

Safe and Sound

February 2017

Sue Hanley, Chair of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership

This month the Partnership would like to draw your attention to some of the on-line scams and frauds that are currently about.

Facebook can be a great way to keep in touch, but it's also home to a ton of scams and swindles to catch out the unwary. They pop up several times a year in various forms, but still manage to catch thousands of people out. The thing to remember is if it looks too good to be true, it probably is! Beware of posts telling you that you have won the Facebook lottery or other big prizes and asking you to like and share, or pay an administration fee you will never see again. Even worse, you may be asked to click on a link which could be loaded with malware or viruses. Just engaging in these types of posts can mark you out to scammers as being gullible and a potential victim.

Be wary of accepting friend requests from someone you are already friends with. Scammers use cloned Facebook profiles to trick users. We strongly recommend that you check your privacy settings on Facebook and limit who can see your friends list. Go to www.nwcsp.org and click on Help and Advice for more information about keeping safe on line and a handy quick link to privacy settings on Facebook.

Increasingly social media is being used to get people to donate to animal charities which don't exist. Criminal groups based overseas are using social media to target UK donors and rather than tackling animal welfare the money is used to support their own lifestyle. Genuine charities are registered with the charities commission, you can check on 0845 300 0218 or visit www.charity-commission.gov.uk

Fraudsters are sending out a high number of phishing emails purporting to be from Migrant Helpline. Although Migrant Helpline is a genuine charity, it is being used to trick members of the public and is not related to the real charity. It will thank you for a donation you haven't made and ask you to click on a link that can download malware which could steal personal and banking information.

To keep up with scams, report fraud and cyber crime, please visit Action Fraud: <http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/> For more information about North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership visit www.nwcsp.org Follow us on Twitter! @saferredditch.