

## **Information sent on behalf of Hampshire Constabulary**

### **New online advice and support for victims of crime**

The Victim Care Service, funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner and provided by Victim Support, has launched a new website to ensure anyone affected by crime in Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton can access support and advice.

The website [www.hampshireiowvictimcare.co.uk](http://www.hampshireiowvictimcare.co.uk) offers tips on how to protect yourself from different types of crime and advice on what to do if you experience them. It also includes a comprehensive database of organisations that can be searched by individuals and professionals looking to meet a specific support need.

The Victim Care Service provides support for victims and witnesses of crime to cope with, and recover from, the harmful effects of the crime they have experienced. The Victim Care Service is open to all victims, no matter what the type of crime, regardless of whether the crime has been reported to the police or not, and no matter how recently or how long ago the crime took place.

The service also has specialist teams who deal with the most vulnerable victims for example those who have experienced domestic or sexual abuse and children from the age of four upwards.

Police and Crime Commissioner, Michael Lane, said: "While we have seen our communities pull together to help each other during this time, sadly, we have also seen those who wish us harm exploiting the situation to take advantage of the vulnerable. I would like to remind everyone that the police are still working to fight crime, protect victims and tackle anti-social behaviour. And equally reinforce that support services for victims like the Victim Care Service very much remain in place and stand ready to offer help and advice. This new website complements the support over the phone that the Victim Care Service continues to provide during the pandemic."

Victim Care Service freephone number 0808 178 1641. The service is open from 9am-5pm Monday to Friday but there is also a Live Chat service that is contactable 24/7 on Victim Support's website.

### **Message sent by**

Graeme Barbour (Police, Digital Communications Officer, Hampshire)

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### **COVID19 Scam Awareness**

Criminals are exploiting the COVID-19 pandemic to defraud people.

Below are some of the most common scams to be aware of:

#### **EMAIL, TEXT AND PHONE CALL SCAMS:**

- An unexpected email from the government offering you money.
- The 'infection list' scam mimicking the World Health Organisation (WHO) claiming to provide a list or map of local infections.
- An email from HM Government asking for donations for the NHS.
- An HMRC email stating you are 'eligible to receive a tax refund'.
- Sale of fake COVID-19 swabbing tests, supplements, and anti-virus kits.
- A text message asking you to pay a fine as it says you have been 'recorded as leaving your home on three occasions' during the lockdown.
- A phone call stating 'government guidelines now require everyone to wear a mask outside the house, press 1 to purchase your mask'.

#### **DOORSTEP CRIME**

- Cleansing services that offer to clean drives and doorways to kill bacteria or offering to 'decontaminate' the inside of your home.
- Bogus healthcare workers offering to take your temperature or provide 'home-testing' for the virus.
- Criminals offering to do your shopping. They take the money and do not return.

#### **ADVICE AND SUPPORT:**

Always question unsolicited calls, texts or emails requesting your personal or financial information (name, address, bank details). To verify the company contact them directly using a known email or phone number. For advice on cybercrime, or to report suspicious emails, visit

[www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware) Anyone who has been a victim of fraud or cybercrime can report it online at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call **0300 123 2040**