



# Colin's Blog

9<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2017

Once again, we look back at yet another Terrorist attack in London. Our thoughts go out to the victims, their families, friends, and colleagues at this sad time!

Yet again we are reminded of the importance of keeping alert, and looking out for each other, staying vigilant in these troubled times.

The changing face of the new wave of cowardly terrorist attacks, means that it is even more difficult for the security services to keep tabs on the many thousands of radical individuals who are currently believed to be lying dormant across the UK.

I must admit, that, whilst travelling on the Central line this week, I found myself paying even more attention to my fellow passengers, and I remained what seemed to be, extra alert during my visit to the Westfield shopping centre in Stratford.

I always have the contact numbers for the BPT (British Transport Police) on my mobile phone. You can report crime on: **0800 40 50 40** or Text



**IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS DIAL 999**



**Alert: Fraudsters claiming to be from HMRC**

- Fraudsters are contacting the elderly and vulnerable claiming to be from HM Revenue & Customs.
- Victims are being told they have arrest warrants, outstanding debts or unpaid taxes in their name.
- The fraudsters are asking victims to purchase iTunes gift cards as payment.
- There are a variety of methods being used including calls, texts and voicemails.

**Action Fraud is warning people once again of scammers contacting victims claiming to be from HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) that trick people into paying bogus debts and taxes using iTunes gift cards.**

Victims are being contacted in a variety of methods by fraudsters claiming to be from HMRC and are being told they owe an outstanding debt. In most cases they ask for payment in iTunes gift card voucher codes.

Fraudsters like iTunes gift cards to collect money from victims because they can be easily redeemed and easily sold on. The scammers don't need the physical card to redeem the value and instead get victims to read out the serial code on the back over the phone.

### **Methods fraudsters use:**

**Spoofed calls:** Fraudsters cold call victims using a spoofed number and convince them that they owe unpaid tax to HMRC.

**Voicemails:** Fraudsters leave victims automated voicemails saying that they owe HMRC unpaid taxes. When victims call back on the number provided, they are told that there is a warrant out in their name and if they don't pay, the police will arrest them

**Text messages:** They may also use text messages that ask victims to urgently call back on the number provided. When victims call back, they are told that there is a case being built against them for an outstanding debt and they must pay immediately.

One 87 year old victim recently told the BBC that he was phoned by fraudsters who claimed to be from HMRC stating there was an arrest warrant out in his name. They told him it would be cancelled if he bought £500 in iTunes gift cards at Tesco.

The man bought the cards and gave them the serial numbers. But when they asked for a further £1,300 in vouchers, he became suspicious and hung up.

### **How to protect yourself:**

- HMRC will never use texts to tell you about a tax rebate or penalty or ever ask for payment in this way.
- Telephone numbers and text messages can easily be spoofed. You should never trust the number you see on your telephones display.
- If you receive a suspicious cold call, end it immediately.

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

[http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report\\_fraud](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud)

# Action Fraud

Report Fraud & Internet Crime

## 0300 123 2040



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## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

From Nick Knowles presenter of **DIY SOS**

“We can’t help everybody, but everybody can help someone.”

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I woke up this morning, to the news that we now have, what is termed as a ‘Hung Parliament.’

As I have said many times before, I have no bias towards any political party, however, I think that this should now serve as a ‘Wake Up call,’ to all politicians across the political spectrum, to start to *‘listen more,’* to the public, start rebuilding and bolstering up, the essential public services rather than systematically put them at risk through cutbacks and underfunding. The recent events in Manchester and London focussed the minds of many voters on the need to do this. It brings to mind **‘LOOK and LEARN,’** an excellent children’s publication that I subscribed to whilst at school, Obvious, it’s title is just what all politicians need to do!

We all need to play our part in supporting the hard-pressed Emergency services including what was once, our world renowned and envied flagship **NHS.**

I’ll get off my soap box and leave it there, ‘for now!’ . . . . .

**Keep Alert, Keep Secure, Keep Safe** and have a good weekend.

Colin