



## Public warned over phone scam in which fraudsters pose as police

We are warning residents to be vigilant over a phone scam involving fraudsters posing as police officers – with one elderly victim swindled out of £14,000.

Officers are investigating 12 reports across Devon in the space of a fortnight of people being called by scammers under the guise of ‘assisting with an investigation’.

They are asked to withdraw significant funds from cash machines and to hand the money over to a courier.

Residents have been targeted in Exeter, Exmouth, Sidbury, Plymouth, Bradninch and Heybrook Bay between 2 and 18 July. One Exmouth resident was convinced to hand over £14,000.

An investigation is ongoing to identify those involved.

Police Sergeant Tona Pooley said: “Victims are never to blame. These fraudsters can be very persuading and demanding, which unfortunately in this case, has led to some people being scammed out of thousands of pounds.

“If you have been a victim of this scam or to one similar, please report it to the police or to Action Fraud. Your information is vital in helping us identify the people who are behind this.

“Reporting fraud is important. If you’ve been a victim of a scam or an attempted scam, however minor, there may be hundreds or thousands of others in a similar position.

“I’d also like to encourage people to familiarise themselves with our fraud prevention advice – these useful tips are key in helping to keep you and your money safe.”

You can report fraud to the police by calling 101 or by completing an online report:

[Report fraud, bribery or corruption | Devon & Cornwall Police](#)

Individuals who have been targeted by a scam or fallen victim can also contact Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or at [Action Fraud](#)

### How to protect yourself:

Any police, bank, fraud department or similar **will never ask you to:**

- Transfer money or ask you to purchase items
- Become involved in an investigation or assist them by transferring or using your own money
- Withdraw your money and give it to a courier
- Give out yours or someone’s card pin number or full card details

If you receive a call that is suspicious, we advise you to:

- Hang up and wait for 5-10 minutes, or phone a friend or relative to clear the line
- If you need to check a police officer calling is a genuine officer, contact your local police force by dialling 101
- Talk to your friends and family about any cold callers and ask for their help and advice
- If you have already given your bank details over the phone or handed your card details to a courier, call your bank straight away. Phone 159 to reach your bank's fraud department directly

Further advice around fraud can be found on the Devon & Cornwall Police website:

[Advice about fraud | Devon & Cornwall Police](#)