

Colin's Blog

Saturday 11th November 2017

Caught on camera last Sunday
This beautiful Red Admiral butterfly.
Who decided to check out the weather
by landing on my barometer?

One of nature's magnificent little
creatures, the butterfly, was indeed a
welcome sight and even the sun was
shining bright in admiration!

For my wife and I, it was a wonderful
finale to what had been a spectacular
weekend, during which we watched an
excellent firework display on Friday, in
aid of the Essex and Herts Air
Ambulance on North Weald aerodrome,
followed by a wonderful Firework party

with several of our brilliant neighbours, on Saturday!

With all of the bad things that happen in our world, it was great to enjoy the weekend
amongst so many good friends.



This weekend, North Weald
aerodrome, will be one of many
hundreds of sites across the country,
where people will remember the
ultimate sacrifice that thousands of

men and women made in both world wars and other
conflicts before. And since, so that we, and hopefully
future generations can remain free from oppression, dictatorship or worse.



**At the going down
of the sun and in
the morning we will
remember them.**

Anti-bullying week 2017

Get involved and help #stopbullying

Anti-bullying Week 2017 is being held between the 13th and 17th November and is organised by **Anti-Bullying Alliance**. Follow the events on social media using **#antibullyingweek** and **#abw17**. The theme will promote difference and equality in schools with the tag-line 'All Different, All Equal'.



As you know the effects of bullying can have a massive impact on all individuals, whether that is at school, work, college or socially. Anti-bullying week is a great way to get involved, take a stand against bullying and raise awareness in your school, college or organisation.

Bullying doesn't just affect children but adults too

We would like to get your school or workplace involved and help raise money for Bullying UK so that we can continue supporting people affected by bullying. Our target this year is **£100,000** and we would welcome your support in helping us to achieve this. No matter how big or small, your donation and support makes a huge difference for those affected by bullying.

<http://www.bullying.co.uk/> and <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Bullying in any shape or form is totally unacceptable. I can remember my schooldays, and the bullying that I suffered as a young teenager when I moved from London to a secondary school in Essex. I suffered for around two years at the hands of school bullies, then, in my first few years at work I came across several adult bullies in the workplace. People of any age who bully others, are, in my view amongst the lowest life forms, and I have spent many years helping others to prevent from becoming victims of bullying. In the past, I even suffered from a minority of what I term as; 'misguided senior officers,' in the Police Force, who thought that rank gave them a license to bully others. Luckily these days, much of this has been stamped out, and in today's culture, it is not so easy for them to get away with it..

Cyber Bullying is becoming an ever-increasing problem. Children and young



people often use their smartphones, computers and tablets, to bully their peers. It would be naive of me to say that they don't know what harm that they can cause, as most of them are old enough to know better. Naivety is something that often shows up in parents, who think that their little dears wouldn't do such things. Many parents happily allow their children to have unsupervised access to the internet, and to smartphone which they, the

parents, pay for. Not only do the bullies cause countless harm, through their actions, but, in extreme cases, this has led to their victims having low esteem, depression, and as we know, in some cases, commit suicide. Social media must share a big part of the blame. Do you know what your child is doing on his or her phone, or what site they are searching on the internet? Some people might say 'it's up to them,' and not be concerned as long as they leave the adults in peace. More fool them! There will be some out there who say that it's down to the child to ensure that they do not misuse their phones, or the internet, however, a responsible parent will know that parental guidance is their responsibility.

Is your child a victim? Remember, watch for the warning signs, depressed, withdrawn, more moody than usual, try to talk to them (that in itself is often a challenge, especially with adolescents).

Whatever you do, if you suspect that there is something wrong, don't do nothing!



Scams continue to bombard us:-

What's App has one circulating at the moment which offers vouchers for ASDA. In order to receive them, you have to send the message onto twenty of your contacts, before you redeem your voucher, which of course, is never there, once you press the link.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) is warning the public about rogue websites advertising fake premium rate numbers for their cruelty line.

The premium rate 0844 numbers advertised are designed to rack up a heavy bill for the caller and are given a false impression that they're affiliated with the charity.

The RSPCA said when a member of the public dials the fake number they'll be charged a premium rate and are then diverted to their National Control Centre. This means the caller may not be immediately aware of the scam.

Fake Google listings

The correct number to report 24-hour cruelty to the RSPCA is **0300 1234 999**. The call will cost the same as any call to a UK landline number.

The charity conducted a search on Google and found 8 different scam sites with the incorrect 0844 premium rate numbers in the first 10 pages of Google.

Dave Allen, our head of education and advice, said: "The amount of sites out there advertising incorrect contact numbers for our charity is very worrying. We're urging people to watch out for websites with fake numbers and information that doesn't sound quite right. Some of the sites can be quite convincing with

unauthorised feeds from our official Twitter and Facebook page which makes them look all the more real”.

“Unfortunately, it can be difficult to get these sites shut down, but we’ve been trying to solve this issue by reporting the problem to Google so that the sites aren't ranked highly in searches. We've also lodged a complaint to the UK’s communications regulator OFCOM and now we're trying to raise awareness of this scam with the general public.”

“Not only can these numbers leave people with a hefty phone bill, but it also means members of the public may be put off contacting us when an animal is in desperate need of care.”

Fraudsters don't care who they target, last year we warned the public about **puppies and kittens** being advertised for sale via popular online auction websites.

For those who may have missed the article, here it is again: -

Alert: Fake puppies and kittens for sale online 29th April 2016

Action Fraud has received a rise in the reporting of pets, and in particular puppies and kittens, being advertised for sale via popular online auction websites.

Fraudsters are placing adverts online using stolen photos of pets claiming they are currently held abroad or somewhere less accessible within the UK.

Once a sale is agreed and payment is made, usually by money transfer or bank transfer, the pet does not materialise. The fraudsters will usually ask for further advanced payments to cover courier charges, shipping fees or vet bills.

Even if further payments are made, the pet will still not materialise as it is likely that the pet does not exist.

Stay within auction guidelines to avoid being scammed:

- Be cautious if the seller initially requests payment via one method, but later claims that due to 'issues with their account' they will need to take the payment via an alternative method such as a bank transfer.
- Consider conducting research on other information provided by the seller, for example a mobile phone number or email address used by the seller could alert you to any negative information associated with the number/email address online.
- Request details of the courier company being used and consider researching it.

- Agree a suitable time to meet face to face to agree the purchase and to collect the pet. If the seller is reluctant to meet then it could be an indication that the pet does not exist.
- A genuine seller should be keen to ensure that the pet is going to a caring and loving new home. If the seller does not express any interest in you and the pet's new home, be wary.
- If you think the purchase price is too good to be true then it probably is, especially if the pet is advertised as a pure-breed.
- Do not be afraid to request copies of the pet's inoculation history, breed paperwork and certification prior to agreeing a sale. If the seller is reluctant or unable to provide this information it could be an indication that either the pet does not exist or the pet has been illegally bred e.g. it originates from a 'puppy farm'. A 'puppy farm' is a commercial dog breeding enterprise where the sole aim is to maximise profit for the least investment. Commercial dog breeders must be registered with their local authority and undergo regular inspections to ensure that the puppies are bred responsibly and are in turn fit and healthy. Illegally farmed puppies will often be kept in inadequate conditions and are more likely to suffer from ailments and illnesses associated with irresponsible breeding.
- When thinking of buying a pet, consider buying them in person from rescue centres or from reputable breeders

Report fraud and cyber-crime and receive a police crime reference number.

There has been an increase in cold calls to the public from bogus bailiffs requesting payments for a "phantom" debt.

The fraud involves being cold-called by someone purporting to be a bailiff working on behalf of a court, attempting to recover funds for a non-existent debt.

Fraudsters are requesting payment by bank transfer and if refused they threaten to visit the people's homes or place work in order to recover the debt that is owed. From the reports we have received a range of different businesses and individuals are being targeted.

Though this type of fraud can occur throughout the UK, we have found that significant levels of reports are being made from those in the Yorkshire area.

Key facts about bailiffs

A bailiff is someone who has a legal power to collect certain debts. They may do this by asking you to pay what you owe, or by taking and selling your belongings to raise the money.

Bailiffs are only used to recover certain debts such as council tax, child support and compensation orders. Bailiffs are not used to recover debts relating to private advertisement; these would be collected by debt collectors.

Debt collectors do not have the same legal powers as bailiffs and will not have special court authorisation to act. If you're not sure whether you're dealing with a bailiff or a debt collector, **check the Citizens Advice website**.



How to protect yourself

- Make vigorous checks if you ever get a cold call associated with a bailiff.
- If you work for a business and receive a call or visit from bailiffs or debt collectors, be sure to speak with your manager or business owner first. Never pay the debts yourself on behalf of the business you work for; some fraudsters have suggested employees do this whilst talking with them, suggesting they can then be reimbursed by their employer, when in reality the debt is non-existent.

- Request details of the debt in writing to confirm its legitimacy.
- Do not feel rushed or intimidated into make a decision based on a phone call. **Take five** and listen to your instincts.

Have you been receiving these calls?

Fake modelling jobs advertised online and through social media

1st November 2017

Action Fraud have noticed that Fraudsters have been setting up fake adverts on social media (including Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp) and job browsing websites to dupe people into believing they are recruiting for prospective models.

Once a victim shows interest in the modelling jobs, fraudsters contact victims on the false promise of a career and ask them to come in for a test photo shoot.

The fraud is then carried out in two ways;

1. Fraudsters pressurise victims into sending an upfront fee to book a slot for the test shoot. Once they have received the upfront fee, the victim will never hear from the fraudsters again.

Or

2. Fraudsters will take the advance fee that the victim sends for a photo shoot and arrange a photo shoot with the victim. After the photo shoot, the fraudsters will contact the victim after a few days and convince them that their shoot was successful and offer them a job as a model. The victim will then be asked to sign a contract and pay another upfront fee, usually to secure the modelling contract.

In August 2017, **49 victims** lost an average of **£1,448** each to this type of **advance fee fraud**.

Fraudsters also targeting parents

Fraudsters are also creating fake adverts for supposed modelling opportunities for children which do not exist. Fraudsters will inform parents or guardians that a potential career in modelling awaits their child. This tactic convinces the parent or guardian to sign up their child and send an advance fee.

The suspects will also convince the victim that in order to become a model, they will need to have a portfolio. The fraudsters will recommend a number of packages and stress that if a package is not paid for in advance, the process of becoming a model cannot continue.

Over a two year period (September 2015 – August 2017), an average of 28 reports of advance fee modelling frauds were reported to us. In August 2017 alone, there were 49 reports of this fraud type were received and may continue to rise. The total loss in August 2017 alone was over £71,000.

Tips for staying safe:

- Carry out your own research prior to paying any type of advance or upfront fee.
- Be wary if you are asked to pay for a portfolio, as many legitimate agencies will cover that cost.
- Don't give your bank account details or sensitive information to anyone without carrying out your own research on the relevant agency.
- If you have been affected by this, or any other type of fraud, **report it to us**.

https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud

ActionFraud

Report Fraud & Internet Crime

0300 123 2040

COLIN'S FESTIVE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN
STARTING NEXT WEEK

I have also been asked if I can produce a newsletter or update which can be circulated by NhW co-ordinators, to people who do not have access to the internet. Obviously, even though I have formally retired, with my voluntary sector roles, I have many other demands on my time, however, I have decided to produce an A4 newsletter that can be copied and circulated by co-ordinators four times a year, the first one will be on the lead up to Christmas.

I have had a very busy week, giving talks to several organisations as well as attending the excellent Senior Citizens event organised by EFDC in Buckhurst Hill yesterday (hence the late circulation of my blog!

I'm off to meet up with Bob Higgs and his family for lunch. Many of you will remember that Bob was the detached beat officer for Fyfield and surrounding villages, when I was in the same role at Moreton.

Keep Alert, Keep Secure, Keep Safe and have a great weekend!

Colin

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You can also read my blog at: <http://www.eppingforestnhw.org.uk/>

