

Tuesday 19th March 2019

Limerick people urged to learn more about how to avoid fraudsters and keep their money safe

'Friends Against Scams' information and training being offered by Ulster Bank staff to shoppers in the Crescent Shopping Centre in Dooradoyle on the 20th March

19th March 2019: People in Limerick are being urged to learn more about how to avoid fraudsters and keep their money safe. 'Friends Against Scams' information and anti-fraud training is being offered by Ulster Bank staff to shoppers in the Crescent Shopping Centre, Dooradoyle, Limerick on the 20th March from 11am to 2pm.

The 'Friends Against Scams' initiative, which is being rolled out around Ireland by Ulster Bank, was started in the UK to help organisations to train staff and spread the anti-fraud message.

A recent survey commissioned by Ulster Bank, found that while over half (69%) of Munster respondents say they are fairly confident that they could detect a potential scam (up from 54% in 2017), only 19% say they're very confident that they know what kind of security information their bank may ask them for (down from 29% in 2017).

Ulster Bank's Community Protection Advisor, Denise Cusack, who's based in Limerick, said:

"At Ulster Bank we are committed to helping customers. That's why Ulster Bank staff in Limerick and around the country have been receiving 'Friends Against Scams' training in recent months, so that we can help customers to avoid fraudsters and keep their money safe. Every day I travel around the country meeting customers and community groups to provide support to those who have been the victim of a fraud or a scam. I see at first hand the financial and emotional distress that can be caused and I know how important awareness and education are if we are to prevent this.

"My top tips for consumers in Limerick to remember when banking online are:

- 1. Be vigilant. Just because someone knows basic personal details (such as names and addresses or even a customer's mother's maiden name), it doesn't mean they are genuine. We advise customers to listen to their instincts – if something doesn't feel right, take a moment to stop and pause and think things over.*
- 2. Customers should always follow their bank's security advice and never provide remote access to their device when asked to do so following a cold call.*
- 3. Customers should be cautious with what they disclose on social media and take precautions to ensure that their profile is private and only viewable to people they know.*
- 4. We advise that customers should keep their mobile devices' operating systems up to date to ensure that they have the latest security patches and upgrades.*
- 5. A genuine bank or organisation will never ask a customer to transfer money to a safe account for fraud reasons.*
- 6. A genuine bank will never contact a customer out of the blue to ask for their full PIN or password. Stay in control and have the confidence to refuse unusual requests for information. Your bank will never ask you to disclose card reader codes over the phone under any circumstances"*

Ulster Bank's Community Banker in Limerick Joe Federico said:

“Many people who find themselves targeted by fraudsters can feel embarrassed and vulnerable. We hope by raising awareness and bringing these things into the open, people in Limerick will feel more comfortable in speaking out and help others avoid scams in the future. At the moment in Limerick and around the country we are seeing a number of Vishing attempts, where people are being called and asked to provide remote access to their laptop or pc in order to “fix” their broadband. Once the scammer obtains access the person is asked to log onto their online banking and then divulge personal details. It’s important to learn how to identify and avoid scams like this. Remember never click on links that allow anyone remote access to your computer and never give out your online banking codes, full pin or passwords, as your bank will never ask you for this information. I would encourage everyone to pop along to the Crescent Shopping Centre in Dooradoyle on the 20th March from 11am to 2pm to learn more. Anyone who encounters suspicious behaviour should contact our fraud and scams team immediately. We have a dedicated number for customers to call to report a fraud or scam – 1800 245 403. (if it’s outside of hours or you’re calling from a mobile please call (+44) 370 010 1913.) You can also get more information our website at <https://digital.ulsterbank.ie/personal/security-centre.html>.”

ENDS

Notes to Editor:

Ulster Bank’s Community Banker in Limerick Joe Federico and Ulster Bank’s Community Protection Advisor, Denise Cusack will be providing ‘Friends Against Scams’ information and training in the Crescent Shopping Centre, Dooradoyle, Limerick on the 20th March from 11am to 2pm.

Research

The Ulster Bank fraud research was published in November 2018. It was carried out by Empathy Research. Research and was conducted through an online survey across a nationally representative sample of 1,023 adults aged 18+ in October 2018.

Friends Against Scams

‘Friends Against Scams’ was created in the UK to provide information about scams and those who fall victim to them. RBS was a founding partner of the ‘Friends Against Scams’ programme when it launched in the UK in 2016, with the simple aim to reduce the number of people falling victim to criminal scams. Ulster Bank staff around the country have been receiving ‘Friends Against Scams’ training in recent months, so that they are in a position to help customers to avoid fraudsters and keep their money safe.