

Telephone Scam Alert from Police Scotland

Telephone scams are a common way for criminals to con people out of money.

Last week in Edinburgh we received a report from a local resident who stated that she had received a telephone call from a male calling himself "Jack" claiming to be "from the surgery". The call was made from a mobile phone number unknown to the resident. Early into the conversation, "Jack" informed the resident that she was entitled to an "Emergency Call Button". Having not expected any calls from her surgery - and believing this to be a scam - the resident did exactly the right thing and ended the call immediately. She then reported the incident to her local surgery who confirmed that they had not tried to contact her and that this indeed a potential scam.

To protect yourself and prevent becoming a victim of similar frauds and scams, please consider the following crime prevention advice if you receive an unsolicited telephone call:

- Don't reveal personal details. Never give out personal or financial information (such as your bank account details or your PIN) over the phone, even if the caller claims to be from your bank.
- Hang up. If you feel harassed or intimidated, or if the caller talks over you without giving you a chance to speak, end the call. It may feel rude to hang up on someone, but you have the right not to be pressurised into anything.
- Ring the organisation. If you're unsure whether the caller is genuine, you can always ring the organisation, company or bank they claim to be from. Make sure you find the number yourself and don't use the one provided by the caller.
- Don't be rushed. Scammers will try to rush you into providing your personal details. They may say they have a "time-limited offer" or claim your bank account is at risk if you don't give them the information they need right away.

There are also ways in which you can avoid scam or 'cold calls'. You can block or prevent some cold calls by considering the following:

- Register with the Telephone Preference Service – it's free and it allows you to opt out of any unsolicited live telesales calls. This should reduce the number of cold calls you receive but may not block scammers.
- Talk to your phone provider to see what other privacy services and call-blocking services are available, although you may need to pay for some of these services.
- If you have a smartphone, you can use the settings on the phone to block unwanted numbers. If you're not sure how to do this, you could visit your local mobile phone shop for assistance.
- There are products to block some calls. Some local councils provide call blockers through their trading standards teams.

For more advice and information on how to protect yourself from being a victim of frauds or scams, please visit our dedicated page on the Police Scotland website or you can visit the Trading Standards Scotland website here.

All reports of fraud and any other financial crime should be reported to Police via 101 without delay. In an emergency always dial 999.

Thank you.