

### **These current scams are circulating here and abroad:**

- Doorstep callers 'checking for coronavirus'.
- Companies selling 'fast COVID-19 tests'.
- Companies selling products that they claim can treat, cure or prevent the virus, including face masks.
- Companies selling fake cleaning products and hand sanitisers.
- Fake charities asking for donations to help with the coronavirus.
- Fake emails pretending to be from a government department.
- Companies claiming to have or to be on the verge of producing a vaccine and requiring payment to reserve a batch.
- Companies phoning to offer to clean and sanitise homes, pre-payment is required over the phone or with gift cards.
- Scammers pretending to be from the UK government, advising that a new tax refund programme has been introduced to deal with the coronavirus outbreak and that you are due a refund.
- Emails pretending to be from the World Health Organisation with attachments on how to stay safe – the attachments contain malware which will infect your computer, steal your information and result in a request for ransom.
- Scammers have circulated fake maps via email which claim to show virus outbreaks but, again, they are malware.
- Scammers offering fake investment opportunities in companies working to produce a vaccine

### **Don't get caught out.**

- Scammers want to steal your money or your personal information. They do this by calling unannounced at your door, phoning, texting or emailing. They will also advertise online and via social media.
- The only test available is through the NHS – you cannot buy a test kit or pay for a test from anybody else.
- There is no vaccine or cure.
- Only buy from companies that you have dealt with before and type in their online address if you want to order – don't respond to a link in an email or find them by an internet search because scam websites could be imitating a genuine company.
- Charities must be registered with the Charity Commission (<https://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/>) – check they are legitimate before you donate

If you or somebody you know has been caught out by a scam or fraud please contact one of our specialist officers, **Linda or Sue on 0151 511 8785 or 0151 511 8775**, who are already working with people in Halton who have lost thousands of pounds to scams. If you need advice on anything else please contact the [Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline](#) or 0808 223 1133

The only reliable information on how to protect yourself, and measures to take if you think you have the virus, is available from the NHS and the UK government websites:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>