

Management Committee

Date: 16 March 2022



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## Fraud Prevention work update – CPP Management Committee

### 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the CPP Management Committee with an update on the work carried out to date towards the Fraud Prevention project in Argyll and Bute.

### 2.0 Recommendations

The CPP Management Committee are asked to:

- Note the contents of this report

### 3.0 Background

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, incidents of Fraud have continued to be a threat to people within Argyll and Bute with much needed community and partnership focus being placed on this.

### 4.0 Detail

#### **Call Blocker Devices – funded**

In 2021, funding was received from Argyll and Bute Community Planning for call blocker devices that work by blocking out both scam and nuisance calls. Devices to date have been installed either by Police Scotland or Trading Standards as a result of some having been identified as vulnerable either through social work, self-referral, and referral by family or if they have been a victim telephone fraud and are otherwise vulnerable.

Further developments have seen Dementia Advisors in Argyll and Bute trained to install devices for the people they are already providing support to as a result of dementia diagnosis. This enables a wider spread of people to support the installation and for those in advanced stages living with dementia, reduces stress by having people they are familiar with install devices rather than introduce someone unknown to them such as Police or Trading Standards. Discussions are ongoing with Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to provide similar support as they are already attending home addresses for Home Fire Safety Visits prioritised based on vulnerability.

Data provided by truecall, who provide the funded call blocker devices, (Jan 2021 to end Feb 2022) shows there have been 129 of the 150 devices installed throughout Argyll and Bute. The infographic on the following page, provides an overview of the devices and the important cost-benefit analysis obtained through installation of devices.

It is estimated that over the 4 year life of these units they will have led to a saving for vulnerable households of £461,252, a reduction £428,440 in public service costs (NHS, social care & police) and 'wellbeing benefits' of £249,357 across all users, and for those who would have been scam victims there are quality of life benefits of £262,189. **This gives total project benefits of £1,401,238 of which £889,692 are direct financial benefits.**

# Protecting Vulnerable Adults From Scam Phone Calls

Since 2021 Argyll & Bute Police have installed 129 call blockers to protect older and vulnerable people from scam phone calls. So far 10,205 nuisance and scam phone calls have been blocked, and we estimate that 17 scams have been prevented.



16

nuisance and scam calls received per month



28%

of all calls received were nuisance or scam calls



99%

of nuisance and scam calls were blocked by trueCall call blocking technology

£1,401,238 benefits

Costs

Benefits 27:1

## Cost-Benefit analysis

It is estimated that over the 4 year life of these units they will have blocked 96,592 nuisance calls (of which 26,483 will have been scam phone calls), prevented 156 scams, saved vulnerable households £461,252, led to a reduction of £428,440 in NHS, social care & police costs, and an increase in wellbeing & quality of life valued at £511,546 - total benefits of £1,401,238. The financial benefits of £889,692 are 27 times the project costs of £33,411.

## Comments from those protected by the trueCall call blockers



This made a huge difference and enable my mother to live in her own home for longer



My mother no longer gets anxious and agitated. I cannot impress on you the positive impact this has made.



Thanks for making my phone my friend again!



**Printed Fraud Prevention Materials – funded**

Booklets were obtained from the Metropolitan Police Service and rebranded to ensure they were relevant to Scottish Households. These were then printed with materials posted out to various community groups and organisations for dissemination. Booklets are also provided during installation of call blockers to provide additional advice and guidance. Door/window stickers were also purchased as coming into Spring/Summer often brings an increase in bogus/doorstep type crimes. These stickers are useful deterrents to people cold calling at home addresses.



Hard copy “fraud prevention packs” have been issued to Dementia Advisors to issue to their clients as we are in the process of having these compiled for SFRS to issue when at addresses of vulnerable people as well. PDF copies and links to where these can be accessed on the Police Scotland website have also gone out to CPP partners and all community councils as well.

**Fraud Prevention Inputs**

Inputs have been provided to a number of community groups including Dunoon Senior Citizens Group, Strachur Hub, Jeans Bothy and the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Community Planning Group. These have been in the form of the “Scam Savvy Quiz” allowing everyone to participate whilst ensuring key messages are conveyed including fraud types, methods and prevention. Further inputs are planned with Grey Matters, the other Area Community Planning Groups and Hope Kitchen. Online training and awareness has also taken place as part of Cyber Security Week 2022 hosted by Neighbourhood Watch Scotland in partnership with Police Scotland.

**5.0 Conclusions**

Fraud can affect anyone and often becoming a victim is a result of untargeted contact where the victim may believe a scam is genuine due to financial hardship, chaotic lifestyle or vulnerability. The partnership work that has taken place throughout 2021 to protect people living in Argyll and Bute from becoming a victim of fraud is the starting place with more education and awareness needed if we are to truly protect those most at risk.

**6.0 Implications**

Strategic Implications	None
Consultations, Previous considerations	None
Resources	None
Prevention	None
Equalities	None

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