

Report to the Tyne and Wear Trading Standards Joint Committee

21 June 2018

Scams Awareness Month 2018

Paul Dowling, Strategic Director, Communities and Environment, Gateshead Council

Purpose of the report

To update the Committee on the delivery of Scams Awareness Month in June 2018.

Scams Awareness Month

1. Scams Awareness Month is a yearly campaign which aims to create a network of confident, alert consumers who 'don't miss a trick' when it comes to scams. It is a true partnership event between Citizens Advice, the Chartered Trading Standards Institute and local authority Trading Standards services.
2. Whether you're an individual consumer looking to protect yourself and your family from scams, or an organisation or group representing consumers, all such efforts during Scams Awareness Month in June 2018 are important.
3. Across the region all local authority Trading Standards services will be engaging with local partners to deliver on Scams Awareness Month.

General Scams

4. The type of scams that consumers may experience and the types and sources of assistance can be accessed through the following:
 - [Friends Against Scams](#), a National Trading Standards Scams Team initiative, aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims of scams by empowering communities to "take a stand against scams". Visit their website to learn more about the initiative, including scam awareness training.
 - [30+ Ways to Stop Scams](#) from Money Saving Expert. This guide explains what to look out for, how to protect yourself, and what to do if you're a victim of a scam.
 - [Take Five](#) is a national awareness campaign led by FFA UK (part of UK Finance), with a range of partners, that urges people to stop and think if what you're being told really makes sense. You can read more about the campaign and download resources on [their website](#).
 - Visit www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/advice to see their advice on spotting scams, including the "[Scam Academy](#)" [videos](#) and their "[Can you find the fraud?](#)" [quiz](#).

Online scams

5. Online scams can target any victim, regardless of age and are not just targeted towards individuals.
 - Visit www.cyberaware.gov.uk for advice on the simple ways the public and small businesses can help protect themselves against cyber crime.
 - Visit www.cyberaware.gov.uk/toolkit for free and downloadable materials such as posters and leaflets.
 - Visit [Barclays security page](#). Consumers can see hints and tips on how to keep themselves safe online and protect themselves from fraudsters at www.barclays.co.uk/security.
 - Take the Barclays digitally safe [interactive quiz](#). You can also view their videos on how you can [take control of your personal data](#) and how to [protect your children's personal data on social media](#).

Mail and phone scams

6. [Think Jessica Leaflet \[0.58 mb\]](#). [Think Jessica](#) work to protect elderly and vulnerable people from scams which come through the postal system and criminals who contact them by telephone.

Employment scams

7. SAFERjobs offers free advice and help with problems encountered during the job search. You can [visit their website](#) for more information.

Investment scams

8. ScamSmart is a communications campaign by the Financial Conduct Authority designed to help prevent investment fraud. The website www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart gives investors tips on how to spot the techniques used by fraudsters and hosts the FCA Warning List.
9. [The FCA Warning List](#) is an online tool that helps users find out more about the risks associated with an investment and check a list of firms the FCA knows are operating without its authorisation.

Pension Scams

10. Visit www.pension-scams.com to learn more about pension scams, including how to spot the signs and protect yourself and others.

Property fraud scams

11. Visit www.gov.uk/propertyfraud for HM Land Registry's advice on how to protect your property from fraud.
12. Go to www.gov.uk/property-alert to sign up to HM Land Registry's free Property Alert service which can help protect your property from fraud.

Recommendations

13. The Committee is asked to note the information as contained within the report.