



Keeping our communities
safe and reassured



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PAYMENT PROTECTION INSURANCE SCAM WARNING

Staffordshire residents are being warned about falling prey to a scam involving MoneyGram and PayPoint.

They are both legitimate schemes which allow people to send money digitally without the use of a recipient bank account. MoneyGram is a quick and secure service that allows users to send and received money online. PayPoint is a service based in many retail outlets and is used predominantly to pay utility bills and top-up mobile phones.

However, fraudsters are cold-calling people falsely offering refunds for mis-sold Payment Protection Insurance (PPI) on previous loans.

To release the funds, potential victims are asked to make payments to cover commission fees. This involves them sending the money to the fraudsters, who are often based abroad.

Police recently received a report from a victim in South Staffordshire but the scam is not restricted to any particular area and anyone can be targeted.

On this occasion the victim was contacted by a cold caller who claimed that they had been mis-sold PPI which they could recover for the victim. They requested a commission fee of £315, which the victim sent to Nepal using MoneyGram.

The victim was then requested to make a second payment using PayPoint.

DC Tim Whiteley, from Staffordshire Police's Economic Crime Unit, said: "These companies are preying on people and reeling them into the scam by promising them money.

"They use various methods to get money from victims, including MoneyGram, Paypoint and Ukash. These allow them to receive the victim's money without using a bank account. In many cases this makes the offender almost impossible to trace.

"We want to warn people to be extra vigilant and refuse these cold callers. If you wish to see if you are eligible for a refund instruct a recognised firm that is registered with the Ministry of Justice."

NEWS RELEASE

Anyone who suspects fraud or would like advice should contact Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040, or visit their website at www.actionfraud.org.uk. Anyone who is a victim of fraud should contact Staffordshire Police on 101.