

Dorset Police is calling on residents to heighten their vigilance to potential fraud via telephone scams and courier fraud after a significant number of incidents in the county over the past year.

The message 'Hang Up On Fraudsters' is being spread throughout Dorset and the South West in response to a spate of offences within the last 12 months. Victim losses within the region are in excess of two million, with 700 reported crimes, and potentially many more unreported.

A range of resources, including posters and fliers, have been utilised in Dorset to warn the public. Local businesses, including post offices, hospitals and GP surgeries have also been displaying the advice. Social media platforms have been positively targeted with the hashtag **#HangUpOnFraudsters** and local radio stations have helped to spread awareness. Sherborne Safer Neighbourhood Teams also have social media pages, (Twitter: **@SherborneSNT** ) & (Face Book: **Sherborne Safer Neighbourhood team** ).

The campaign has had positive results, with many members of the public coming forward with information and refusing to hand over money. However, officers are still concerned as the offences continue in some areas.

Residents in Poole, Dorchester and Weymouth have been targeted by the offenders, who call the victims and tell them that their bank accounts have been compromised in some way. The callers have a variety of sophisticated methods, including pretending to be police officers or banking advisors, to convince victims that they are legitimate. On many occasions they have persuaded them to transfer or hand over large sums of cash.

### **Dorset Police is issuing the following advice:**

#### **We would urge:**

- Children, grandchildren, relatives and friends of the elderly and vulnerable to warn them of the scam.
- Taxi company owners and drivers to be vigilant, especially if approached or asked to courier small packages to London on behalf of elderly people.
- Banks and other financial institutions, in particular counter staff, to be suspicious if elderly customers uncharacteristically draw large amounts of cash and to query this.

#### **Anyone who receives a suspicious call is urged to:**

- Hang up immediately, dial 1471 and note the number that called you.
- If you need to use the same phone, wait five minutes, as the fraudsters could still be on the line or use another phone on a different line.
- Report the call to your local police on 101.

#### **Simple guidelines to help you to prevent yourself becoming a victim of courier fraud are:**

- NEVER give your PIN or bank details out over the phone
- NEVER withdraw cash and send it anywhere via a courier or taxi
- NEVER send bank cards anywhere via a courier or taxi
- NEITHER the police nor your bank will ever ask for you to do any of the above.

Mark Jones  
Police Community Support Officer 6269  
Sherborne Rural Safer Neighbourhood Team

[sherbornerualsnt@dorset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:sherbornerualsnt@dorset.pnn.police.uk)