

9 November 2009

## Bogus caller strikes

North Devon residents are being urged to be aware of bogus callers, posing as council officers, operating in the area.

North Devon Council has discovered that residents here are being targeted, after news of a similar scam in Torridge. In both cases, the caller claimed to be from the council, saying that the individual may be eligible for a reimbursement in council tax. Already knowing the name and address of the victims bank, the caller then asked for more bank details before explaining they would be sent a form to complete, to process the claim.

Councillor David Luggar, Lead Member for Revenue and Benefits at North Devon Council, says: "If you are contacted by someone that you are unsure about, please don't be tricked under any circumstances. Officers at North Devon Council would never contact residents and ask them for this sort of information over the telephone. If you are in any doubt, finish the call straight away."

Detective Inspector Dave Atkinson of Barnstaple Police, says: "I am aware of a couple of isolated incidents where attempts to obtain personal information have been made via the telephone. Thankfully, nobody so far has been duped. It is reassuring to see that a vast majority of the public are now much more vigilant when it comes to cold callers and do not divulge private information. I also urge people to consider shredding items such as bank statements or other documents that contain private information prior to disposal, as these are often used by fraudsters to obtain credit or clone your identity."

Residents are being urged to report any suspect calls to the council's Revenue Manager on 01271 388382 or email [laurence.oshea@northdevon.gov.uk](mailto:laurence.oshea@northdevon.gov.uk). They can also call crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

For more information contact:

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