

Kent Fraud Alert System



Number 9 of the 12 Frauds of Christmas – Pet Fraud (featuring Bubbles Cat)

This is the 9th of the 12 Frauds of Christmas and unfortunately one that we still receive reports of on a regular basis, pet fraud. Often people think they are ordering a lovely kitten or puppy only to be disappointed when arriving to collect their new pet, as they discover it was a scam and the address supplied by the fraudsters are just innocent people whose address has been used and are nothing anything to do with the scam.

So “Bubbles Cat” says, “Paw’s for thought this Christmas before buying a pet online and see the below and see what my dad’s mates say about this.”

- Do your research: if you’re making a purchase from a website or person you don’t know and trust, carry out some research first. Look up reviews of the website or person you’re buying from. If you’re purchasing an item from an online marketplace, you can view the seller’s feedback history before going ahead with the purchase.
- Trust your instincts: if you’re unable to view the animal in person, ask for a video call. If you’re buying a young animal, make sure you’re able to see the mother and rest of the litter. Any responsible seller will understand why you want to view the animal in person. If the seller declines, challenge them on why. If you have any suspicions, do not pay any money until you’re certain it’s genuine.
- Choose your payment method wisely: avoid paying by bank transfer. Credit card or payment services such as PayPal give you a better chance of recovering your money if you become a victim of fraud.

If you think that you may have been a victim of this or any other type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by ringing 159 and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

Preventing fraud

Together,
let's stop
scammers.



Remember, ABC:



never Assume



never Believe



always Confirm

Get the latest
scam advice:



@KentPoliceECU



Kent Police

Contacting Kent Police

Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report

Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact

In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**

If deaf or speech impaired, text ‘**police**’ and your message to **60066**

www.kent.police.uk



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TO STOP FRAUD™



Number 10 of the 12 Frauds of Christmas – Phishing

This is the 10th of the 12 Frauds of Christmas and it is that old favourite, phishing.

What is phishing?

Phishing emails, text messages or phone calls (often called 'smishing' and 'vishing') contain an urgent call to action, which usually encourages the recipient to visit a website that is designed to steal your personal and financial information. This information can then be used by criminals to commit offences such as identity theft or fraud.

Protect yourself

Fake emails and text messages can be difficult to spot and criminals will make their communication look legitimate. Take your time and not act too quickly. Criminals will often use threatening language in their scams, giving you a limited time to respond and claiming there will be negative consequences (like a fine, or your account being blocked) if you don't. **If the message contains a hyperlink, or attachment, don't click it.**

Often these scams exploit current news stories, big events or specific times of year (like tax reporting) to appear more believable or the message may be offering something desirable that is in short supply. This is in the hope you will respond quickly so as not to miss out on a good deal or opportunity.

Criminals also use a tactic called 'spoofing' to make their call, or text message, appear genuine by cloning the number or sender ID which the organisation uses. It's important to remember if you're contacted out the blue by someone purporting to be from a well-known organisation, asking for your personal or financial details, that this could be a scam. **Do not respond and hang up the phone.**

If you have any concerns, **always contact the organisation directly to check if the communication is genuine** before taking any action. Visit the official website by typing it directly into your browser, log into your account, or phone their advertised phone number. Don't use the links or contact details in the message you have been sent.

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