

Kent Fraud Alert System



TO STOP FRAUD™

Warning over mobile phone delivery frauds

Residents have been warned to be on guard against an increasingly common method of fraud after two men were arrested and sentenced. Fraudsters are using stolen details to order mobile phones in the names of people from Kent and arrange for the phones to be delivered by legitimate courier companies. The homeowners tend to be puzzled when the devices are delivered, but a fraudster then arrives minutes later pretending to be from the courier company and saying there has been a mistake. They ask the resident to return the item, which they can then sell or use in further offences.

An investigation by detectives from Kent Police linked two men to seven such offences which were carried out in the Maidstone, Sittingbourne, Orpington and Bexleyheath area in May and June 2021. When police saw that a phone used in those offences had arranged another phone purchase in Gillingham, they arrived at the delivery address at the same time as the fraudster, Babatunde Olaonipekun, and arrested him.

Olaonipekun, 42, of Lodge Hill Lane, Rochester, and his accomplice Afis Quadri, 44, of Limeburners Drive, Rochester, were both given suspended sentences at Maidstone Crown Court on 11 September 2024 after admitting conspiracy to defraud.

Detective Chief Inspector Helen Smithers said:

“We are pleased to have brought these two men to justice, but my team believe offences of this kind are very common and under-reported. Often people do not realise they are victims until it is too late, and sometimes deliveries will be rerouted to a neighbour to reduce suspicion when the second apparent courier asks for the item to be returned. We believe many of the phones, particularly iPhones, which are obtained using these frauds are quickly sent for sale abroad, making the crime difficult to detect. I urge anyone who receives a package which they have not ordered, or has suspicious people calling at their front doors, to check with their banks or the phone company involved and report any offences to the police. Fraudsters often attempt to or succeed in setting up false bank accounts in the names of their victims as part of the fraud, so I urge people to keep an eye on their accounts and report anything suspicious.”

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 or call 0300 123 2040.

For further information about Fraud, visit our website at www.kent.police.uk | [Advice about fraud | Kent Police](http://www.kent.police.uk)

Preventing fraud

Together,
let's stop
scammers.



Remember, ABC:



never Assume



never Believe



always Confirm



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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

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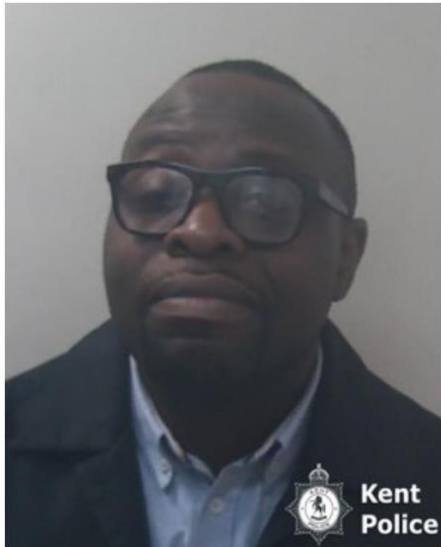
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Heartless Criminal convicted of Romance Fraud

A man behind a romance fraud in which a victim was scammed out of more than £120,000 has been jailed following an investigation by Kent Police. In May 2023, a victim came forward to tell police she had transferred a lot of money to a man she had met online, but now believed she had been defrauded. The woman, who was living in the Medway area, had joined a website to meet new people and had been contacted by a man who claimed to be an army officer involved in 'covert operations' in Mali.



Maxwell Rusey.

Following further messages between the two, the man said he wanted to live with the victim when he returned to the UK. He told her he had a consignment of gold which he needed to import back to the UK and asked if she could help his friend pay the relevant duties and taxes. The woman agreed and in 16 separate transactions in 2022 and 2023, paid £128,500 into accounts the man claimed belonged to his colleague. Detectives found that the accounts had actually been set up by a Maxwell Rusey, formerly of Nuneaton, Warwickshire.

He was arrested in March 2024 and later charged with fraud and money laundering offences after a fake passport used to set up one of the accounts was found in his possession. The 53-year-old admitted money laundering and possession of articles for use in fraud before Woolwich Crown Court and was jailed for five years on Monday 23 September.

Detective Constable Mark Newman, Kent Police's investigating officer, said:

“Romance fraud is a particularly cruel offence which causes serious emotional harm for victims, as well as the financial impact it entails. Many victims struggle to report offences due to the level of deception used by fraudsters and I would like to praise the victim in this case for coming forward and supporting this prosecution. I am pleased that the court has recognised the seriousness of the offence in the sentence handed down and I hope it sends a message to other offenders that jail awaits them.”

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Car Sale Scams

We have recently been advised of several reports of people being scammed when selling their vehicles online, in particular in West Kent.

The scam involves 2 or 3 people attending the sellers address and whilst one distracts the seller, another will put oil in the coolant or water in the oil of the vehicle for sale.

They will then show this to the seller and state that the engine, if not blown, has blown and offer a much lower amount for the vehicle.

Best advice –

- Stay with the buyers – do not leave them alone with the car or allow yourself to be distracted at the rear of the vehicle whilst someone is looking at the engine.
- Be aware of suspicious behaviour - scammers will often request an enormous discount due to the 'fault' with the vehicle.
- Be confident to refuse the sale - if you are doubtful about how genuine the buyer is or believe that something suspicious is going on, do not hand over the keys.

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 or call 0300 123 2040.

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Amazon Scams

Beware of criminals calling pretending to be from Amazon, saying that your account has been hacked.

They will then proceed to ask to access your device where they will encourage you to open an online account to secure a refund.

These criminals are experts at persuasion and speaking to someone on the phone can make it seem more genuine.

Stop and apply the principle of ABC and never Assume or Believe a call is genuine and always Confirm by hanging up and contacting them directly or check your account through a trusted source. If it is real, they will be happy to help.

Additionally, remember that Amazon do not make unsolicited calls to customers, and they will never ask for personal information over the phone.

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Fake AA Emails

A fake email impersonating the AA has been reported over 8,000 times to Action Fraud.

The fake emails state that you have won a free car emergency kit and all you need to do is click on the link and supply your details. However, the link will take you to a realistic looking website under the control of the criminals, where they will steal your personal and financial data.

If you get an email like this or any other suspicious looking emails, you can report these by forwarding to report@phishing.gov.uk

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