

Scams Awareness & Prevention project

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 - Group talks
 - Personalised advice (both preventative & 'aftercare')
 - Practical, easy-to-action hints & tips
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Background

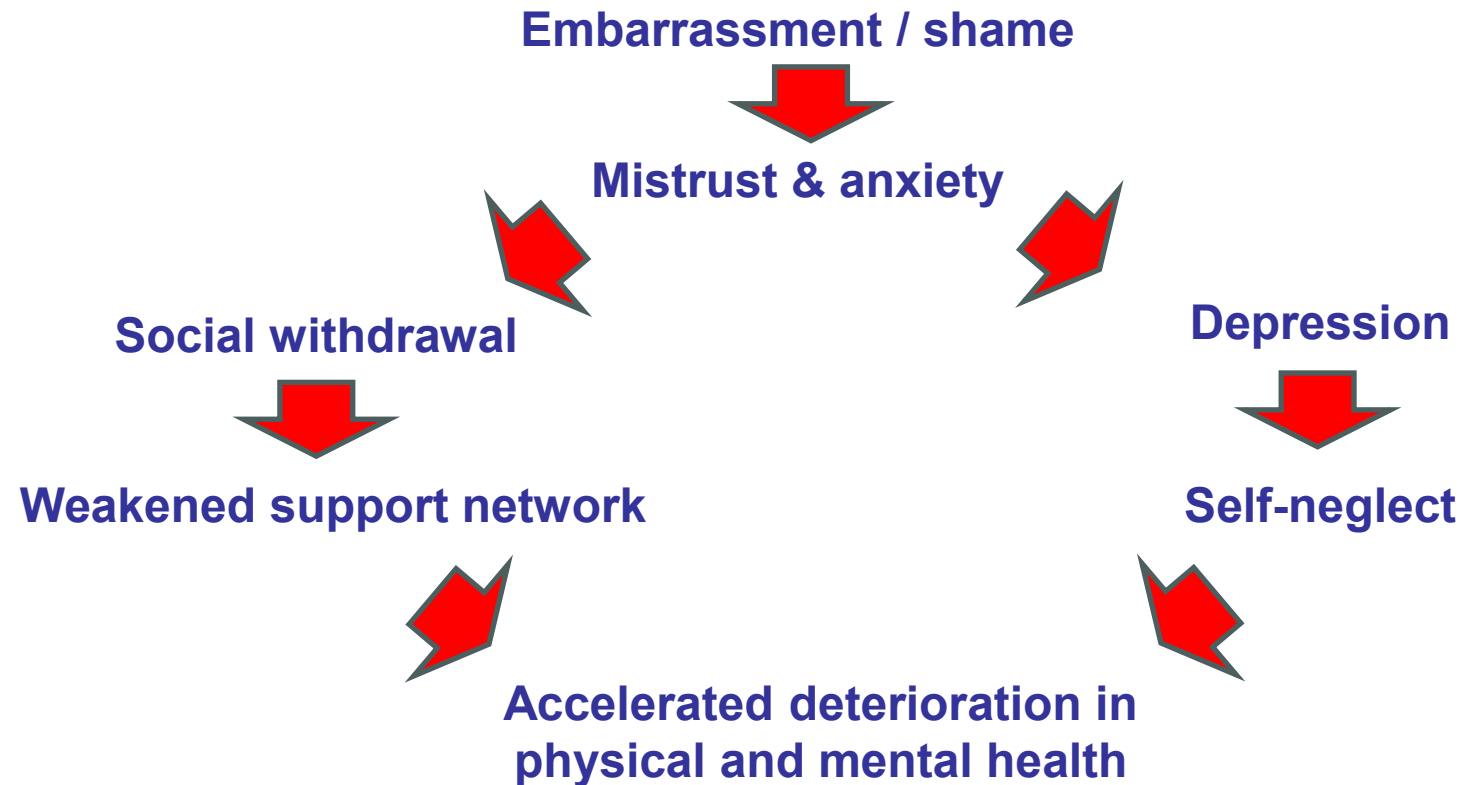
- Masses of data showing scamming/fraud is one of the fastest-growing types of crime & that older people can be particularly vulnerable.
- In addition to the £1bn+ in financial losses suffered in the UK, 2021 Age UK & National Trading Standards analysis of Crime Survey statistics revealed the significant health & welfare impacts.

Someone over-65 is defrauded every 40 seconds. During a 12-month study, older people who had been scammed were found to be 2.4 times more likely to have died or entered a full-time care facility than a comparator group who'd not been defrauded.

- Lloyds Bank funding our work as part of their programme of community investment of funds recovered from criminal accounts.
- Launched in 2022 as a 2-year initiative and then extended (with repeat funding) to 2024/25.
- 18 AgeUKs across England & Wales participating. Northumberland the only AgeUK in the North East.



The potential health impacts following a scam



What we do

Three part-time staff covering the whole of Northumberland and offering:

- **Group 'Scams Awareness' talks.** Usually a 30-60 minute session which works well in groups from 10-40 people.
 - Face-to-face / doorstep / street scams
 - Postal & leafleting
 - Telephone
 - Online

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We cover how fraudsters operate in each of these 'channels', the types of scenarios they create to exploit people, their 'pressure tactics' and the tools & techniques the public can use to defend themselves.
- **Personalised advice, 'aftercare' & 'victim support'.** We provide practical support in reporting scams & helping victims 're-secure' their accounts, devices & day-to-day approach.
- **Call blockers.** Lloyds' funding includes the provision (nationally) of around 1000 call-blocking devices which can be installed to protect those most vulnerable to or affected by telephone scamming – same 'trueCall' technology as Trading Standards

Successes

Amost 4000 people have attended awareness talks & several hundred have accessed 1-to-1 support. In dozens of the latter cases we have helped recover money, rebuild confidence & establish stronger protection going forward. *A couple of examples of snippets from our materials which are particularly popular with clients might include:*

Our ‘How Strong Is Your Password?’ tool makes a great conversation-starter at drop-ins

Example password	Time to hack
Password1	0.0001 seconds
Emma2304	1 hour
EmmaZ3O4?	3 weeks
EmmaBlondeGirl	800,000 years
BohemianRhapsody75	100,000,000,000 years

Call-blocker effectiveness (TrueCall)

Number of users	30+
Total calls received	20,000+
Nuisance calls received	2529 (12% of all calls)
Nuisance calls blocked	2512
% block-rate	99.5

Northumberland user data June 2022 – June 2025

How we can help your teams & clients

We are always actively seeking opportunities to “share the message” and help increase public awareness/resilience against scams. So, we welcome introductions to work with any groups comprising (or working with) the Over-50s.

In addition to our ‘standard’ awareness talks & 1-to-1 support, we have:

- **Run staff training/awareness sessions for partner organisations & volunteers**
- **Supported community warm-hubs**
- **Worked closely with G.P. groups, social prescribers & successfully dealt with referrals**
- **Hosted ‘drop-ins’ at community events (regular attendance at some key groups)**

We are very flexible about providing the best format to raise awareness and build advocacy. Give us a call or drop us a line to discuss what would work for your audiences/clients



Contact details

Scams Awareness Officers (Ashington-based, but covering all of Northumberland)

- Jennifer Burn
- Chris Balfour
- Dale Boustead

Main AgeUK Northumberland office switchboard: 01670 784 800

E-mail address: scams@ageuk-northumberland.org.uk

