

# Press Release

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## **2 in 3 people in the South East targeted by scammers so far in 2021**

**65% of** people in the South East have been targeted by a scammer since January, new research by Citizens Advice **Brighton and Hove** has found.

Fraudsters tried to trick locals in a range of ways, but the biggest scam faced by Brighton and Hove locals is delivery text or email scams. **56%** of people in the area said they'd been contacted about a scam of this kind.

Many people in Brighton and Hove say they're worried that they or a loved one could fall victim to a scam, with **61%** saying they're concerned this might happen.

To encourage people to report scams, share their experiences and look out for others, Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove have launched their annual Scams Awareness campaign.

### **Jo Carden, Chief Officer of Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove said:**

"A shocking number of people in Brighton and Hove have been targeted by a scammer so far this year.

"As life begins to unlock, it's so important we all do our bit and report anything that looks like a con when we see it. By learning how scammers operate, and helping each other understand what to look out for, we can all work together to stop fraudsters in their tracks."

To help stop more people being fleeced by these types of scams, Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove are sharing the following tips on how to spot them.

It might be a scam if:

#### **Chief Executive Officer – Jo Carden**

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- it seems too good to be true – for example, a holiday that’s much cheaper than you’d expect
- you suspect you’re not dealing with a real company – for example, if there’s no postal address
- you’ve been pressured to transfer money quickly or in an unusual way – like by iTunes vouchers or a transfer service
- you’ve been asked to give away personal information like passwords or PINs
- you haven't had written confirmation of what's been agreed

If you've been scammed, Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove advise:

- talk to your bank or card company immediately if you've handed over any financial and sensitive information or made a payment
- report offline scams, like telephone, post and doorstep, to Citizens Advice [online](#) or by calling 0808 223 1133. Report online scams to the dedicated Scams Action service either [online](#) or on 0808 250 5050
- report the scam to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040

### **Scams Glossary:**

**Delivery text/email scams** - These can be text messages or phishing emails pretending to be from a delivery courier like DPD or Royal Mail. These messages claim that you have missed a delivery and ask you to reschedule for a fee, thereby obtaining your bank details. Whilst it can start with a small fee, it can end with criminals emptying a person's entire bank account. The Guardian recently reported on this “new fraud wave sweeping the UK”

**-ends-**

### **For more information contact:**

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**We give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are, and whatever their problem.**

### **Notes to editors:**

1. Opinium surveyed a representative sample of 2,086 adults living in the UK. The sample was weighted to be nationally representative of the UK. Fieldwork took place between 21 and 25 May 2021. Respondents were asked:
  - a. **Question 1:** Since the beginning of the year (1 January 2021), have you been contacted by anyone that you think was trying to scam you? Please select all that apply. **Answers:** Yes - but I ignored it/didn't fall victim; Yes - I fell for it; No - to the best of my knowledge I have not been contacted by any scammers; Don't know/can't remember

- b. **Question 2:** What kind of scam were you targeted by? Please specify all that apply. **Answers:** Deliveries and parcels; Government or civil expenses; Banking; Other consumer issues; Investment; Health or medical; Pension; Holidays; Employment; Other
  - c. **Question 3:** How worried, if at all, are you about you, or someone close to you (such as your friends, family or neighbours) falling victim to scams? **Answers:** Yes - extremely worried; Yes - very worried; Yes - somewhat worried; No - not at all worried; Don't know
2. Scams Awareness is an annual campaign which aims to create a network of confident, alert consumers who know what to do when they see a scam. This year's campaign will take place over two weeks, from the 14th - 27th June. The campaign includes a range of organisations across the Consumer Protection Partnership, including Trading Standards, the Department for Business Energy and Infrastructure, and Citizens Advice Scotland.