

## **SCAMS: Read it Share it Prevent it**

Beware of COVID-19 scams: scammers are criminals operating across our Diocese, exploiting fears about COVID-19 and targeting members of our communities, particularly older and vulnerable people who are isolated from family and friends. Criminals come in all shapes and sizes and can contact people at the door, by phone, in the post or online.

### **Examples of Scams:**

Trading Standards are warning people to remain vigilant and be aware that your bank or the police will **never** ask for your bank details or PIN over the phone. Here are some examples of identified scams,

- Impersonating healthcare workers claiming to be offering 'home-testing,' or offering miracle cures or vaccines for coronavirus – there is no specific treatment for coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Offers of home cleaning services which scammers use to try to gain access to your home; don't allow strangers into your home without checking who they are via a trusted source.
- People offering to spray disinfectant onto driveways of properties or around your home for cash.
- Emails saying that you can get a refund on taxes, utilities or similar are usually bogus and they are just after your personal and bank details.
- There are lots of fake products available to buy online that say they can protect you or cure coronavirus. These will not help and are designed to take your money.
- There are new mobile phone applications that claim to give you updates on the virus but instead, they lock your phone and demand a ransom.
- People offering to do shopping or collecting medication and asking for money upfront and then disappearing.

### **Tips to avoid being scammed:**

- Be cautious and listen to your instincts. Don't be afraid to hang up, bin it, delete it or shut the door.
- Take your time; don't be rushed.
- If someone claims to represent a charity, be suspicious and don't give them money or your bank details. Don't let them into your home.
- If you are online, be aware of fake news and use trusted sources such as Gov.uk or NHS.uk websites. Make sure you type the addresses in carefully and don't click on links in emails or text messages.
- Only purchase goods from legitimate retailers and take a moment to think before parting with money or personal information.
- Protect your financial information, especially from people you don't know. Never give your bank card or PIN to a stranger, even if they are going to get shopping for you.
- Know who you're dealing with - if you need help, talk to someone you know and trust or get in touch with your local Council on the numbers below.

### **Where to get help:**

**If you think you've been scammed** report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

**If you need advice** call Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0808 223 1133 or Citizens Advice: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) and select Consumer

**If you are in immediate danger** contact the police on 999

**Contact your bank** if you think you have been scammed or given out your banking details

**To learn more about different types of scams** and how to protect yourself and others, visit [www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk](http://www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk)

**Scam advice is available from National Trading Standards:**  
[www.nationaltradingstandards.uk/work-areas/scams-team/](http://www.nationaltradingstandards.uk/work-areas/scams-team/)

A shorter **Dementia friendly** [summary](#) of Scam advice is here.

**Keep up to date with the latest scams:**

Action Fraud: [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) @actionfrauduk

Friends Against Scams: [www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk](http://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk) @AgainstScams

Take Five: [www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk](http://www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk) @TakeFive