

Information from Kent Police

False claims of Telephone Preference Service:

Fraudsters are cold-calling victims, falsely stating that they are calling from one of the well-known UK telecommunication service providers. They call victims claiming to provide a 'Telephone Preference Service' - an enhanced call-barring service, which includes barring international call centres.

The fraudsters ask victims to confirm/provide their bank account details, informing them that there is a one-off charge for the service. Victims instead see monthly debits deducted from their accounts, which they have not authorised. The fraudsters often target elderly victims.

In all instances, direct debits are set up without following proper procedure. The victim is not sent written confirmation of the direct debit instruction, which is supposed to be sent within three days.

On occasions when victims attempted to call back, the telephone number provided by the fraudster was either unable to be reached or the victim's direct debit cancellation request was refused.

During 2017, there were 493 Action Fraud Reports relating to this fraud.

Protect yourself:

- There is only one Telephone Preference Service (TPS). The TPS is the only official UK 'do-not-call' register for opting out of live telesales calls. It is **FREE** to sign-up to the register. **TPS never charge for registration.** You can register for this service at <http://www.tpsonline.org.uk>.
- You will receive postal confirmation of genuine direct debits. If you notice unauthorised payments leaving your account, you should contact your bank promptly.
- Always be wary of providing personal information, or confirming that personal information the caller already claims to hold is correct. Always be **certain** that you know who you talking to. If in doubt hang up immediately.
- If you have been affected by this, or any other type of fraud, report it to Action Fraud by visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040.