

Keep Your Money Safe



Surrey Police and Sussex Police Fraud Newsletter

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“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
Antony Leadbeatter
Surrey Police & Sussex
Police Economic Crime Unit

QR CODE SCAMS – QUISHING... WHERE ARE THEY TAKING YOU TO?

Quick Response Codes or QR Codes as we know them are becoming more frequently used whether that is to review your local restaurant or to answer a quick quiz but be aware they could also be used as a gateway to committing fraud.

They're widely used for things like quickly directing users to websites, ordering or paying for goods and services. But can we trust them? Many are used in public spaces like car parks, where there is a risk they could have been physically tampered with. A different code could have been placed over the legitimate one, sending you to an alternative site. However, often the victims who lose the most money are then subject to a secondary scam. Having lost a small amount to the initial fraud, they are subsequently called by a bank impersonator and that is when larger transactions are often made.

QR code fraud can also happen by email, known as Quishing. Most people are now suspicious of dubious-looking links in emails and are (correctly) cautious of clicking on shortened links. Criminals therefore use QR codes to disguise the links to malicious websites that phishing emails contain. If you receive an email with a QR code in it, and you're asked to scan it, you should exercise caution just as you would when clicking on a link. Ensure it is taking you to where you are expecting to go.



SUMMER IS NEARLY HERE. ARE YOU LOOKING FOR TICKETS TO A CONCERT, SPORTING FIXTURE OR BOOKING A FLIGHT – BEWARE OF FRAUDSTERS...

Action Fraud, has launched a ticket fraud awareness campaign ahead of the summer, urging people to stay alert for criminals who are trying to sell tickets online or on social media for top events and sold-out concerts.

Across Surrey and Sussex, we continue to receive reports from residents who have been targeted by ticketing fraud. Typically this fraud type goes up around this time of year and we have recently seen cases of people being defrauded when purchasing tickets for flights, sporting events such as WWE, and music concerts including Coldplay.



TICKET FRAUD VICTIMS

A football fan from Surrey lost £50 when they transferred funds in the belief they had secured a ticket to an upcoming Premier League fixture. Sadly, the ticket did not exist and despite parting with the money in response to an initial approach via a Facebook message, he never got to attend the game.

In another example, an elderly couple from Sussex were defrauded out of £3,000 for flights, purchased online from a scam company, whilst another victim parted with £700 for a flight booked on a site falsely claiming to be Expedia.



HOW DO SCAM TICKET WEBSITES WORK?

- The website offers you the chance to buy tickets to a popular event. The event is often actually sold-out, or the tickets haven't officially gone on sale yet.
- You pay for the tickets but they are never delivered.
- In some cases you might be told that a customer representative will meet you at the venue on the day. Nobody turns up.
- You may even receive tickets, but when you arrive at the event, the organisers tell you the tickets are fake.
- When you try to call the company you bought the tickets from, your calls are not answered or do not connect.
- Remember that it's easy for scammers to set up a fake website that looks genuine. Some even use a name or website URL that is similar to a legitimate website.

TOP TIPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM TICKETING FRAUD:

- Only buy tickets from the venue's box office, official promoter or agent, or a well-known ticketing website.
- Avoid paying for tickets by bank transfer, especially if buying from someone unknown. Credit card or payment services such as PayPal give you a better chance of recovering the money if you become a victim of fraud.
- The password you use for your email account, as well as any other accounts you use to purchase tickets, should be different from all your other passwords. Use three random words to create a strong and memorable password, and enable 2-step verification (2SV).
- Be wary of unsolicited emails, texts or adverts offering unbelievably good deals on tickets.
- Is the vendor a member of STAR (Secure Tickets from Authorised Retailers)? If they are, the company has signed up to their strict governing standards.
- STAR also offers an approved Alternative Dispute Resolution service to help customers with outstanding complaints. For more information visit star.org.uk/buy_safe.

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE... FRAUD AWARENESS EVENTS AVAILABLE

As part of our campaign on fraud prevention and awareness within Surrey and Sussex, we are now offering in-person talks or discussions on how to stay safe from frauds and scams, this will include what to look for, how to keep yourself safe and reporting methods if you feel that you have been targeted by frauds and scams.

These talks are aimed at any groups who would like to learn more including youth, religious and specialist groups. These talks are free.

A member of our fraud prevention volunteer team alongside PCSOs from the Neighbourhood teams where available will attend in person to deliver useful fraud prevention advice.

If your organisation or community group feel that you would benefit from this or to find out more, please contact SussexandSurreyFraudPreventionEngagements@surrey.police.uk



**YOU CAN ALSO ATTEND A SCAMS AWARENESS WEBINAR BY
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE & SURREY TRADING STANDARDS WITH A GUEST
SPEAKER FROM CRIMESTOPPERS ON TUESDAY, 6 MAY 10AM -11.30AM.**

VISIT THE LINK HERE: [HTTPS://WWW.EVENTBRITE.CO.UK/E/SCAMS-AWARENESS-WEBINAR-BSL-AVAILABLE-TICKETS-1318472128629](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/scams-awareness-webinar-bsl-available-tickets-1318472128629)