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New fraud guidance helps public to give safely

Charities do vital work. They need our donations. But charities and their supporters are also targets for criminals. Fraudsters eagerly exploit our trust and compassion to steal donations and undermine the important work that charities do.

As part of National Charity Fraud Awareness Week the Fraud Advisory Panel has joined forces with police, regulators and other stakeholders to issue simple fraud prevention advice for anyone wanting to donate on the doorstep, on the street or online, helping donors make sure their money really does reach those who need it.

David Kirk, Chairman of the Fraud Advisory Panel said: “The vast majority of fundraising activities are legitimate but fraudsters are expert at hijacking our kindness and diverting our charitable donations into their pockets. Cruelly, they are especially active during a crisis or tragedy. But making sure our donations really do reach the causes we care about is easier than most people realise. For example:

- Ignore unsolicited emails, texts or social media messages/posts from charities you’ve never heard of or have no association with.
- Protect your personal information – never reveal passwords or PINs.
- Watch out for tell-tale signs like spelling or grammar mistakes in the literature, photocopied IDs and unsealed collection buckets.
- Don’t feel under pressure – take your time to make a considered, informed decision.”

The Fraud Advisory Panel, Get Safe Online and GoFundMe have also simultaneously released five tips for donating safely through crowdfunding sites.

Kirk explains that it is vital we don’t simply stop giving: “Charities need our support more than ever in these difficult times. But we can all keep donating and make life a lot harder for the charity fraudster by taking the straightforward precautions listed in this new guide.”

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PRESS RELEASE



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Notes for editors:

1. *Giving safely: a guide to making donations to UK charities* is available from: <https://www.fraudadvisorypanel.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Giving-Safely-WEB-Oct17.pdf>
2. The guidance has been produced in partnership with Action Fraud, Charity Commission for England and Wales, Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, City of London Police, Fundraising Regulator, Get Safe Online, Institute of Fundraising, Metropolitan Police Service, National Trading Standards Scams Team, Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, Police Scotland, PSNI, Scottish Fundraising Standards Panel, Take Five and Victim Support.
3. *Giving safely through crowdfunding* is available from: <https://www.fraudadvisorypanel.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Giving-Safely-Crowdfunding-WEB-Oct17.pdf>
4. Charity Fraud Awareness Week (23 – 27 October) is being co-ordinated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and the Fraud Advisory Panel in partnership/coalition with the Charities Against Fraud partnership. For more information visit: <https://www.fraudadvisorypanel.org/charity-fraud/get-involved/>
5. The **Fraud Advisory Panel** is the UK's leading counter-fraud charity. We bring together fraud professionals from all sectors and disciplines to improve fraud resilience across the UK and around the world. The Panel was established in 1998 by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) which continues to provide valuable support. www.fraudadvisorypanel.org