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**Scam awareness event aims to help protect Chichester District residents**

Chichester District Council’s Community Warden for Selsey will be helping residents spot the signs of fraud on Saturday 17 August at Selsey Town Council.

Community Warden, Rich Moorey, will be conducting presentations throughout the day, which last approximately an hour. These will take place at 9.30am, 11am, 12.30pm, 2pm, 3.30pm, 5pm, and 6pm and are free for anyone to attend.

The presentations will cover several different, but prominent types of 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.

Rich will also talk about rogue traders, and detail how residents can spot the signs of when they may be at risk of falling victim to a scam. Rich will use examples from his experience as a Community Warden to demonstrate how people can protect themselves.

Scams and fraudulent activity remain a major concern as they can affect anyone. In the first quarter of 2024, there were 200 reports of scams in the Chichester area alone.

Rich joined the Community Wardens in the summer of 2022, after 14 years serving in the area as a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO). During this time, he regularly came across cases of people who had fallen victim to scams which prompted him to help residents spot the signs of scams through presentations on the issue.

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.

“Some time ago I became aware of the significant impact that scams and rogue traders are having on our community,” says Rich. “Scams and fraud can affect anyone regardless of who they are, so as a Community Warden I want to make sure residents are protected, informed, and reassured that help is available if something does go wrong.

“When I discuss how to protect yourself from scams, I often use rogue traders as an example,” explains Rich. “With them, I emphasise not being afraid to contact the police if you have real suspicions and concerns. I also point people to Trading Standards who have their ‘Buy with Confidence’ scheme, where you enter details online, the trade you need, and the site provides a list of traders who are registered with Trading Standards.”

There are also a few other helpful steps that people can take to make sure they are better protected. This includes:

* keeping software up-to-date and using strong passwords on mobile devices, computers, and laptops.
* when receiving suspicious email or mail, keep in mind whether it was solicited or expected.
* deleting suspicious emails, then deleting them from the “deleted” inbox.

There is also support online for those who are concerned they are being targeted. The free Get Safe Online website has lots of information and advice that residents can use to protect themselves, as well as a website checker that can check if a website potentially harmful: <https://www.getsafeonline.org/checkawebsite>.

Citizens Advice offer an online scam checker tool which people can use to check if they feel suspicious about websites they see links to or messages they receive: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/check-if-something-might-be-a-scam/>.

“We are very proud of the work Rich has been doing for people across the district to help them be more scam aware,” says Councillor Tracie Bangert, Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing at Chichester District Council. “Scams are a prevalent crime across the nation, not just in the district, but they are 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.”

To find out more information, organise a scam-prevention presentation, or to discuss a different issue, people can email the Community Wardens at: CommunityWardens@chichester.gov.uk

Selsey Town Council can be found at 55 High Street, Selsey, PO20 0RB.

**ENDS**

**For further information, please contact Thomas Carr, Communications Assistant at Chichester District Council on 01243 521297**

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