

December 2021

GREATER MANCHESTER  
**POLICE**



# ECONOMIC CRIME UNIT

## Scam Care Awareness Messages (SCAM)

**PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST FRAUD BY STAYING UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST SCAMS**

### What is the Economic Crime Unit?

The ECU is part of the Serious Crime Division of Greater Manchester Police. We have responsibility for all economic and cyber-dependant crime (crimes that are committed using technology) in the Greater Manchester Area.

Our primary function is to ensure that the public are informed of and protected against fraud and cybercrime while bringing offenders to justice, tracing and seizing criminals assets.

### What's New?

December means one thing - Christmas is coming and with it, lots of shopping!

December is also the month that gives scammers the most opportunities to make money from you, so be extra cautious and take a moment when making online purchases to check it all looks legitimate.

Follow us at [@gmpfraud](https://twitter.com/gmpfraud) on Twitter this month to stay up to date with our advice on beating festive fraudsters.

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## November Fraud Recap

In November we sent an urgent scam warning about "friend in need" scams which involve criminals using compromised WhatsApp accounts to ask contacts for emergency cash - in many cases, they posed as children asking their parents for money. WhatsApp are working together with the National Trading Standards on a "Stop. Think.Call" Campaign which urges users to confirm the identity of people who contact them with voice notes or a phone call. If anyone ever messages asking you for money, you must be confident you know who it is before sending anything!

Courier fraud remains a high-earning scam for criminals who rely on your fear to pressure you into moving your money. They will call and impersonate your bank or the police and tell you that your bank has been compromised, either advising you move your money into one of their 'safe accounts' or withdraw it all in cash to be handed in as 'evidence'. Your bank does not operate unsafe accounts and will never ask you to move your money - just hang up.

Be aware Criminals are using social media sales platforms such as Facebook Marketplace or Gumtree to target the public by convincing them when they are selling valuable possessions that funds have been transferred to their bank accounts via a mobile banking app. Protect yourself always be completely satisfied the funds are in your bank account and have someone with you at home to meet with prospective purchasers or arrange to meet in a public place. Do not show your ID or provide any personal details to a buyer. If you have suspicions consider cancelling the sale.

Be aware of Ticket Fraud! Take a moment to stop and think before sending anyone your money. Consider does this offer sound too good to be true, if it does it is likely a scam. Protect yourself - Only buy tickets from official sources, for example the venue box office or official promoter or agent. And consider the use of secure payment methods such as Pay pal or credit card.

If you think you've been a victim of fraud, report it to Action Fraud online at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or by calling 0300 123 2040.

In November we welcomed a new apprentice in the Economic Crime Unit to help tackle financial crime and support our unit in the effort to raise fraud awareness! Our 2020 apprentices have secured employment in Greater Manchester Police and will go on to serve the community in various units around the force.

One of our Scambusters, Maureen "Mo" Harrop, has been recognised recently for her tireless work serving the communities of Greater Manchester. Not only does she contribute her time to calling victims of fraud and delivering presentations in the community, she has been supporting the wellbeing team with making calls to other volunteers and is a key member of the GMP Alcohol Awareness team. With the Alcohol Awareness team, Mo has taken part in a wellbeing event which saw her team and others visit GMP sites forcewide and offer their support to staff and officers. For the wellbeing team, Mo annually contacts 48 volunteers to check on them and offer support, particularly through lockdowns.

As a result, she has been nominated as an individual for both the Lord Ferrer's Award and Chief Constable's Award. She was the runner up for the Lord Ferrer's Award and travelled to London, where she attended the ceremony in St James' Palace.

She has said it's been an honour to have even been nominated for these kinds of awards and is proud to be able to offer support to people in need:

*"The reason I do this is because 27 years ago I nearly died from alcoholism, I went right down in the depths of it and that is an illness of the mind - the drink is but a symptom. I know what it felt like to be at rock bottom and not having anybody to turn to. There were people I could've turned to - there were phone numbers or anonymous numbers I could ring and say 'I've got a problem and I need help', which was a massive thing to do. I reached out for help, I know how important that is whether you've been the victim of a scam, dating fraud, domestic violence, anything at all - the key is to reach out and know that help is there and that is the support that groups like us are there to give."*

## Upcoming Events

- The Scambuster volunteers continue their visits to Independent Living accommodation around Greater Manchester and have been receiving amazing feedback. If you live in or work for a shared accommodation establishment for older people in Greater Manchester, you can get in touch at [scambusters@gmp.police.uk](mailto:scambusters@gmp.police.uk) to arrange a visit!

- December means one thing - Christmas is coming and with it, lots of shopping!

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Follow us at @gmpfraud on Twitter this month to stay up to date with our 12 scams of Christmas.

Every month we are going to give you some of our top tips about staying cyber-secure and protecting yourself and your details while enjoying the Internet.

**The top tip for November is to [use Two-Factor or Multi-Factor Authentication!](#)**

Two-factor or multi-factor authentication is a service that adds additional layers of security to the standard password method of online identification.

Without two-factor authentication, you would normally enter a username and password. But, with two-factor, you would be prompted to enter one additional authentication method such as a Personal Identification Code, another password or even fingerprint. With multi-factor authentication, you would be prompted to enter more than two additional authentication methods after entering your username and password.

Two-factor authentication (often shortened to 2FA) provides a way of 'double checking' that you really are the person you are claiming to be when you're using online services, such as banking, email or social media. It is available on most of the major online services.

When setting up 2FA, the service will ask you to provide a 'second factor', which is something that you (and only you) can access. This could be a code that's sent to you by text message, or that's created by an app.

**[Click here to learn how to set up 2FA!](#)**

