



Press release

1 in 4 people in the East of England have been targeted by a scammer since lockdown began

1 in 4 people in the East of England have been the target of a scam since lockdown came into effect across the country, finds Citizens Advice Hertfordshire. A high percentage of people (69%) are worried that someone they know will fall prey to fraudsters. And an even higher proportion of people , 97% in the East of England, reported being concerned about coronavirus scams in particular.

Citizens Advice Hertfordshire are encouraging people to talk about their experiences and look out for others they think could be at risk.

Citizens advice leaders across Hertfordshire have come together and said:

“Our data shows that the last few months have been very difficult for a lot of people across Hertfordshire. To make matters worse we’ve seen appalling evidence of opportunistic scammers taking advantage of people’s worries and concerns.

“1 person in 4 in the East of England has been targeted by a scam since lockdown began, showing we all need to be on high alert.

“It’s really important we all do our bit and report anything that looks like it’s too good to be true, when we see it. By learning how scammers operate, and helping each other understand what to look out for, we can work together to stop fraudsters in their tracks.”

To help stop more people being tricked out of money by scams, Citizens Advice Hertfordshire is sharing the following tips on how to spot them.

If you’re worried you, or someone you know, could be getting scammed take the following steps:

- Look into installing a call blocker to help combat telephone scams
- Talk to your or their bank immediately if there is any suspicious activity or transactions from their account or credit cards
- Report the scam to Citizens Advice who will give you advice on what to do next and report the scam to Trading Standards
- Report the scam to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040
- If you or someone you know is struggling to pay bills or outstanding debts Citizens Advice may be able to help

You can also take the following steps to safeguard yourself and others:

- Be suspicious if you're contacted out of the blue, even if it's from a name you recognise
- If it sounds too good to be true it probably is
- Never send money to someone you've never met
- Never give out your bank details unless you are certain you can trust the person contacting you
- Don't be rushed – you never need to make a decision straight away and if you feel pressured say “no”
- Suspect a scam? Hang up, wait five minutes to clear the line or use another phone to call
- Don't suffer in silence – speak out about scams

-ends-

For more information contact: Citizens Advice Hertfordshire

Tel: 03444 111 444 (10am to 4pm)

We give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are, and whatever their problem.