

Keep Your Money Safe



Surrey Police and Sussex Police Fraud Newsletter

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RECRUITMENT SCAMS

This month we are urging job seekers to stay vigilant, especially those entering the workforce for the first time. Recruitment scams are a type of fraud where criminals pose as legitimate employers or recruiters to trick job seekers out of their money or personal information.

With the job market increasingly shifting online, fraudsters are exploiting popular platforms like TikTok, Reed.co.uk, and LinkedIn to deceive victims under the guise of attractive job offers.

Criminals create fake job adverts or impersonate genuine companies and recruitment agencies. The aim is to lure victims with high-paying roles or easy online work — often using professional-looking branding, stolen logos, and well-crafted emails or messages. Fraudsters prey on ambition and financial need. If something doesn't feel right, stop and verify. One quick check could prevent a significant loss.

Warning signs of a recruitment scam:



You're offered a job without an interview.

The recruiter uses a free or suspicious email address (e.g. Gmail, Yahoo).



You're asked to pay upfront for training, equipment, or checks.

The job promises unrealistically high pay for minimal effort.



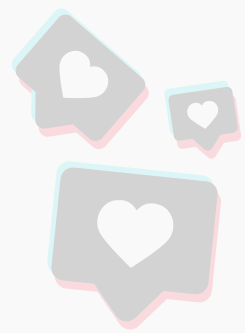
Poor grammar or generic language in job descriptions.

You're rushed into making decisions or sharing personal details.

“Each month we see many incidents of fraudsters targeting our residents in an attempt to defraud them. We're working hard to prevent this and support vulnerable victims of fraud or scams. By following our tips and encouraging family, friends and colleagues to do so too, you can reduce the risk of becoming a victim.”

Detective Chief Inspector
Antony Leadbeatter
Surrey Police &
Sussex Police
Economic Crime Unit

Common recruitment scams we are seeing locally



TikTok Content Writer Scam:

Victims are approached via TikTok or other social media platforms and offered jobs writing content, liking videos or posts and promoting brands. The "employer" may request a fee for training, a security deposit, or personal bank details under the pretext of payroll setup. The job and employer turn out to be fake. Cases such as these have been reported across both forces with one Surrey victim losing £12,000 to the fraud.

Reed/LinkedIn Impersonation:



Scammers create fake recruiter profiles using names and logos of real recruitment companies. Victims receive job offers via text messages or emails directing them to realistic (but fraudulent) application pages, where they're asked to pay for background checks, certifications, or equipment. In a recent Sussex case, a working-age male received a text message from a person claiming to be from Reed.co.uk offering a job opportunity. He was told to go to a website to review items, however an upfront fee was requested which he didn't receive back. In total he paid out £2,600 to this scam.

How to protect yourself

Do your research – Check the company's official website and contact them through official channels to verify the job offer.

Use trusted job sites – Stick to well-known platforms and avoid informal contacts through social media unless verified.

Never pay to get a job – Legitimate employers will never ask for money upfront.

Check contact details – Look out for inconsistencies in phone numbers, email domains, and web addresses.

Be cautious with personal info – Don't share your National Insurance number, passport details, or bank information until you're sure the offer is genuine.



A variety of fraud prevention literature is available, including the latest edition of [The Little Book of Big Scams – 5th Edition](#), accessible in digital, braille, and hard copy formats. To request a copy in your preferred format, please contact us at operation.signature@sussex.police.uk

INVESTMENT FRAUD AWARENESS WEEK

CAMPAIGN ROUND-UP

To coincide with UK National Savings Week (22 – 28 September), Sussex Police and Surrey Police launched a dedicated Investment Fraud Awareness campaign, working with key partners to help protect communities and educate the public on the risks and realities of investment fraud.

Community Events

In partnership with Barclays and supported by local agencies, the campaign featured in-person awareness events in Crawley and Woking:

- Monday, 22 September – Barclays Crawley
- Sussex Police, along with PCSOs, Volunteer Fraud Prevention Panel (VFPP) members, Victim Support, and Neighbourhood Watch, engaged with members of the public to offer practical advice on investment fraud and how to report it.
- A representative, from the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) office, attended on behalf of Katy Bourne, with coverage included in Katy's Friday Force Focus.
- Friday, 26 September – Barclays Woking
- Surrey Police were joined by Woking Community Safety, Fraud Caseworkers from the Victim and Witness Care Unit, PCSOs, and Neighbourhood Watch to continue the community engagement work.

During both events, PCSOs were on hand to take live reports of fraud from members of the public – including cases of investment fraud. Victims were offered further safeguarding support, including the provision of TrueCall call-blocking devices, which help prevent up to 90% of scam calls from reaching vulnerable individuals.

Online & Social Media Messaging

Supporting content was shared across social media channels throughout the week. If you missed the updates, you can catch up via the following press releases:

<https://www.sussex.police.uk/news/sussex/news/news/be-investment-fraud-aware/>.

<https://www.surrey.police.uk/news/surrey/news/2025/be-investment-fraud-aware/>

The Sussex PCC Office also supported and promoted the Crawley event via their channels.

Media Coverage

To broaden the campaign's reach, PC Bernadette Lawrie, Operation Signature Lead, provided media interviews:

- BBC Radio Surrey – <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx2re06lgd6o.amp>
- That's TV Surrey – Interview covering key fraud prevention messaging