A person smiling for a picture

Description automatically generated**District Dispatch**

Sadly, nobody is immune to scams and fraud — they can affect anyone, regardless of who they are. Although this type of crime is prevalent across the nation, not just in the district, it is a major concern here. And although figures have improved, the latest studies show the district remains one of the areas with the highest amounts of money lost through scams.

Criminals target people both online and in their homes. I often receive texts, emails and even phone calls from fraudsters and this is becoming more and more frequent. However, there is something that we can all do — by staying vigilant and always taking a moment to stop, think, and check whenever we are approached, we can help to protect ourselves and others from fraud.   
  
As a council, we are working hard to help residents spot the signs of scams. All of our Community Wardens are digital ambassadors. This means that they have received training to give them a better understanding and knowledge of scams, which is being used as a safeguarding tool for residents in their areas.

This month, Rich Moorey — our Community Warden for Selsey — ran a series of free scam awareness presentations, covering a range of issues and advice, such as discussing the most prevalent scams. These include courier fraud (fraudulent communications that look like they are from delivery companies); financial and investment scams; romance fraud on dating apps and social media; and websites.

As part of these sessions, Rich also talked to residents about rogue traders, using examples from his experience as a Community Warden to demonstrate how people can protect themselves. Rogue trading is a huge issue — just this month, Rich helped protect a lady from losing £3,000 to a rogue trader who was carrying out unnecessary loft insultation work in her home!

Rich is organising another day of presentations on Saturday 28 September at the Assembly Rooms in Chichester, and more details will be available soon so please do keep an eye on our social media channels and [www.chichester.gov.uk/latestnews](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/latestnews).

To help protect yourself from scams and fraud: keep software up-to-date and use strong passwords on mobile devices, computers, and laptops; when receiving suspicious email or mail, keep in mind whether it was solicited or expected; and, delete suspicious emails, then delete them from the ‘deleted’ inbox.

The Get Safe Online website also has lots of information and advice: [www.getsafeonline.org/checkawebsite](http://www.getsafeonline.org/checkawebsite), and Citizens Advice offer an online scam checker tool that you can use if you are suspicious about websites or messages you may receive: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/check-if-something-might-be-a-scam](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/check-if-something-might-be-a-scam/).

If you’re ever concerned that you have been approached by a rogue trader, don’t be afraid to contact the police. Trading Standards also have a ‘Buy with Confidence' scheme — [www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk/) — where you enter details online, the trade you need, and the site provides a list of traders who are registered with Trading Standards.

Rich joined the Community Wardens in the summer of 2022, after 14 years serving in the area as a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO). Since joining the district council, Rich has also teamed up with several groups in his area including Selsey Town Council, and The Care Shop in Selsey who provide outreach support for vulnerable people. Although Rich works predominantly with older residents who often live alone and are more vulnerable to being targeted by scams, he is happy to help anyone across the district who needs more information.

We’re very proud of the vital work that our Community Wardens do to help people feel and keep safe in our communities. If you live in Chichester East and Whyke; Chichester West; Tangmere and Oving; Selsey; or The Witterings, you will probably have seen our friendly Community Wardens in and around your area. They are a fantastic group of people, so do say hello if you see them.

To find out more about our wardens, visit: [www.chichester.gov.uk/communitywardens](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/communitywardens).

Best Wishes

Tracie Bangert

Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing at Chichester District Council

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| A logo with text on it  Description automatically generated | **Terri Foster** Senior Communications Officer Communications Chichester District Council |

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