

A neighbour was recently telling me how they nearly fell victim to a scam involving her broadband provider TalkTalk. She realised what was going on before it was too late. A few days later I was listening to the radio and heard the same story from a gentleman who unfortunately had over £10,000 taken from his account.

The scam involves someone ringing and stating that they've registered that there is a problem with the broadband connection. They then get you to go through a series of actions such as resetting box etc before getting you to turn on your computer. They then give you various instructions which gives them, within a few clicks, access to your files including bank details. Without knowing they've got all the information they need to access your account and withdraw money before you've even hung up the phone on them.

Sadly this is happening far too often. Recorded crime statistics show a 5% increase in reported fraud crimes but the actual figure is probably a lot higher, although it is difficult to estimate by how much. Nevertheless as a MP I've had cases which have left me heartbroken. Vulnerable older people are usually targeted and their entire life savings stolen by fraudsters.

Unfortunately quite often the stolen money is not reimbursed and lost forever. That is why it is essential that people take good care to protect themselves from fraudsters. For example a bank will never ask you for your password and a utility service provider would wait for you to report a problem.

Finally if you do think you have been targeted to report it to the Action Fraud unit so that the police can act before others fall for the scam. Information and knowledge will help us combat these despicable fraudsters and stop victims losing everything they've worked hard and honestly for.