OWSTON FERRY PARISH COUNCIL

**RE: Scams advice during coronavirus outbreak**

*We* hope that you are well. As a reminder, we would like to re-iterate the government and NHS guidelines about maintaining good hygiene; please visit [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) for further information.

It is particularly important for people who are over 70 and/or have an underlying health condition.

Things such as Facebook Community Groups, WhatsApp Groups and the Nextdoor social network that send neighborhood alerts can be great ways of staying in touch with those around you, however it can be difficult to know who to trust.

Please be aware that not everyone out there is trustworthy and some people will take advantage of this unusual situation our society is facing.

**Here are just some of the scams we are aware of, but please note that criminals come in all shapes and sizes and can contact you at the door, by phone, post or online:**

* Virus testing kits
* Vaccines or miracle cures – there is currently no vaccine or cure.
* Overpriced or fake goods to protect yourself from coronavirus such as anti-bacterial products.
* Shopping or medication collection services.
* Home decontamination services.

**Tips to avoid being scammed:**

* Don’t be rushed into making a decision. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
* Only purchase goods and services from legitimate retailers and take a moment to think before parting with money or personal information.
* Don’t assume everyone is genuine. It’s okay to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you. If in doubt, speak to someone you trust.
* If someone claims to represent a charity, ask them for ID. Be suspicious of requests for money up front. If someone attempts to pressurise you into accepting a service they are unlikely to be genuine. Check with family and friends before accepting offers of help if you are unsure.

**Contact information:**

* If you think have been scammed, contact your bank first.
* If you think you’ve been scammed, report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 and if you need advice, call the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0808 223 1133. If you are in immediate danger, contact the police on 999.

To learn more about different types of scams and how to protect yourself and others, visit [www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk](http://www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk) and complete the free online training.

Why not become a Scam Marshal? A Scam Marshal is any resident in the UK who has been targeted by a scam and now wants to fight back and take a stand against scams. Scam Marshals do this by sharing their own experiences, helping others to report and recognise scams and sending any scam mail that they receive to the National Trading Standards Scams Team so that it can be utilised as evidence in future investigative and enforcement work. Visit [www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk/ScamMarshals](http://www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk/ScamMarshals) for more information and to sign up.

Kind Regards

Owston Ferry Parish Council

 **Read it. Share it. Prevent it.
 #ScamAware #Coronavirus**