reply to these letters or sign up for a catalogue order in order to 'claim' your winnings. Visit www.thinkjessica.com to see how it can ruin lives.

ROMANCE & DATING FRAUD



Fraudsters set up fake profiles on dating sites, appear charming, sincere and loving, and eventually the conversation will turn to requests for money. Your 'love' will probably say they are abroad working, and never actually meet you face-to-face.

Protecting yourself

Be wary if they keep making excuses not to meet up with you or even talk to you. If they ask for money of any kind (even a mobile phone top-up) then treat it with extreme caution. Talk to your friends and family. NEVER send money to someone you haven't met, no matter how 'wonderful' they may seem. Never accept receiving large amounts of money into a bank account for them. Use tineye.com to check their profile picture isn't a fake.