

Warning after victim falls for lottery scam

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A householder handed over money to scammers claiming to be from the Australian and Nigerian lotteries.

The victim believed the letters were genuine despite being warned by her spouse not to pay.

The sum of money lost has not been disclosed but community warden Alison Beaumont told of this case as a wider warning against con-men.

Ms Beaumont, speaking at the Tower Hamlets Forum annual meeting last Wednesday, said: "A lot of my time has been taken in dealing with scam victims."

"They send money to scammers however much you advise them not to."

She said that those targeted were mainly aged 75 or over but there were also other scams such as student loan offers.



Community warden Alison Beaumont - "there is a scam for everyone"

She told the meeting at Curzon Hall, Curzon Road: "There is a scam for everyone. They are by criminal gangs. That is what they do for a living and they are good at it."

"It can cost people thousands of pounds."

Ms Beaumont is the Kent County Council community

warden for Dover's Tower Hamlets and St Radigunds wards.

But her work on scam cases, which also involves the council's trading standards department, can take her anywhere in Dover district.

KCC trading standards says that scams can come in the form of letters, phone calls, emails, the internet or advertisements.

The department says that you are 20 times more likely to be robbed at your computer screen than in the street.

Common types of mail scams are bogus letters concerning prize draws, inheritance, lotteries, investments and debt.

Trading standards say that people in Kent are receiving a wide range of fake prize draw letters saying they have won cash or an item such as a laptop computer.

They are told to claim their prize by buying an item or paying a release fee.

These letters are often followed by telephone calls to push the victim into claiming.

Trading standards say that in one day 22,000 people replied with cash to one scam mailshot, giving the crooks a total £500,000.

Householders are advised never to respond to such letters and never to send cash or disclose personal details.

If you have received a scam email do not click any links, open attachments or send back a reply. Fake emails can be spotted in various ways.

For example, the sender's address does not tally with the trusted organisation's website address and does not use your proper name when contacting you, for example, "dear customer". The message could urge to you act at once or your account may be closed or ask for information such as your password or bank details.

The email can even contain spelling or grammatical errors.

For details about protecting yourself from these and other swindles visit the website kent.gov.uk/business/trading-standards/consumer-protection/scams

Villagers get fast broadband

Fast broadband has arrived in villages after a campaign led by MP Charlie Elphicke.

Rural communities had internet speeds of less than two megabytes per second - 10 times slower than parts of Dover town.

Last year the Dover MP got a commitment from BT Openreach to install a street cabinet with new fibres in Canterbury Road, Lydden, on the southern edge of Chunnel Plant Hire's depot.

Places such as Lydden and Temple Ewell had been affected. KCC confirmed the cabinet is in place and residents can now ask to be connected to it.

Mr Elphicke said: "The internet plays a vital role in people's lives. Yet the service in some of our rural areas was shameful."

"Children needed it for school, parents needed it for work, and businesses needed it to function."

"The speed of Openreach and KCC's approach to this was



MP Charlie Elphicke with, from left, Cllr Mark Rose and residents Roy Beer and Chris Howarth

more dial-up than superfast - so I'm delighted residents can now get connected to proper broadband."

Mr Elphicke said he welcomed the government's commitment to delivering a legal right to broadband so the whole constituency of Dover, with Deal, should have access to high speed broadband by 2020.

He said: "I keep telling ministers how frustrating it is for my constituents, so I am glad

they have acted."

The Digital Economy Act 2017 introduced the idea of a broadband universal service obligation (USO). It will provide a legal right to get a broadband connection of at least 10 Mbps download speed. This is up to a reasonable cost threshold, currently proposed at £3,400.

The USO is expected to be delivered by BT, funded by a cost-sharing industry fund and in place by 2020.

Man denies harbour killing

A 28-year-old man will go on trial later this year after a grandfather was killed in Folkestone harbour.

Gerald Philpott pleaded not guilty to the manslaughter of Steve Holton, who was found near the harbour wall.

His three-day trial at Canterbury Crown Court has been scheduled for July 2 in front of Judge Heather Norton.

Philpott, of Dallas Brett Crescent, Folkestone, was remanded on bail until his trial.

Mr Holton, 54, was found dead at the harbour after paramedics were called in the early hours of August 19, last year.

Hearing aid support clinic

A free hearing aid clinic will be held at the Dover Gateway district council offices at Castle Street.

It takes place from 10.30am to 11.30am on Tuesday, February 13.

It is run by Hi Kent, the charity for the deaf and hard of hearing. Hearing aids can be cleaned and retuned and new batteries will be given.

Weekly clinics are also held at Age Concern's Riverside Centre in Maison Dieu Gardens, Dover. These are from 10am to noon on Wednesdays. No appointment is needed.

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Funeral of former town clerk

The funeral has taken place of former Dover town clerk Ian Gill.

The service was at St Andrew's Church, Broadstairs, last Monday, followed by burial at Margate Cemetery.

Mourners included The Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports Lord Boyce, Sandwich mayor Paul Graeme and Peter Sherred, Surrogate Judge of the Cinque Ports.

Mr Gill died on December 15, aged 79. He had been ill with

dementia for a decade and was in a nursing home in Beltinge.

Mr Gill took over as Dover town clerk in 1968 and became the first chief executive of Thanet District Council after it formed following local government reorganisation in 1974.

He was also Registrar of the Cinque Ports from 1979 and was responsible for installing the Queen Mother as Lord Warden in 1979

After she died in 2002, he oversaw the installing of her

successor, Lord Boyce. It was his last major duty before he retired in 2005.

Mr Gill was made a member of the Royal Victorian Order by the Queen, having been included in the Honours List marking the Queen Mother's 100th birthday in 2000 and becoming a CVO (Commander of the Royal Victorian Order).

Mr Gill, a solicitor by profession, was a widower with two daughters, Tracy Jackson and Sue Gill.

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