



Visit our website at: www.villagewatch.co.uk and join our Group on *Facebook*

Please Complete our Online Survey

We are conducting a survey to get as many views as possible on how we can best take our Watch forward after the disruption caused by the pandemic.

It takes about five minutes to complete and is completely anonymous (although you can include your name if you wish).

Please follow the link on our website:

www.villagewatch.co.uk

We need New Volunteers to join our Existing Active Members

- *We need someone to liaise with our Coordinators to establish their current availability.*
- *If you have financial, fundraising or publishing experience, we especially need your skills.*
- *We need people to join our experienced volunteers to open the Advice Shop for a couple of hours on a Saturday morning once a month.*

If you can help or have any ideas or suggestions we would love to hear from you.

Please contact us by email at: watch@villagewatch.co.uk

Cold Callers Fined

Five companies that made thousands of unwanted marketing calls to "older, vulnerable people" have been fined a total of £405,000. The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) said that some of those targeted suffered from dementia. It says that it is continuing to investigate a number of other companies. It has also issued the companies with enforcement notices that require them to stop making such calls immediately.

The calls were selling insurance products for appliances, such as televisions, washing machines and fridges. The data privacy watchdog said companies were deliberately targeting older people by buying specific marketing data. They asked specifically for information about people aged 60 and over, who were homeowners and had landline numbers.

Some victims lost thousands of pounds on white goods insurance and servicing which the companies often knew they did not need.

The UK Information Commissioner, John Edwards said: "These are unlawful predatory marketing calls that were targeted at some of the most vulnerable members of our society and driven purely by financial gain".

He warned companies employing these tactics to expect a strong response and urged anyone pestered by such calls to report their concerns to the ICO at:

ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint

Marketing calls should not be made to anyone registered with the FREE Telephone Preference Service (TPS) unless they have previously told the caller that they wish to receive them.

www.tpsonline.org.uk/register

Online Safety Bill

This Bill received its First Reading in the House of Commons on 17th March. It will make a number of online activities illegal and place the responsibility to prevent them squarely on the internet companies that host them. They include:

- Cyber-flashing
- Deliberately sending flashing images to people with photosensitive epilepsy with the intention of inducing a seizure (also known as *Zach's law*).
- Content or activity promoting self-harm, as is already the case for suicide.
- Pornography sites will have legal duties to prevent children accessing them.

It will give the regulator *Ofcom* the power to fine firms and block access to sites that fail to comply with the new rules.

Clickbait

'Clickbait' is the term used to describe targeted sponsored ads that impersonate real news articles but contain nasty scams, rip-offs and fake news.

When scrolling through genuine news websites, you will probably have noticed 'sponsored' articles with attention-grabbing headlines scattered among the stories of the day. These often include links that take you to must-read fake news stories that pretend to be pages of trusted news websites.

While some of it clearly looks like internet spam, many of these ads are carefully worded to draw you in. They are targeted specifically at you, using your location and internet habits to grab your interest.

Thanks to a successful campaign by *Which?*, these ads have now been added to the *Online Safety Bill*.

You can read more about this at:

conversation.which.co.uk/scams/scam-adverts-nadine-dorries-letter

Get regular news of the latest scams FREE from:

www.which.co.uk/scam-alert-service

Police News

Our Beat Team produces a monthly Newsletter with news of crime and other local policing matters.

You can read it in full each month on our website:

www.villagewatch.co.uk/police