

Community Impact Bucks' COVID-19 Briefing #25

Charities: protection from cybercrime and fraud

Short regular briefing from Community Impact Bucks

29th April 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

In March ([COVID-19 Briefing #4](#)) we highlighted the rise in COVID-19 related fraud with an increase of 400% in report to Action Fraud.

It's sad but true that at times like this there are people about who want to take advantage – not just of the elderly and vulnerable but there are also reports of them targeting organisations supporting the COVID-19 response. Below you will find the Government's advice for charities and further information about next week's National Cyber Security Centre webinar on how to keep your charity secure.

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE ON FRAUD

With police recording an increase in COVID-19 related scams, the Government has published guidance on fraud and cybercrime to help charities minimise the risk of becoming a victim. The alert provides guidance on:

- Procurement fraud
- Mandate or Chief Executive Officer frauds
- Scam/ phishing emails
- Unsolicited offers of goods, services or financial support (advanced fee fraud)
- Protecting your devices
- Reporting fraud and cybercrime

For full details, read the Government's advice in [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): increase risk of fraud and cybercrime against charities](#).

KEEPING YOUR CHARITY SECURE WEBINAR

Charities have had to adjust the way they work to ensure the delivery of essential services with unprecedented levels of home working. This shift brings new risks to the organisation. To help charities protect themselves, the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) is running a webinar on how to keep your charity secure during COVID-19 pandemic on **Thursday 7th May, 1pm**.

The webinar will cover the types of attacks being experienced by organisations during the build-up to and during the lockdown, and will tell you how to adapt your defences and security. Registration for the NCSC's webinar is through [Charity Digital](#).

SCAMS: WHAT TO BE AWARE OF

Buckinghamshire Councils Trading Standards office and Thames Valley Police have made us aware of a number of scams and areas of concern. Here's just a few things for us all to be aware of and share with our volunteers and clients:

- Offers of Coronavirus 'home testing kits' > there are no such tests available
- Claims that the Council needs to enter your home to do a 'deep clean' > simply not true
- Offers of refunds on taxes etc re COVID-19 are just a scam to get your bank details
- Offers of investment opportunities to take advantage of the COVID-19 financial downturn
- Fake products offering protection against COVID-19 > the best protection is to STAY AT HOME
- Mobile phone apps claiming to give updates on the virus > they block your phone and then demand a payment to release it
- Beware of people offering to do your shopping and taking money then not returning
- Don't give cash, bank details or PIN numbers to anyone you don't know
- Banks and the Police will NEVER ask for your account details over the phone
- Be sceptical > if you're unsure about a new contact by phone, email or at the door just hang up, delete, or shut the door.

If you have real concerns call the police on 101 (999 in emergencies only) or speak to Trading Standards on 01296 388788.

RESOURCES FOR CHARITIES

- COVID-19 related phishing emails try to trick people into opening attachments which could lead to personal information, logins, passwords or banking details to be stolen. Friends Against Scams has published a poster which warns against this, Please share [Friends Against Scams' poster](#).
- NCVO has published guidance for volunteers on how to recognise and report scams. Find out more at [NCVO KNOWHOW: Recognising and reporting scams](#).

#FundAlert: NATIONAL LOTTERY AWARDS FOR ALL

The National Lottery has announced that organisations, including those which currently have National Lottery Awards For All funding, can now apply for funding for a project helping communities through the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding ranges between £300 and £10k to cover six months of expenditure and the application date is ongoing. Full details on applying and eligibility can be found on [National Lottery Awards for All](#).

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