

Operation Signature

Protecting the vulnerable from Fraud

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How it all began



- Tom Beckett from West Sussex sent over £100,000 to Scammers

Scam – the Secret Crime

- Click on this link to play a short video which highlights the type of scams and vulnerability we are trying to protect.
- https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=op+signature+scam+sussex+police
- Alternatively – copy and paste the address into your web browser, or go to YouTube, and type in ‘Scam – the secret crime’

What types of fraud are there?

They include:

- mass marketing fraud – lotteries/prize draws/psychic/clairvoyants
- courier fraud and HMRC scams
- investment (wine/gems/metals)
- inheritance
- catalogue (cheap worthless goods)
- dating and romance
- Computer / Microsoft
- Money mules
- Rogue Trading/Op Liberal type offences

Hampshire - old process of reporting fraud

- To Action Fraud
- Information collated
- Small percentage are sent back to police to deal
- AF send a pro forma letter – basic and with no advice on
- Missing many chances to spot vulnerability

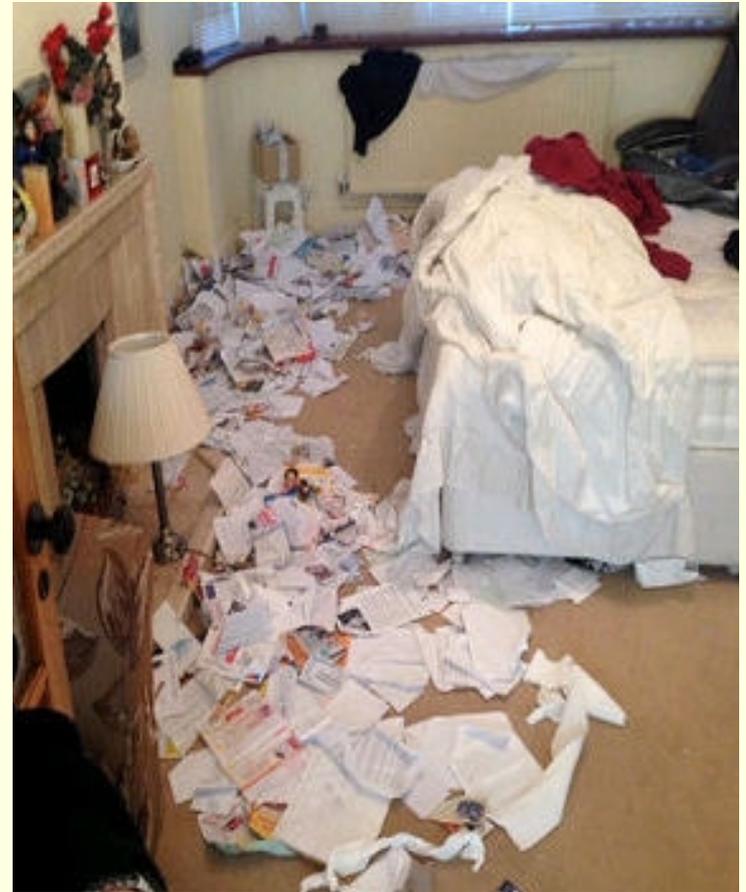


ActionFraud
Report Fraud & Internet Crime
actionfraud.police.uk

Why should we care?

- This type of fraud is very clever, and most people won't always know they are a victim.
- There is a large element of grooming that happens, it is not simply a case of someone thinking they can 'get rich quick'.
- Majority of the victims are over 70 years old, live alone, live in isolation. It is not just the mail they receive, they get telephoned, often late at night when the scammers know family will have gone home. They are urged to take out loans, even remortgage so they have the funds to carry on sending money.
- Estimated that £6bn a year goes from the UK – but that's reported – the actual figure is likely to be £9bn.
- Protecting this kind of vulnerability is key.

A victim's home



Signs to look out for

- Are there unusually high quantities of mail?
- Is the mail promising large wins, but requiring cash to be sent?
- Are they secretive about their mail?
- Are they in possession of cheap looking goods e.g jewellery, vitamins, health goods?
- Do they hide mail around the house?
- Are they receiving a lot of scam 'phone calls?
- Do they live in clutter?
- Do they deny there is a problem, contrary to the evidence?
- Do they visit the post office regularly, and/or keep a lot of stamps?
- Are they reluctant to engage or provide NOK details?

Spotting the signs

- This is a three minute video which will help spot signs of a potential victim
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=tLP9XOfFaCk

Advice to remember

- Victims will be embarrassed and ashamed, or refuse to believe they have been conned.
- Give reassurance this is common and they are not alone, and that the scammers are highly sophisticated.



Trading Standards

- Hampshire Trading Standards have a rapid response team.
- Can help with disputes over work carried out.
- They also give talks and help on scam mail.
- Police – 101 or in emergency 999.
- Trading Standards Quick Response manned 9-5 Mon – Fri:
01962 833666
- 2 officers on Duty every day to attend callouts
- Last 10 yrs.':
 - 530 callouts
 - £561,000 saved

How do we reach the 'hard to reach'?

- Working with partner agencies to inform their staff.
- Trading Standards
- Carers
- Meals on Wheels
- Health visitors
- Charities
- HFRS community safety officers
- Voluntary organisations
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Coronation Street?

Useful reading (right click and open Hyperlink)

- Action Fraud
- Crime Prevention toolkit
- Think Jessica
- Hampshire County Council
- Royal Mail scam information

Contact

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