

# Kent Fraud Alert System



TO STOP FRAUD™

## Investment Scams

We are receiving reports daily, of people being scammed on investment frauds.

Many people at present are looking at making the most of their savings and are on the lookout for good investments with high returns. However, criminals are aware of this and victims of investment fraud report being lured in by glossy websites, social media posts and online ads. Criminals will call by telephone, email, with too good to be true offers to entice people to invest. They will also befriend people via social media with details of great investments in which they have invested.

Investment scams can be hard to spot. Before ever investing, **STOP**. Always seek independent financial advice before investing, for example speak to your Bank.

You can also check the FCA Warning List - [ScamSmart - Avoid investment and pension scams](#) | [FCA](#)

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 calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call 0300 123 2040.

## Preventing fraud

Together,  
let's stop  
scammers.



### Remember, ABC:



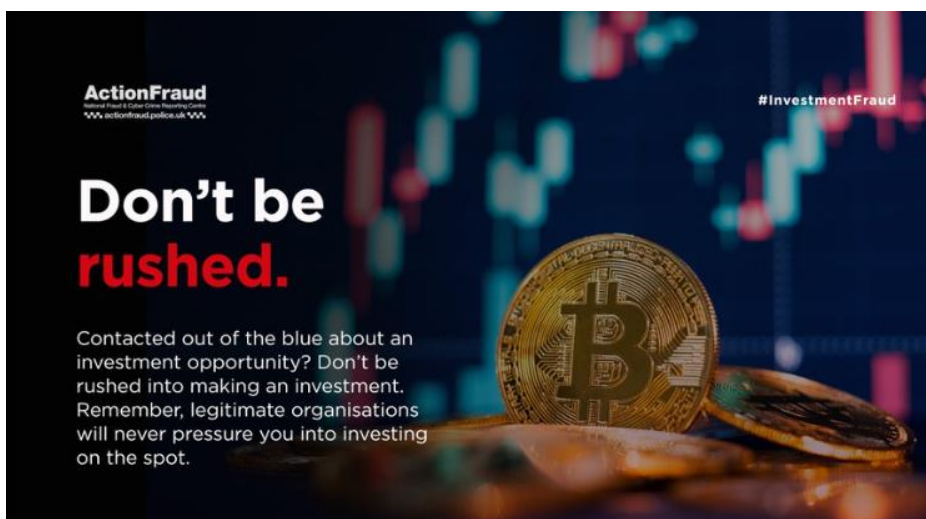
never Assume



never Believe



always Confirm



For further information about Fraud, visit our website at [Advice about fraud](#) | [Kent Police](#)

You will also find valuable information from the Home Office at [Stop! Think Fraud](#) - [How to stay safe from scams](#)



**Kent  
Police**

Report a non-urgent crime online [www.kent.police.uk/report](http://www.kent.police.uk/report)

Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 [www.kent.police.uk/contact](http://www.kent.police.uk/contact)

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

If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use our textphone service **18000**. Or text us on 999 if you've pre-registered with the emergency SMS service.

[www.kent.police.uk](http://www.kent.police.uk)



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## Cost of living scams

With changes to disability payments being discussed in the news, scammers will see an opportunity to exploit this situation. Scammers often impersonate government agencies, such as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), to trick individuals into revealing personal information like bank details or National Insurance numbers.

### Please remember –

- DWP will never ask for personal details by SMS or email.
- Be sceptical: Be wary of unsolicited texts, emails, or social media messages that ask you to click on links.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- If you receive a phone call, email or text asking for financial information or to send money and are uncertain, then STOP and apply the ABC of scam awareness and never **Assume** or **Believe** that a call/message is genuine but **Confirm** by calling via trusted number.

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# Kent Fraud Alert System



## Romance Scams – Are you a victim or think someone you know maybe?

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Unfortunately, this is a scam that we see reported daily, with victims losing many thousands of pounds.

Romance scams involve people being scammed into sending money to criminals who go to great lengths to gain their trust and convince them that they are in a genuine relationship.

They use language to manipulate, persuade and exploit so that requests for money do not raise alarm bells. These requests might be highly emotive, such as criminals claiming they need money for emergency medical care or to pay for transport costs to visit the victim if they are overseas. Criminals will often build a relationship with their victims over time.

Other popular versions of this scam are criminals impersonating famous celebrities or friendship scams, where they will ask you for financial help as a friend or may state that they are aware of an incredible investment opportunity to share. However, all of these are scams.

Many victims are not even aware they are victims and are often in denial, so it is important that family and friends are aware of the signs.

- They may be very secretive about their relationship or provide excuses for why their online partner has not video called or met them in person. They might become hostile or angry and withdraw from conversation when you ask any questions about their partner.
- They may express strong emotions and commitment to someone they have only just met.
- They have sent, or are planning to send, money to someone they have not met face-to-face. They may take out loans or withdraw from their pension to send money.

If you think you have been or a family member or friend is the victim of a romance scam, then report it to Action Fraud at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call 0300 123 2040.



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# Kent Fraud Alert System



## Blue Badge Scam

I have been made aware that Kent residents have recently been contacted by telephone to help “speed up” their Blue Badge application by paying between £100 to £500 pounds, which will also get them an extended blue badge. However, this is all a SCAM.

Additionally, be on the lookout for other online Blue Badge Renewal Scams using fake websites that copy official government or council sites, charging people extra fees for "processing" your Blue Badge application.

Some scams steal personal details, leading to identity theft or financial fraud.

Victims often do not realise they have been scammed until they fail to receive their renewed Blue Badge.

For further information on the Blue Badges, visit the official Government website at - [Apply for or renew a Blue Badge - GOV.UK](#)

If you think you have been or a family member or friend is the victim of a romance scam, then report it to Action Fraud at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call 0300 123 2040.

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## Rogue Traders

This type of criminality is currently being reported across the county, with reports this week in Deal, Gravesend, Gillingham, Whitstable, Tunbridge Wells and Herne Bay.

Criminals will knock on doors stating that there may be damage to your property, in particular roofs, that needs immediate work.

However, STOP and be wary of cold callers offering to undertake work on your property as this work may not be necessary or may not be completed to a satisfactory standard or not completed at all.

You may also be overcharged and out of pocket.

If seeking a tradesperson to undertake some work on your property, please remember to always:

- Obtain at least three written quotes.
- Ask family and friends for recommendations.
- Agree payment arrangements and start and finish dates in writing beforehand.
- Never pay in full until you are completely satisfied with the work.
- Never accept a quote on the doorstep from an unsolicited caller.

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## Dealing with rogue traders

- 1 Research different companies and compare quotes so you know how much you would be expected to pay for a job. Rogue traders will often charge extortionate prices for simple jobs.
- 2 Be wary of leaflets that are posted through your door offering services. Rogue traders will often have incorrect business addresses, and be only contactable by mobile numbers. Ask for identification and take vehicle registrations down and do not be afraid to ask for references.
- 3 Make sure a quote is obtained in writing for the exact work to be completed. Do not give traders an opportunity to subtly damage your property to charge extra (take pictures before and after a quotation if physical inspection is required). Rogue traders like to bill you for items you have not requested.
- 4 Avoid paying money up front and insist in a bank transfer from your bank to theirs using a sort code and account number; do not give them your card details. Avoid paying in cash.
- 5 If you feel something is wrong, do not continue with the work. Trust your instincts. Ask a friend or relative for advice and take your time to make a decision. Rogue traders will try and pressure you into a sale.



### Reporting to Trading Standards

If you think a business has broken the law or acted unfairly, you can report them to Trading Standards.

Trading Standards use the information you give them to investigate unfair trading and illegal business activity, like rogue traders and scams.

Trading Standards can take businesses to court or stop them operating, but they won't help you fix your problem – for example, they can't help you get a refund.

[kent.gov.uk/business/trading-standards](http://kent.gov.uk/business/trading-standards)






### Safe Local Traders

[www.kent.gov.uk/tschecked](http://www.kent.gov.uk/tschecked)

Trading Standards Checked is Kent County Council's (KCC) safe traders scheme for businesses in the home improvement sector. Together with Kent Police and our members, we aim to prevent financial abuse, stop doorstep criminals and protect residents, especially the vulnerable, from criminal and rogue traders.

Trading Standards Checked carries out thorough checks on traders and is the only scheme vetted by Kent Trading Standards – [tschecked.kent.gov.uk](http://tschecked.kent.gov.uk)



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