

## **Watch out for scammers during Covid-19 outbreak**

As the Covid-19 coronavirus outbreak continues, Bridgend County Borough Council is urging residents to remain alert for scammers.

The authority is aware that residents are being targeted with emails, text messages, telephone calls and WhatsApp messages offering advice surrounding the coronavirus.

Several fake websites have been found selling products and offering treatment for the coronavirus as well as sites asking for donations for victims suffering of the outbreak.

Residents, particularly those who are older and vulnerable, are urged to remain vigilant, ignore scam products such as anti-virus kits which falsely claim to cure Covid-19, and not to answer the door to anybody not familiar to them.

While there are genuine groups of volunteers offering help during the outbreak, local communities are being urged to look out for signs that neighbours may be at risk from doorstep criminals, and to always ask for ID from anyone claiming to represent a charity or voluntary organisation.

The UK Fraud Prevention Service is offering the following advice:

- Be sceptical if you receive an email, text or WhatsApp message about the coronavirus, and never click on any attachments or links.
- Never provide personal data such as your full name, address and date of birth – scammers can use this information to steal your identity.
- Do not allow yourself to be pressured into donating money and never make donations by cash or gift card, or send money through transfer agents.
- If you think you have been the victim of a scam, speak to your bank immediately and report any fraud to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.
- You can get further information on dealing with scams and fraud by calling the Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133, or contact Citizens Advice.