**RUCKINGE MONTHLY NEWS. SEPTEMBER 2023.**

I have spoken before about so many issues that become a 'business opportunity' for the criminals/scammers This linked to the pressures residents are under with the cost of living and the need to look for bargain shop offers can create a 'perfect storm for criminals to action and strike.Sadly, the misery of rising mortgage interest rates offered another opportunity for scammers as residents struggled with this worry in their households.

# Kent Fraud Alert System

TAKE FIVE TO STOP FRAUD™

**Wilko fake websites**

Lookout for fake websites impersonating Wilko. The company has stopped selling goods online & is also no longer offering home delivery or click and collect services, so if you see anything like this, it is a SCAM. One fake site had a sofa for sale at £25 and an adult's electric bike also for sale at £25.

How to avoid copycat websites.

- Make sure that the website address (URL) is correct and matches the site you intended to visit. Copycat websites often have similar URLs to the legitimate sites, but with small differences such as spelling errors or a different domain extension.
- Check for the padlock icon in the address bar which indicates the connection is secure. However, don't rely on the padlock icon alone.
- Legitimate websites usually have contact information such as a phone number, email address, or physical address. But some copycat websites might have contact details, so don't rely on them alone either.
- Be wary of websites that have poor grammar, spelling errors or low-quality images.
- Check for reviews of the website. These can give you an idea of other people's experiences with the site and whether it is trustworthy.
- Don't rush. Take your time to research the website and make sure it is legitimate before making any transactions or providing personal information.




(Source trading Standards)

If you think that you may have been a victim of this or any other type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by ringing 159 and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

Kent Police

**Contacting Kent Police**

Report a non-urgent crime online **www.kent.police.uk/report**
Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 **www.kent.police.uk/contact**
In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**
If deaf or speech impaired, text '**police**' and your message to **60066**
**www.kent.police.uk**

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## Mortgage Scams

Criminals are using mortgage offers "as low as 2.39%" to lure people into phishing scams. They request that you click on a link that takes you to a realistic looking website that is under the control of the criminals, who are looking to steal your personal and financial data.

Remember if it looks too good to be true then it probably is. Always forward suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk Your reports have resulted in the removal of 235,000 malicious websites as of May 2023.

If you think that you may have been a victim of this or any other type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

**Preventing fraud**

Together, let's stop scammers.

**Remember, ABC:**

never Assume

never Believe

always Confirm

Get the latest scam advice: **@KentPoliceECU**




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The two SCAMS featured this month show the speed at which criminals react to events which they turn into a business opportunity.

Barely had the announcements been made on the BBC NEWS AT TEN about WILKO STORES being in trouble and facing store closures when in a matter of hours scams offering closing down online bargains were there scamming people out of monies for items at knocked down prices. REMEMBER THERE IS A WILKO STORE IN ASHFORD closing 14th SEPTEMBER

Next the worries and misery suffered with the sudden rise in the mortgage rate saw attractive deals offered to people who were in despair about the sudden huge bills they were facing.
This scam tragically struck at much younger persons who we may not have envisaged would be the normal risk group.

WITH BOTH THESE SCAMS. "IF IT SEEMS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE", TAKE GREAT CARE PLEASE"

To the routine matters the risks remain the same

Thefts from CARS/VEHICLES. Thefts from SHEDS, GARAGES, and OUTBUILDINGS/EXTERNAL STORAGE.
Thefts of INTERNET PARCELS from doorsteps, the vans are now followed so no isolated premises are even safe.
DRUGS/ ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR/CRIMINAL DAMAGE.

Also, to monitor any new crime trends that have occurred in the wider district and could arrive in the Ruckinge area. There has been in other rural areas Catalytic Converter thefts but again thankfully nothing in Ruckinge or the wider Saxon Shore District.

At the time of going to press the excellent late summer weather just raises the risk we may leave our properties insecure when we are just "popping out" and have had all doors and windows wide open.

The risk of a passing "chancer and opportunist" is extremely low however we just do not want to present a gift with a moment's carelessness.

Stay safe, secure, alert and vigilant.

Take care and mind how you go. Thank you for your support.

Peter

Peter New (peternew1@aol.com)
Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch