



Caithness CAB launches Scams Prevention Guide

Iain Gregory, Caithness CAB *'We receive an ever-increasing number of queries from clients who have received a phone call, an email or a text message from unknown sources. All these contacts have one thing in common – the caller is after your money and your personal data. The people who get in touch with CAB before giving out information are the ones we can help – the unlucky ones are the people who suddenly find that their bank account or credit card has been emptied with no chance of getting the money back or who find themselves to be the victims of identity theft. With assistance from local experts including Police Scotland, Trading Standards and Clydesdale Bank, we are today launching our Scams Prevention Guide in order to try to counter this threat and better inform our community of the dangers posed by scammers.'*

Inspector Nick Clasper, Area Inspector, Local Policing, N Division, Police Scotland:

'As has been described within this booklet, there are a variety of scams which are employed with the aim of obtaining money or benefit over the victim. These can occur through a variety of means, but I would like to reinforce a few points – Your bank or building society will never ask you for details over the phone. Even if the person on the end of the phone offers you the chance to phone them back, hang up and make sure there is a dial tone and use the phone number from your correspondence. Do not open links or attachments in emails which you are not sure of. These can come from people you know who may have had their accounts hacked. If someone comes to your house and offers you services, please follow the advice from Trading Standards. I appreciate it is possibly a cliché, but my advice would be if in doubt, don't'.

Emily Fraser, Manager of Clydesdale Bank's Wick and Thurso Branches:

'Remember, we will never ask you to provide your personal banking details, either by email or by phone, and you should never provide them to anyone else. Anyone who has any concerns about any contact should always inform their bank – using a telephone number or email address known to be correct – and should consult

Caithness CAB who will ensure that useful advice is given and that any further action needed is taken’.



David MacKenzie, Team Leader Highland Council Trading

Standards: *‘To entice consumers to give out personal details, the scammer may offer a false promise of the consumer being entitled to a rebate on their Council or HMRC Tax bill. The scammer may also falsely state that the consumers’ bank or building society has been targeted by fraudsters. Recipients of such telephone calls should be on their guard, as local and national government departments as well as banks, building societies and other financial institutions would never cold call the public in this way to request an individual’s personal details. Anyone receiving such an unsolicited call is advised to end the call immediately and under no circumstances to give any personal details to the caller’.*

Iain Gregory continues *‘As part of the Highland Consumer Partnership, we, along with Highland Council Trading Standards and Citizens Advice Scotland, work hard to reduce consumer harm and encourage fair trading. As prevention is always better than seeking a cure, this booklet aims to raise awareness and provide information to our local community about current scams affecting our clients in Caithness and North Sutherland, in the hope that we can help people to avoid becoming victims of the scammers. Scams are crimes. Please spread the word and if in doubt, contact CAB.*

Ends

Notes to Editors

Scams prevention guides will be freely available to the public at a number of locations, including Wick and Thurso Citizens Advice Bureau offices.

Caithness CAB is a registered charity SC002849 and has been serving the community of Caithness for over 30 years.

In 2014/15 Caithness CAB dealt with 13,454 advice issues on a wide range of subjects and assisted clients to a financial gain of £1,624,467 through debt rescheduling, benefit entitlement checks, helping to claim compensation for poor products or services and assisting with unemployment claims and unpaid wages claims.

For more information on the Highland Consumer Partnership, please visit www.highlandconsumerpartnership.org.uk

For media queries relating to this story, please contact Iain Gregory on 01847 894243.