

**Here are a couple of recent messages from ESSEX POLICE via ESSEX COMMUNITY MESSAGING giving timely advice .....**

### **ROGUE TRADERS**

Spring is here but so is the Doorstep/Rogue trader. That loose slate on the roof, the flashing or pointing on the chimney, the guttering, driveway, jet washing and at this time of the year the tree that needs cutting or gardening work that needs to be sorted for the summer are all on the rogue traders list.

Essex Police and Essex County Council Trading Standards advise you never to agree to have work done by anyone who knocks on your door. Fully check out traders who leaflet your home before you agree to any work as they may be providing you with false details. If your home needs household repairs or maintenance or your garden or trees need work ensure you use a trader who has been recommended to you or use a Trading Standards Buy With Confidence trader via 03454 040506 or [www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk)

Please keep an eye on vulnerable neighbours, family or friends as the doorstep/rogue trader may be knocking on their door right now to relieve them of their savings. Please help them by calling the Trading Standards helpline on 03454 040506 or Essex Police on 101 and giving us the information we need to put a stop to this criminal activity.

### **DON'T BE THE VICTIM OF SCAM MAILINGS**

Have you received scam mail through your door recently? The likelihood is that you probably have. Scam mail is sent by fraudsters, often from overseas, trying to persuade residents to part with money or personal information by tempting them with 'cash prizes'. These scams can result in considerable financial loss to the victims.

Essex County Council Trading Standards have become aware of an incident where a resident was sent a scam letter enclosing a photograph of a cheque with the victim's name on it, claiming that they had won the 'Football Lottery'. The victim was asked to post a considerable amount of cash in order for the cheque to be released. Not surprisingly, this was a scam and the victim lost the money.

These types of scams are often time limited which puts pressure on the potential victim to reply quickly. Once the letters are replied to the residents personal details are often added to a list of potential targets which are then circulated to other fraudsters. Residents who respond to scams can then be bombarded with similar scam mailings. Please keep an eye on vulnerable neighbours, family or friends to help prevent them becoming the targets of these types of scams.

Essex Trading Standards advise you not to respond to any mailing which has the hallmarks of a scam and would encourage you to forward the letter to Royal Mail Scams Department, Freepost, Scam Mail, PO Box 797, Exeter EX1 9UN or report the information to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040. If you are concerned about a mailing call the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline, who handle calls for Trading Standards, on 03454 040506.

For further advice and information please visit [www.thinkjessica.com](http://www.thinkjessica.com)