



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION for 8th November 2007

### EMAIL NEWS

An old hoax email from 2005 is now re-circulating regarding a company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service) asking people to phone a 0906 premium rate number (the figures quoted in the email for phone charges are wrong) regarding a parcel that is undelivered. The old ICTIS website stated that the company was closed down in December 2005; there is the following information on the new [www.phonepayplus.org.uk](http://www.phonepayplus.org.uk) website which replaced ICTIS:

### A STATEMENT FROM PHONEPAYPLUS ABOUT THE CURRENT 'POSTAL SCAM' CHAIN EMAIL

PhonepayPlus, the phone-paid services regulator, is aware that a chain e-mail about an alleged postal scam is being circulated on the internet. The email refers to the Royal Mail, Trading Standards and ICSTIS (PhonepayPlus' former name).

PhonepayPlus appreciates that recipients of the email may want to find out more information about the alleged scam and has therefore issued the following statement:

The chain email refers to a service that was shut down by us in December 2005. We subsequently fined the company that was operating the service, Studio Telecom (based in Belize), £10,000.

The service is **NO LONGER** running and has **NOT** been running since December 2005.

The email refers to a £15 charge for simply being connected to a recorded message.

This is **NOT TRUE** – a £15 connection charge does **NOT** exist. The service in question actually cost £1.50 per minute and lasted six minutes, making a total cost of £9 if callers stayed on the line for the full six minutes.

You do **NOT** need to contact us, or the Royal Mail, about this service as it was stopped almost two years ago.

**If you receive a copy of the email warning you about the alleged scam, please do NOT forward it to others. Instead, please forward this statement from PhonepayPlus.**

Please go to [www.phonepayplus.org.uk/pdfs\\_news/ConsumerGuide.pdf](http://www.phonepayplus.org.uk/pdfs_news/ConsumerGuide.pdf) for useful information about how to recognise phone-paid services and understand what they cost, and some simple tips to help you enjoy using services with confidence.

### A NEW SPANISH LOTTERY

A N/W member has received a printed full colour letter from the 'Loteria Primitiva' which states that you have won a large sum in Euros. This is a hoax even though the English National Lottery logo is shown at the head of the letter and should be binned. There is a form enclosed for your bank and personal details and I expect later a request for you to send a processing fee after which you will hear no more from them.

### Lotteries Draws, Lotteries and Prize Draws – Police Advice

'Congratulations on winning \$200 million in the International Criminal & Fraudsters Lottery'. We would all like to win a vast sum of money which is why a large proportion of the population invest in the lotteries and prize draws from nationally run ones down to local charities. The big difference here is the word invest. **You had to buy a ticket and that is an important point to remember.**

There are a number of variants on the fraudulent theme. In one the victim will be told that they as an individual or their company has won a substantial multi-million dollar prize in a lottery which has just been drawn. Unfortunately there has been a mix up in the numbers and the lottery organizers will need proof of identity before the prize money can be released. Eventually the victim will be handing over money in order to overcome administration or transfer problems. Another variation is where you receive some grand looking documents by post informing you of a huge win in a lottery or prize draw. Most of the literature will include official looking seals and guarantees as to the method of sealing, dispatch and verification. If the documents originate from overseas then they will go on to explain that as a foreign winner you will need to pay a fee in order to have the money transferred to you in accordance with the host nations monetary control systems.

In the case of UK based schemes you will be given premium rate telephone numbers to either telephone or text. The fraudsters have now taken to using the UK National Lottery as a means of validating their scams. They all follow the line that your e-mail address has been chosen at random and that you have won a vast amount of money for absolutely no outlay — unlike the rest of us who have forked out our hard earned cash to buy a ticket! Recent innovations from the fraudsters include warnings at the end of their e-mail that fraudulent e-mails are in circulation using the National Lottery name and that these should be ignored. One kind soul has set up a customer care site where you can forward the offending item which basically provides them with a new list of victims for free. A local Sussex courier company has had their address 'hijacked' in order to legitimise the 'delivery' of the prize money so don't be fooled by UK addresses or telephone numbers contained within the text of any e-mail. There is also an address in Tanfield Rd, Croydon which has regularly been used.

A case which has recently been dealt with by a CID Officer involves an elderly couple in Sussex who have paid £94,448 in total as 'processing fees' to a lottery scam operating from Canada, Australia and Jamaica. I have no wish to embarrass this couple by including these facts I do so only as a warning to others that whatever you might think it is all too easy to be drawn into believing what these fraudsters are telling you.

***Remember this —In the real world you would normally have to buy a ticket to take part in a lottery or prize draw and the prizes are funded by the number of tickets sold. In the fraudulent schemes there is no large 'prize'***

#### **BOGUS CALLERS**

In SOUTH NORWOOD an elderly female victim had two white males call, one was carrying a blue clipboard. They claimed they needed to check the rear of her property to check for subsidence. The victim showed one of the men the back wall while the other remained inside the property. Later it was found that all the rooms had been searched and it is not known yet what if anything was stolen. The first male was described as about 30 years old and of stocky build. Second male was approx 40 – 50 years old, unfortunately no better description available.

In NEW ADDINGTON two white males knocked on the door and asked to speak to the 'governor of the house'. They said they were going to carry out work on a neighbour's rear fence and needed to gain access. The victim took one suspect through to the garden, she then saw the second suspect in her living room. As she was not happy she asked them to leave which they did and nothing appears to have been taken. First male described as approx 35 years old 6'00" tall with short black hair. Second male was approx 40 years old 5'11" tall with black curly hair.

There is information that a white male may be in the Croydon area using a new shape Vauxhall Astra and that he has access to a uniform similar to Police. The male is about 5'09" tall and of stocky build. PLEASE be careful to ask for identification and check it carefully if anyone calls at your door. All genuine callers from the Council, Water Board etc carry ID cards with their photo. Police Officers carry a Warrant Card which states their name and rank together with their photo and on one side of the small black wallet there is a silver metal badge with the MP crest on it.

#### **BURGLARY INIATIVE**

Operation 'Safer Homes' was launched on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2007 by the Met Police targeting known and wanted burglars across London.

Burglary remains at a 30 year low for London, a historic achievement for the organisation.

Historically we have seen burglary rise at this time of year with the longer nights, houses are in darkness, burglars seize on this opportunity.

To ensure that we continue to reduce household burglary, we have launched Safer Homes, which is an enhanced drive to find and arrest wanted suspects.

Each of the 32 boroughs have been carrying out early morning raids on their local burglars. Since Safer Homes began we have arrested 177 people. The operation will continue until the end of December.

#### **Croydon**

Since Operation Safer Homes was launched police in Croydon have arrested a total of 27 individuals. The operation is being supported by colleagues within the Forensic Science branch who are enabling us to process the forensic evidence speedily, in some cases, within 24 hours.

**Crime prevention advice: Make sure your house looks like there is someone home; if you can - leave a light on, or set a timer to switch a light on.**

**Police are also advising that there has been a slight rise in the number of slip lock burglaries**

**that have occurred in the past 6 weeks. A piece of plastic is used to open a Yale lock. Police advice is to fit a 5 lever mortice lock. If you have a mortice lock our advice is for you to use it as your insurance may be invalidated should you become a victim of burglary when the lock has not been used.**

For more crime prevention advice visit [www.met.police.uk/crimeprevention](http://www.met.police.uk/crimeprevention) or contact the crime prevention team on 020 8649-1414.

Detective Supt Ian Smith Croydon Police said” In the past two weeks since the Met launched Op Safer Homes we have at Croydon arrested over 20 individuals for burglary offences committed in Croydon. We will be continuing our efforts to reduce burglary and will be targeting those handlers who we believe are involved in handling stolen goods. 'Safer Homes is intended to put the fear back on the burglars. 'The message is clear, come forward and surrender yourself, we are coming to arrest you.'”

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SIGNS ON LAMPOSTS**

**To all N/W Co-Ordinators:** If your road has any of the old N/W signs without the Croydon Neighbourhood Watch written on them or you have any damaged or missing signs please contact Sarah Gardner on 020 8649 0168 or email her on [sarah.gardner@met.police.uk](mailto:sarah.gardner@met.police.uk) and give the lamppost number which is painted on the post so that the Council can remove and replace the signs. A new list of all recent requests will be sent to Croydon Council in the next couple of weeks

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH OFFICE MOVE**

The planned move to Kenley Police Station did not take place as planned, due to problems with the phone lines; watch this space for more information.