

# LOCAL CAMPAIGN GROUPS LAUNCH 'SCAMS AWARENESS MONTH'

**Caithness** Citizens Advice Bureau and Trading Standards are set to expose tactics used by scammers

Cold calls, high-pressure sales tactics and automated voicemails asking for people's details are just some of the tricks scammers are using to rob people of their hard earned money.

The organisations are launching Scams Awareness Month on 4 July to help stop people falling prey to scams by following a three-step rule - get advice, report it, and tell others about it.

Fraud victims pay a heavy price, losing billions of pounds every year. Scams targeting people by phone or post alone cost people in the UK an estimated UK £5 billion annually. Sadly, many people in Caithness are also victims.

Informing the authorities and warning others is the only certain way of stopping scams, but people can be hesitant to even tell their friends and family what has happened.

**Iain Gregory, Deputy Manager of Caithness CAB** said:

"Scams come in a variety of guises and we see new ones emerging all the time.

Please visit our website at [caithnesscab.org](http://caithnesscab.org) and click on "Resources" where we have an online guide to the most common scams. Also we will have daily updates on Twitter @caithnesscab and on our Facebook page.

The golden rule is never, ever to give any personal or financial details to cold callers. If in any doubt terminate the call and hang up, ignore all texts from people you do not know and never open a link on an email from an unknown source. The recent tragic case reported in the press where a lady living in the Highlands lost £26,000 to a fraudster highlights the risks – the lady received a call from a scammer claiming to be her bank and was advised to call back on a known number to confirm the call was genuine. She did this, but of course the line had been held open, she gave her account details and seconds later she had lost £26,000. Your bank will never phone you – ever – asking for your details so hang up, use another phone and report the call.

Reporting suspicious offers and incidents of fraud is vital to getting scams closed down. If you think you've been contacted by a con artist or have been the victim of scam, seek advice and report it to the authorities. We can give you all the assistance you need at CAB on (01955) 605989 or (01847) 894243.

**David Mackenzie** of Trading Standards Inverness office said:

“Scams are more common than most people realise and every day we hear from people who have lost money to a con-artist.

“Some scams are one-offs that persuade you to part with a lump sum, while others go after your personal details so they can access your money or copy your identity.

“We’re asking people to help us tackle scams in Caithness by getting to know the common signs, warning others, and reporting incidents to us so we can investigate.”

### **What to do if you have been scammed**

Get advice and report it to Trading Standards through your local Citizens Advice Bureau or through the Citizens Advice consumer service on **03454 04 05 06**.