

Keep Your Money Safe



Surrey Police and Sussex Police Fraud Newsletter

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ROGUE TRADERS: OPERATION REPLICATE

This year, Operation Replicate brought together police and partner agencies across Sussex, Surrey and neighbouring counties in a coordinated effort to tackle rogue traders and protect communities from doorstep crime. The aim was to prevent people from becoming victims, disrupt criminal behaviour, and protect those most at risk.

Rogue traders often target vulnerable people, such as older residents or those living alone. They go door-to-door offering services like roofing, driveway repairs or gardening, often claiming urgent work is needed and using pressure to secure quick agreement and large upfront payments. The work is often poor, incomplete or unnecessary.

Rogue trading is also linked to illegal waste disposal, where offenders dump waste from jobs to avoid proper costs. This can leave homeowners responsible and harms the environment. Operation Replicate tackles this issue by working with partners to identify and address those involved in waste crime.

“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 Leadbeater
Surrey Police &
Sussex Police
Economic Crime Unit



Building on the success of Operation Replica in Surrey, Operation Replicate activity combined enforcement with community engagement, including four vehicle stop days and two engagement days. This approach allowed officers to tackle offenders while raising awareness with residents, showing the value of combining enforcement with public outreach.

Rogue traders are highly mobile, travelling between areas in vans to avoid detection. By focusing on the vehicles they use, Operation Replicate targets this, enabling officers to stop and check them, identify offences and gather intelligence.

Across Surrey, East and West Sussex, and Hampshire, officers stopped 113 vehicles in visible operations. Over half required enforcement action or advice, four arrests were made and several vehicles seized, highlighting the effectiveness of targeted activity.

With crime prevention being just as important as enforcement, engagement days in Brighton and Guildford brought together police, fraud volunteers, Trading Standards, Barclays and other partners to speak with residents and share advice on staying safe. Through Operation Replicate, Surrey Police and Sussex Police are sending a clear message that doorstep crime will not be tolerated. By combining enforcement, partnership working and public awareness, offenders can be disrupted and communities better protected.

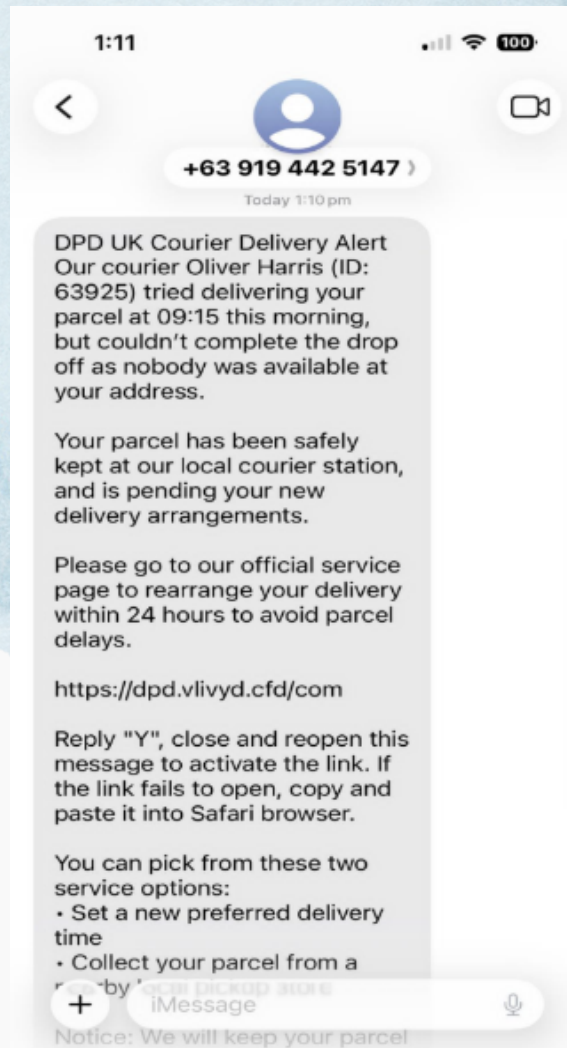
We advise you to be cautious of anyone who turns up unexpectedly at your door offering work. Genuine tradespeople do not usually cold call, and always take time before making any decisions. Getting quotes from more than one company, checking reviews and asking for references can make a big difference. We would also advise not to agree to work on the spot and to avoid paying cash or being pressured into visiting a cash machine. A legitimate trader will be happy to provide a written quote, give you time to think and accept safer forms of payment.

Just as important is remembering that it is okay to say no. No one should feel pressured into agreeing to work. Taking a moment to speak to a friend, neighbour or family member can help provide reassurance and a second opinion. Simple measures such as installing a video doorbell can also help, both as a deterrent and providing evidence if something does not seem right.

Please report any suspicious behaviour, such as unknown callers going door to door or vehicles linked to this kind of activity. Concerns can be reported by calling 101, or 999 in an emergency. Advice is also available from the Citizens Advice Consumer Service regarding rogue trading.

MISSED DELIVERY – TEXT SCAMS

Sussex Police are warning residents about a rise in scam text messages claiming missed deliveries. Earlier this month a male from Haywards Heath reported receiving the below message which he fortunately identified as a phishing scam. These messages, often appearing to come from trusted delivery companies, typically state a parcel could not be delivered and request a small fee, to rearrange.



We would urge the public to remain cautious. Fraudsters rely on urgency, suggesting parcels will be returned or destroyed if no action is taken. Links included in these texts often lead to convincing but fake websites designed to capture personal and financial details. Even small payments can expose bank information, leading to further fraud.

If you receive such a message, do not click links or provide any personal details. Check deliveries through official company websites or apps instead. Delivery firms do not request payment to reschedule.

Report suspicious texts by forwarding them to 7726. If you have shared details or lost money, contact your bank immediately and report it to Report Fraud.

FREE ONLINE SAFETY WEBINARS

Improve your knowledge and stay safe online with FREE webinars and in person sessions delivered by subject experts from West Sussex County Council. Sessions include talks at local libraries on scams, navigating the digital world for parents or you can even learn more about artificial intelligence. If you are interested in booking on any of their free webinars, you can book tickets [here](#):

<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/digital-safety-fraud-prevention-4037633?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=creatorshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=odclsxcollection&utm-source=cp&aff=escb>

Events from Monday, 15 June and Tuesday, 30 June - South-East Cyber Crime Unit

Police Fraud Prevention Volunteers will be in attendance at Waitrose Dorking on Wednesday 24th June from 10.00-1200.

<https://southeastcyber.police.uk/webinars/>

Look out of Police social media channels for more events in your area.

If you feel that your organisation or group in Sussex or Surrey would benefit from having a free, tailored fraud prevention in-person engagement, please contact Sussex Police and Surrey Police at SussexandSurreyFraudPreventionEngagements@surrey.police.uk for further information.