

Consumer Alert Newsletter

27 June 2025

Dear Kent Residents

We're seeing a rise in job scams being shared by text and WhatsApp. These scams often promise work but they're designed to trick people into handing over money or personal details.

Criminals will then use your personal information to pretend to be you. They can apply for things like bank accounts, loans, or credit cards in your name. Some even ask for upfront fees for fake jobs or services.

Here's how to spot a job scam:

- The pay sounds too good to be true
- You're offered a job without an interview
- The advert is badly written or vague
- You're asked for money or personal details

If you're unsure or need help, contact the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on **0808 223 1133**.

Please stay alert and share this with friends and family—especially those who might be more vulnerable to these types of scams.

For scam alerts as they are issued please add us on Instagram or Facebook.

Thank you.

Mark Rolfe

Interim Head Community Protection

Thanks to the vigilance of Roger Lithgow, one of our dedicated Community Wardens, a recent incident in Sturry has highlighted the importance of staying alert to doorstep scams.

At a local church coffee morning, a resident shared concerns about workmen she had hired after approaching them in the street. She later suspected she had been scammed. With her permission, Roger followed up at the next coffee morning and began door-knocking in the area with fellow Warden Keeley Taylor.

Their visits uncovered that the same workmen had offered block paving to another resident. The original resident had paid £675 in cash for UPVC cleaning after being cold-called. The workmen used an unmarked black pick-up and did not provide cancellation rights, a legal requirement.

Roger and Keeley offered advice to residents:

- Always get multiple quotes before agreeing to work.
- Say NO to cold callers.
- ✓ If you feel threatened or pressured, call 999.
- Cold callers must provide written cancellation terms, it's the law.

If you need a safe, local trader use <u>Trading Standards Checked</u>

Let's keep our communities informed and safe. Community Wardens help make stronger, safer communities. Find your local warden today.

Whilst switching to e-bikes for your daily commute is a great move towards more sustainable transport, we want to make sure you're aware of the safety risks associated with these products, especially the fire and explosion risks from lithiumion batteries.

⚠ REMEMBER - it's illegal to use e-scooters on the road or in public spaces, such as parks, street pavements, and shopping centres.

⚠ Fires involving e-bikes and scooters rose from 2 in 2017 to 211 in 2024.

Advice is available on how owners of e-bikes and e-scooters can use them more safely from <u>Electrical Safety First</u>.

Stay safe and ride responsibly!

▲ Watch out for funeral scams targeting grieving families

The Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) is warning the public about a disturbing scam where criminals exploit the grief of bereaved families by impersonating them online and charging mourners to attend funerals that should be free.

→ More information

▲ Doorstep criminals active in Edenbridge, Ashford, Deal, Romney Marsh and Tonbridge.

- A resident was targeted and paid several thousands of pounds for very little gardening work
- Driveway work was offered to another resident the criminals then demanded more money and became aggressive
- In another driveway incident a resident was cold called and charged several thousands of pounds for very poor work
- Earlier this year a resident paid a cold caller nearly £10,000 for roofing work which has been found to be unsafe.
- X Never respond to cold callers! Request a free NO COLD CALLERS door sticker
- ✓ If you need work done on your home or garden use a safe, local trader that's been vetted by Kent Trading Standards
- Look out for others, report active doorstep criminals to Kent Police on 101. You can also report it to the charity CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111. You'll stay 100% anonymous, always.
- all If you have given any financial information let your bank know, call 159
- For advice contact Citizens Advice consumer helpline 0808 223 1133
- Warn friends and family

▲ Aldi recalls Inspired Cuisine Baby Potatoes with Herbs and Butter because of undeclared milk.

This means the product is a possible health risk for anyone with an allergy or intolerance to milk or milk constituents.

Product Details

Inspired Cuisine Baby Potatoes with Herbs and Butter

Pack size: 385g

Use by: All date codes up to and including 01 July 2025

Advice for consumers

If you have bought the above product and have an allergy or intolerance to milk or milk constituents, do not eat it. Instead return it to the store from where it was bought for a full refund.

For more information, please visit the <u>Aldi website</u> or call customer services on 0800 042 0800.

→ More information

▲ Product recall for Soulcal & Co Body Mist presenting a serious chemical risk.

The product presents a serious chemical risk as it contains butylphenyl methylpropional, which is not permitted for use in cosmetic products.

Product Details

Brand: Soulcal & Co

Fragrance: Raspberry & Lotus Blossom, Mango & Passion Fruit, Apple & Waterlily, Coco Plum & Jacaranda, Beach Rose & Coconut Water

✓ Advice for consumers

The products have been recalled from end users by the manufacturer. Affected products have been withdrawn from sale by Farmfoods.

Owners of any of the affected products should stop using it immediately and return the product to the seller they purchased from for a full refund.

→ More information

⚠ Product recall for Pepco Bbe Frotte Blue Cap sold by Poundland presenting a risk of choking, as the button on the top of the cap can easily detach.

Product Details

Brand: Pepco

Barcode: 5045731150841 & 5045731150858

Style number: 871586

Advice for consumers

The product has been recalled from end users by Poundland. Consumers are advised to stop using the product immediately and return it to the store for a full refund, with no receipt required.

For further information, access the recall page on the **Poundland website**.

→ More information

How to get advice and report



To report scams and get advice on consumer issues call Citizen's Advice consumer helpline on **0808 223 1133**

CrimeStoppers.

If you have information on doorstep criminals, counterfeit, fake or illegal goods, illicit tobacco, loan sharks or those selling restricted items to underage kids, call the charity Crimestoppers 100% anonymously on **0800 555 111**

To find a safe, local trader use Kent County Council's safe trader scheme: Trading Standards Checked. To find a member call 03000 416438 or visit kent.gov.uk/tschecked