



Colin's Blog

Friday 8th June 2018

Well, let's start by thinking a little bit about 'Flaming June.'

Apparently, '**Flaming June**,' is a painting by Sir Frederic Leighton, produced in 1895. *Flaming June* disappeared from view in the early 1900s and was rediscovered only in the 1960s. It was auctioned shortly after, during a period of time known to be difficult for selling Victorian era paintings, where it failed to sell for its low reserve price of US\$140 (the equivalent of \$1,126 in modern prices). After the auction, it was promptly purchased by the Museo de Arte de Ponce in Ponce, Puerto Rico, where it currently resides.

As you may know, June is the sixth month of the year in the Julian and Gregorian calendar and is 30 days long. It is the month that has the most amount of daylight hours of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and shortest amount of daylight hours in the Southern hemisphere.

Many celebrations take place in the month of June, especially marriages. (My wife and I have just celebrated our 45th Wedding Anniversary). According to one etymology, June is named after the Roman goddess Juno who is the goddess of marriage and a married couple's household. It is considered good luck to get married in this month.

June and May are the only two months that doesn't start on the same day of the week as any other month. June ends on the same day of the week as March every year.

June's birth flower is the rose or the honeysuckle. The birthstones for June are the pearl, the moonstone, and the Alexandrite which all symbolize health and longevity.



So, now we all know more about this interesting month! I always like to hear about different factoids, that are relevant to the history of our world, which is one reason why my wife and I accompanied our daughter and two of our grandchildren to the Science Museum recently, where we were all fascinated by the many exhibits and wonders, that were on display.

Being an old codger, I haven't used the Underground for a while, and it was a poignant reminder of shake, rattle and roll, together with an element of sardine-ism, the poor standards of dress adopted by so many train travellers these days, and, the *Moronic behaviour* displayed by some, who rush onto the train, without giving those who wish to disembark, a clear passage to do so. Not only is that stupid, selfish and inconsiderate behaviour, it is dangerous, especially when you are travelling with young children! Well that's my rant over for this week!

HMRC has saved the public over £2.4M by stopping fraudsters

Posted 5th June 2018

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) has saved the public over £2.4m by taking down websites that trick people into calling premium rate phone numbers for services that HMRC provide for free.

Fraudsters had been creating replica versions of HMRC's website and directing the public to call premium rate numbers advertised on them. These numbers were simply call forwarding services that connect callers to HMRC, but at a significant price.

HMRC said that specific tactics and costs on each website varied, but the maximum cost of a call was £3.60 a minute, capped at £36 per call. HMRC's own 0300 numbers are mostly free or charged at the national landline rate.

HMRC successfully challenged the ownership of these fraudulent websites and had them taken down. Analysis has shown that had HMRC not taken this action then the public would have lost over £2.4 million.

Scams Awareness Month

This announcement from HMRC comes at the start of Scams Awareness Month organised by Citizens Advice which is running throughout June.

Here at Action Fraud we see a variety of HMRC scams, including fraudsters using spoofed calls, voicemails and text messages in order to dupe victims of their money.

Cartoon Licensed to Colin Freeman



HMRC scam emails are also the most reported type of phishing attempt reported to us.

Treasury Minister, Mel Stride MP the Financial Secretary to the Treasury said: "We know that HMRC is the most spoofed government brand as criminals try to take advantage of the fact that everyone has some involvement with the tax authority. In this particular case, scammers try to dupe the public into paying large sums for services that are available for free or low cost."

"This is a brazen con, charging premium rates whilst simply redirecting calls to the

real HMRC numbers that are available at low or no cost. It is a testament to the hard work of HMRC that they have prevented criminals extracting £2.4m from the public.”

“The public should go direct to gov.uk to obtain genuine HMRC contact numbers. These will not be premium rate numbers. People should be alert for sponsored adverts, websites charging for government services which would be expected to be free and those with disclaimers denying association with HMRC or government.”

Read more on the HMRC Gov.uk website: -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs>

(Please note: Action Fraud is not responsible for the content on external websites).

Every Report Matters – If you have been a victim of fraud or cyber crime, report it to Action Fraud online: https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud or by calling 0300 123 2040.

Scams Awareness Month



Scams Awareness Month 2018. The campaign aims to create a network of confident, alert consumers who ‘don’t miss a trick’ when it comes to scams.

Essex Trading Standards will be supporting the campaign throughout June by providing useful information about scams via our social media channels. Please follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pg/EssexTS> and twitter <https://twitter.com/EssexTS>

In addition, Essex Trading Standards will be holding a Scams Awareness Event in the Atrium at County Hall on Tuesday 26th June between 10am-12pm.

To become a Friend Against Scams visit <https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/>

Teaming up for Recycling



The Trading Standards Buy With Confidence team are currently working with Epping Forest District Council and the Recycle for Essex team on a project to guide consumers to reputable waste removal companies.

We are looking for honest businesses to join the ‘Buy With Confidence’ approval scheme to help with the fight against fly tipping project. Other authorities in Essex have already been keen to help roll out the project across the county, so

watch this space...

Are you are a business or know of a reputable business that would like to join Buy With Confidence.

The Buy with Confidence scheme continues to grow within Essex and nationally. Essex Trading Standards manages the East of England hub for the scheme and have recently approved minibus hire, home security and internal blind companies amongst others. So if you are a consumer looking for an approved trader why not think about using the scheme.

Allergen Consumer Awareness Event

Which ingredients can cause a problem?



Essex Trading Standards are holding a consumer Allergen Awareness Event on **Monday 18th June at Broomfield Hospital, Chelmsford**. Please come along and visit our stand in the main atrium from 9.30 am, for a chance to discuss food allergies with experienced food officers. Tell us your concerns about local businesses and report good practice too!

Officers will be there to talk about the 14 officially recognised food allergens and pass on our knowledge and experience around food labelling and making allergen requests in catering establishments

Experienced Food Officers will be on hand to answer any questions you have. We will also be running an allergen quiz so come along and test your knowledge, we have some great prizes to give away!

The event is being supported by **Allergy UK** and the **Anaphylaxis Campaign**.



Epping Forest District Neighbourhood Watch are currently updating their database of existing members, please respond to their requests, if you haven't already done so. Thank you.

Since retiring from my role as your Essex Watch Liaison Officer, I have continued my support and membership of Epping Forest District NhW, Brentwood Area NhW and of course, Harlow NhW, and I remain a Trustee and member of the Executive committee of our Essex County NhW Association. As part of my involvement, I currently maintain the membership database for the three districts, as well as writing and circulating my blog, which, I understand, many of you enjoy reading. I am also proud to be an Advisor to London Community Watch.



DATA PROTECTION NOTICE: My blog is sent to members and supporters of Epping Forest, Brentwood and Harlow NhW groups. and partnership organisations. When you join neighbourhood Watch, you agree that your contact details are shared between Neighbourhood Watch and Essex Police under existing partnership agreements, and that they are not shared with other organisations or individuals.

To unsubscribe from my blog, or from Neighbourhood Watch, please send an email to: colin@neighbourhoodmatters.org.uk quoting the area in which you reside, so that, I know from which to list remove your contact details. Thank you.

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



HELPING COMMUNITIES TO HELP THEMSELVES



Wine and cheese are ageless companions, like aspirin and aches, or June and moon, or good people and noble ventures.

M. F. K. Fisher