Be Careful Out There! - What are 'they' up to?

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Bromley Heath Neighbourhood Watch May 2012
Aims

• What is out there
• A Quiz
• What are we doing
• Some results
Location of serious acquisitive crimes
Location of antisocial behaviour
What is out there?

- Account and bank scams
- Distraction burglaries
- PCs running slow
- Garden Scams
- Rogues – Driveways
- Lotteries
- Suckers list
The new(ish) ones

• Advertising scams – businesses are contacted by the scammers giving the impression permission has already been given to advertise in publications, and now money is due.

• Telephone calls from the ‘Ministry of Justice’ claiming owed refund for ppi (or similar) just need £200+ admin fee to release the funds.

• I got one myself but I have never taken any out!
An example?

- A lady in South Gloucestershire, husband has dementia, let two males who knocked at her door do £300 worth of garden work.
- She mentioned a damp problem in the bedroom
- Surprise, surprise, they were experts in that as well...
- They quoted £1600 and attempted some plastering
- Realised couldn’t do the work so they left...
- Not before taking all payment up front.
- The lady even gave the 2 males a spare key!
- No paperwork given, no vehicle details and no mobile number
A genuine e-mail?

- Hello, I am trying to contact you in regards to an E-Mail I received from an Elastic; "Watermore.PTFA@southglos.gov.uk" stating that I have Won some Money. I don't know if this is a legitimate E-Mail so I am contacting you about it before I open the attachment and reply to it. I am disabled with no money so I am weary of giving my info out but winning such a prize would greatly help me & my family. I Thank you for looking into this and getting back to me.
A Lottery Millionaire?

- Elderly gentlemen
- Spanish Lottery – massive win
- Phoned for advice
- Three Times!
- English
- Never been to Spain
- Never bought a lottery ticket
- Convinced he had won, why?
- The King of Spain himself had phoned to confirm the win!
Don’t make it easy – Please.

• Be vigilant when choosing a trader – do your research and ask around.
• Fly posting is common practice by rogues
• If you enter into a contract in your home, you are afforded cancellation rights by law, and these should be given to you in writing.
• Get the company details, name, number and address.
• Take your time
• Check references
• Visit other properties, not just those done the day before…
Don’t make it easy – Please.

- Don’t pay up front.
- Don’t let them in – close the door
- If you have a door chain make sure it is in place

If you are looking for a business to carry out work for you have a look on our website www.southglos.gov.uk

Trading Standards page you will find details of traders who are members of the Trading Standards approved trader approval scheme BUY WITH CONFIDENCE

or go to the website www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk
Contacts for Consumers

• Currently Consumers contact Consumer Direct on 08454 040506
• From 1st April 2012, consumers are contacting the Citizens Advice Bureau
• www.citizensadvice.org.uk
The quiz

1. How many complaints did we receive last year?
2. 10 most complained about goods
3. What does POCA stand for
4. What is a RIO
5. What is a LILO?
6. How much do consumers lose to scams each year?
7. How many people are targeted?
8. How many fall for it?
9. What is the most commonly scammed age group?
10. What is the Trading Standards Catchphrase (Tie break)
The quiz

1) Received 7371 complaints.
2) 10 most common:
   1) mobile phone service agreements
   2) second hand vehicles purchased
   3) motor complaints in general
   4) mobile phone hardware
   5) payment protection insurance
   6) upholstered furniture
   7) banking services
   8) Internet Service Providers
   9) TVs
   10) women’s clothing

3) Proceeds of Crime Act
4) Regional Intelligence Officer
5) Local Intelligence Lead Officer
The quiz

6. UK consumers lose about £3.5 BILLION to scams each year
   • £420 million on foreign lottery scams.
   • £70 per annum for each adult living in the UK.

7. 23.5 million people are likely to be targeted by a scam (14%)

8. 3.2 million actually falling victim to one. A victim also has a 30% chance of falling for another scam within the following 12 months.

9. Victims were most common amongst the 35-44 year age bracket!

The catchphrase and really sage advice:

If it is too good to be true it probably is!
What are we doing?

- Regional intelligence officer
- Secure database sharing
- NTSPB – National Trading Standards Policy Board
- POCA
- Rogue Trading Partnership – APSE award shortlist
- Working with the Police
  - Sharing intelligence and briefings
  - Sharing Offences, what works best
TRADING STANDARDS & POLICE NOTICE

THIS IS A

NO COLD CALLING ZONE

RESIDENTS OF THIS AREA DO NOT WELCOME UNINVITED DOORSTEP CALLERS
What are we doing?

- Rogue Trading Days (Intelligence led).
- No cold calling zones
- Trader Approval Scheme
- Quick response to calls
- Wiltshire Farm Foods
- Community Bulletin
- Community Champion?
Questions

• Please keep them simple!!!
Payback...

- Assurances from local home improvements / window company to honour NCCZ
- Seized Car - organised crime gang.
- House sale
- POCA £14,780 so far this calendar year
- Possibly even more soon...
Rogue traders

• Jim Coffey-Interlock Drives Ltd
• Now serving a 3 year prison sentence for trading in a fraudulent and misleading way
• Apart from costs and proceeds of crime his business has had to pay compensation
Payback...

- William Birch, Fred Stevens and Allan Smith ‘tarmaccers’
- William Birch was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment
- Fred Stevens to 12 months imprisonment
- Allan Smith £500 fine to be paid within 28 days and in default 14 days imprisonment
Questions

• Please keep them simple!!!