

SCAM CONFERENCE – 2ND FEBRUARY, 2019

By Lee Roberts, Neighbourhood Watch Manager



It is estimated that the cost of fraud to the UK is £190bn a year. According to the Office of National Statistics you are more likely to fall victim to fraud or cyber offences than any other

crime.

On 2nd February, Neighbourhood Watch attended a Scams Conference organised by Merton Safer Neighbourhood Board. The conference aimed to raise awareness of the many scams taking place every day, where often victims are repeatedly targeted and lose their entire life savings.

#Take Five (www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk) is a national campaign that offers straight-forward and impartial advice to help everyone protect themselves from preventable financial fraud. This includes email deception and phone-based scams as well as online fraud. If you think you have been contacted by fraudsters: -

Take a moment to reflect and step back from the situation. Here are some general tips to keep in mind:

1. A genuine bank or organisation will never ask you for details such as your PIN or card number over the phone or in writing. Before you share anything with anyone, stop and think. Unless you're 100% sure who you're talking to, don't disclose any personal or financial details. Instead, hang up and contact the organisation yourself using a different phone, and the number on the back of your bank card or on their website.
2. Just because someone knows your basic details (such as your name and address or even your mother's maiden name), it doesn't mean they are genuine. Criminals will use a range of techniques to get your details and may even say you've been a victim of fraud to scare you into action.
3. Under no circumstances would a genuine bank or another trusted organisation force you to make a financial transaction on the spot; they would never ask



Editor's Note

Preventing burglary is a priority in Merton. Timer switches for lights and double locking doors and windows are very simple but effective ways of protecting your home. There was an unfortunate case recently where a spade, which had been laying around the back garden, was used to prise open the back doors of a property. Please ensure that garden tools and ladders are safely locked away.

Don't forget, 31st March, 2019 Clocks go forward One Hour

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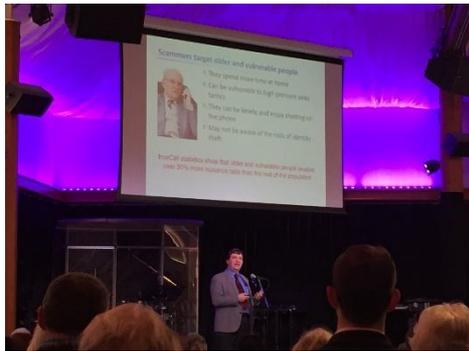
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you to transfer money into another account, even if they say it is for fraud reasons. They will always let you call them back on a number you know is real – if they try and stop you doing this, it's a fraudster and you should hang up.



4. If something feels wrong then it is usually right to question it. Criminals may lure you into a false sense of security when you're out and about or rely on your defences being down when you're in the comfort of your own home. If your gut-feeling is telling you something is wrong, take the time to make choices and keep your details safe.

5. Have the confidence to refuse unusual requests for personal or financial information. It's easy to feel overwhelmed when faced with unexpected or complex conversations. Remember that it's ok to stop the discussion if you don't feel in control of it. If you've taken all these steps and still feel unsure about what you're being asked, never hesitate to contact your bank or financial service provider on a number you trust, such as the one listed on their website or on the back of your payment card



Password trick – memorise a 19 digit password in seconds.

We use passwords for everything from banking to shopping. Many of us are guilty of using the same password for all our accounts.

Hackers and machines can crack a simple password in seconds, so Lee123 is pretty useless. If you want to better protect yourself from on-line fraud it is recommended you have a separate password for all your accounts, or at the very least for on line banking

Here is how to get yourself a fairly uncrackable 19 digit password and memorise it in seconds!

1. Choose three words that have some meaning to you

Cats (I love them) **Caravan** (where I spend a lot of the summer) **Pizza** (one of my favourite foods)

2. Add them together.

catscaravanpizza

3. Throw in some capitals (I used a capital for the first letter of the first word, the second letter of the second word and the 3rd letter of the 3rd word

CatscAravanpiZza

4. Put a number at the end

CatscAravanpiZza5

5. Pop an exclamation mark at the beginning and end, and voila, a pretty impressive memorable password!

!CatscAravanpiZza5!

Reporting

Victims of scams say they feel too embarrassed or ashamed to report what has happened to them. It is really important to report what has happened to you so it can be investigated and you can get support. If you are not ready to report it to the police, speak to Action Fraud **0300 123 2040** (Monday to Friday 8am - 8pm) or Victim Support **0808 16 89 111** .

Little book of big scams

The little book of big scams talks you through various scams, how to spot them and how to report them. This link will take you to a PDF version of a great scams book. If you need a hard copy please let us know.

<https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/the-little-book-of-big-scams.pdf>

CCTV MERTON

In 1994, with just 8 cameras and 4 monitors, a watchful eye was being kept over Mitcham Town Centre by operators in the CCTV control room at Merton Civic Centre.

In the previous year, following the horrendous abduction and murder of little James Bulger, where CCTV played a crucial role in catching his killers, the government invited local authorities to bid for money to increase the number of cameras.



The number of cameras have grown since its early days

Now with 300 cameras covering town centres, housing estates, main arterial roads and transport hubs, it's easy to see how CCTV helps Merton remain as one of the safest boroughs in London.

Manned by 8 operators working shifts 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, the CCTV team work in partnership with the police to prevent and detect all manner of crimes, including Anti-social behaviour, fly tipping, graffiti, theft, robbery and motor vehicle crime, as well as helping to find missing and often vulnerable people and children.

A direct link with the Police

The CCTV control room has an impressive twelve 40" flat screen monitors, each divided into a combination of either 4 or 9 images, all programmable to display the image of any camera in the borough.

Images from 3 screens can project live images directly to the MET's control centre, responsible for taking all 999 and 101 calls, and Wimbledon police station. It is on these monitors that officers can witness first-hand what the operators are watching, or have just watched. Operators are able to talk directly with police via a two way radio which enables operators to direct police quickly to emergencies and for police to request the assistance of operators to monitor a situation.

The CCTV operators are a modest bunch but having sat and chatted for a while, it is obvious just how valuable having a 24 hour service is.

Just recently they have -

- directed police to a prolific graffiti artist in Wimbledon,
- monitored a fatal road traffic accident in Mitcham,
- guided police to two suspicious youths who were searched and arrested for going equipped to steal
- An off duty police officer had made contact with the control room and reported he had found a missing person. CCTV monitored and followed this person until uniformed officers could arrive on scene. The person was confirmed and returned to hospital.
- Observed a pub, with images re-laid to the police control centre, following reports of suspect with knife. Police units arrested 3 suspects on scene, all were in possession of knives and large amounts of cash.

"I couldn't believe what I was seeing"

Martin Gage, CCTV operator for 10 years had this to say when asked about the most memorable thing he had witnessed:

"A few years ago, I was monitoring a group of lads on a walkway in Sadler Close, Mitcham, when the suspect, who turned out to be 14 years old, pulled out what looked like a gun from his pocket. I radioed the police and within 10 minutes several armed response vehicles had arrived. The suspect was arrested for carrying and firing a sub machine gun. I just couldn't believe it, he'd actually fired 3 shots into a door because he was refused entry to a party"

Visit the CCTV control room

To honour the work of the CCTV team we will continue to report on good news stories in future newsletters. We will also be arranging several visits to the CCTV control room during Neighbourhood watch week in June.

Please keep an eye out for dates.

TELL MAMA

Safer Merton and partners invite you to a hate crime advice surgery hosted by Merton Council. A safe space for discussing hate crime and reporting anonymously. Representatives from BAME Voice, Inner Strength Network and Polish Family Association will also be on hand to offer advice. Members of the public can drop in for advice with no appointment necessary.

Tell MAMA, Safer Merton and partners invite you to
A HATE CRIME ADVICE SURGERY
hosted by Merton Council.

The surgeries will run on the second Tuesday of every month from 1:00pm to 2:00pm.

A safe space to discuss hate crime and how to report hate incidents anonymously

Members of the public can drop in for advice with no appointment necessary for this free service.

1:00PM - 2:00PM

TUESDAY 12TH FEBRUARY 2019
TUESDAY 12TH MARCH 2019
TUESDAY 9TH APRIL 2019
TUESDAY 14TH MAY 2019
TUESDAY 11TH JUNE 2019

MERTON CIVIC CENTRE,
LONDON ROAD,
MORDEN SM4 5DX



For further information contact:

safer.merton@merton.gov.uk

SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOUR

By Steve Ratcliffe, Morden Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator

I recently came across 5 teenagers acting suspiciously near to where I live. They were looking into housing areas and one tried to gain access to a block of flats, through the door entry system, while his mates looked on. As a consequence of this, I rang 999 and gave descriptions of the individuals. Following on from this, I informed the St Helier SNT of this incident and, subsequently, a few days later they advised me that a police patrol had tracked down the teenagers but unfortunately, they disappeared in Morden Town Centre.

WANTED - OLD MOBILE PHONES



Do you have an old mobile phone laying around that you no longer need or use? If yes, please consider donating it to Merton Neighbourhood Watch to use in their property marking sessions, with Children who are taking part in Junior Neighbourhood Watch.

Mobile phones can be left at either Wimbledon or Mitcham Police station, clearly marked with Lee Roberts, Merton Neighbourhood Watch c/o Mitcham Police Station.

Feel free to remove the battery and sim card as phones will only be used for marking.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Monday 17th June, 2019 at 7:00 pm – Scam Awareness Event at Merton Civic Centre

CARTOON CORNER



"I HOPE THIS IS GLUTEN-FREE!"

JUNIOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

By Steve Ratcliffe– Neighbourhood Watch Committee Member



Children from Hollymount Primary School receiving their certificates of achievement in the Mayor's Parlour from Mayor of Merton, Councillor Mary Curtin

In the middle of February, we concluded our latest JNW scheme at Hollymount Primary School in Raynes Park. The sessions were challenging as we had to deal with 2 classes (60 children) for each session, something we had not done before. Despite our initial concerns we overcame the numbers and each session went well. We are indebted to the Raynes Park and Pollards Hill SNTs for their support throughout the scheme. This concluded in Merton Civic Centre where the children were given a talk on crime, visited the CCTV room and met the Mayor of Merton, Councillor Mary Curtin, in the Mayor's Parlour where they received their certificates. We received the following feedback from the teacher "The children have learned so much and it has tied into our community society project. I also learnt a lot especially about Neighbourhood watch and I know a lot of the children have been instructing their parents on how to keep their houses and property safe. Thank you everyone, especially Lee for organising".

We are now working again with the second class (Attenborough) in William Morris Primary in Pollards Hill. We have also awarded the Jack Sims Award at William Morris for the best overall Neighbourhood Watch logo produced in 2017/18