

WatchOut

Sussex edition

January 2018



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Call for tower blocks to have alarms following the Grenfell Tower (inset) disaster last year

Plea for tower block alarms

ARCHITECTS are calling for compulsory fire alarms in multi-occupancy buildings and sprinklers or other automatic fire suppression systems in all new and converted residential buildings nationwide.

These are among the wide-ranging recommendations made by the Royal Institute of British Architects in its submission to independent review of building regulations and fire safety, led by Dame Judith Hackitt.

The review was ordered by the government in the wake of the Grenfell Tower fire in June. RIBA's response has been developed by its expert advisory group on fire safety, established by RIBA Council following the Kensington disaster.

Jane Duncan, chair of the RIBA advisory group, said: "The RIBA welcomes Dame Judith Hackett's review but we believe it must be more comprehensive, addressing the details of Building Regulations guidance as well as the broader regulatory system.

"The review should cover all building types and construction methods not just those relating to high-rise, multiple occupancy residential buildings.

"In addition to submitting evidence, RIBA has also proposed a number of significant recom-

mendations to the review, to enhance the future fire safety of buildings for all residents and users."

The RIBA's 19-page submission has numerous recommendations, including:

- Repeal of The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, under which building owners undertake their own fire risk assessment, and the re-introduction of mandatory fire certificates for designated premises, based on independent inspections by the fire brigades, with statutory powers of entry to individual dwellings.
- Introduction of a Building Regulations requirement for central fire alarm systems in multiple occupancy residential buildings.
- Removal of the 'desk-top' study approach to demonstrating compliance with Regulation B4.
- Introduction of requirements for sprinklers and automatic fire suppression systems in all new and converted residential buildings, as currently required in Wales, or at least for residential buildings over three storeys in height.
- Introduction of a requirement for more than one means of vertical escape from new multiple occupancy residential buildings of more than three storeys in height, and no use of compensatory features for omission of a staircase or alternative means of escape.

■ Review of the requirements for natural and mechanical smoke vent/exhaust provisions to corridors, lobbies and stairs to ensure current performance capacities are sufficient.

■ External walls of buildings over 18 metres in height to be constructed of non-combustible (European class A1) materials only.

■ Retro-fitting sprinklers and fire alarms in existing residential buildings over 18 metres in height, or maybe even three storeys for sprinklers.

The RIBA says that consideration should be given to revising the 'principal designer' and 'principal contractor' roles set out in the CDM Regulations 2015, with regard to ensuring so far as is reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare.

The 'principal designer' should have powers during the design and any 'contractor design' periods of projects to enable safe design and construction.

This will need greater level of approvals and inspection by Building Control officers and independent clerks of works/site architects. The 'principal contractor' role should have a greater responsibility to work with fire brigades, client and 'principal designer' to achieve fire safety objectives.

Home and away

Government officials conned

HUNDREDS of people, including Eastern Cape government officials, are believed to have lost millions of rands in an investment swindle.

The outfit, X-Traders Market, dubbing itself XTM, operated from offices in King William's Town and Fort Beaufort, and claimed to have a head office in Durban and other offices in Maritzburg, Greytown and Pongolo.

It apparently scammed investors of their savings with promises of extraordinary growth in returns. Some of these promises included 100% profits on investments.

Beefing up security

WORLD renowned insurance brokers Marsh has appointed an ex-UK National Crime Agency (NCA) director of cyber crime to its London team, its second former intelligence official in the capital in as many years.

Jamie Saunders will join the Tower Place West brokerage as a strategic adviser, in a newly created role.

Saunders was director of the National Cyber Crime Unit at the NCA, which is focused on policing organised crime.

He was previously director of international cyber policy at the Foreign.

Women get scam advice

THAILAND is offering a free course to help Thai women cope with the highs and lows of inter-racial marriage and avoid potential scams or falling victim to human trafficking when moving abroad.

As Thai society becomes more accepting of inter-racial marriages, some women view them as a way to better their economic status, the social development ministry says.

Although there is no recent data on such marriages, a 2004 government study showed more than 15,000 women from one of the poorest regions, northeastern Isan, had married foreign men, and sent a monthly total of 122 million baht to their families.

The course covers "legal rights, how to seek help through relevant Thai authorities, as well as exploring issues of culture shock," said Dusadee Ayuwat, an associate professor at Khon Kaen University who helped to design it.

Sentenced to death

THE former head of a major Vietnamese bank has been sentenced to death for his role in a fraud case involving millions of dollars of illegal loans.

Nguyen Xuan Son, who served as general director of OceanBank, was convicted of embezzlement, abuse of power and economic mismanagement.

Dozens of former employees also received lengthy prison sentences in the major corruption trial.

Nguyen Xuan Son's lawyer told Reuters he would appeal the verdict.

OceanBank is partially-state owned, so Son's crime of mishandling state money was thought to be particularly serious. After leaving the bank, he rose to be head of state oil giant PetroVietnam.

The bank's ex-chairman Ha Van Tham, once one of the richest people in Vietnam, was jailed for life on the same charges, and for violating lending rules.

In total, 51 officials and bankers stood trial, accused of mismanagement leading to losses of \$69m (£50m).

Soccer boss's warning

PETER Lim, a former stockbroker who owns Spain's Valencia football club, has warned members of the public not to fall victim to false claims that he has endorsed investments.

The son of a fishmonger, Lim's net worth is currently estimated at just over \$2.1bn (£1.6bn, /1.8bn), according to Forbes Magazine

One scam involved several Facebook accounts that were supposed to be Lim's official accounts.

However, a spokesperson representing Lim said that Forbes' 13th richest person in Singapore and the 973rd richest person in the world does not have any social media accounts.

At least one person has been duped into travelling to meet Lim at an overseas meeting.

Another fraud claimed that Lim endorsed investments in cryptocurrency, which the spokesperson said he does not.

£76m of fakes seized

MORE than £76m worth of fake goods were taken off the streets of Dubai last year as the authorities sought to tackle a global trade that damages legitimate businesses and fuels organised crime and terrorism.

From knock-off luxury bags from Louis Vuitton and Burberry to cheap unauthorised car parts, sellers were targeted in a large number of raids and seizures.

Weight loss drugs and anti-aging treatments were also commonly faked.

Once largely sold in the bustling streets of Karama, many are now promoted via social media accounts and WhatsApp and delivered to tourists' and residents' hotels and homes.

The value of the seizures was revealed at the Regional Intellectual Property Crime Conference, which aims to strengthen cooperation among international law enforcement agencies.

The latest iPhones - or rather cheap imitations that look like genuine models - were also seized. When Dubai police raided a villa in the city earlier this year, they found 214 iPhone 7s and 673 iPhone 6s Plus models,

along with more than 20,000 sets of fake headphones.

BT joins Interpol

BT has become the first telecommunications provider to sign a data exchange agreement with INTERPOL as it continues to step up its efforts to combat the growing incidence of cyber-crime across the globe.

The accord, signed at the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation (IGCI) in Singapore, provides a framework for threat information exchange focusing on data relating to criminal trends in cyber-space, emerging and known cyber-threats and malicious attacks.

The mutual data sharing agreement will foster even greater co-operation between the two parties as they continue their fight to protect families, consumers, businesses and governments against the rising tide of cyber-crime.

BT's threat intelligence experts will provide the IGCI with their knowledge and unique insight into the evolving global threat landscape, helping INTERPOL in its efforts to identify and take action against cyber-criminals operating around the world.

Tackling cyber crime

The European Commission has joined the war on cyber-crime, creating a new EU Cybersecurity Agency to co-ordinate responses to and prevent cyber attacks.

The agency, a substantial beefing up and changing of the remit of a Crete-based European agency, will organise pan-European cybersecurity exercises annually and ensure better sharing of threat intelligence and knowledge.

It will also prepare plans for rapid co-ordinated responses to large-scale cross-border cyber attacks.

The EU will also establish a Cybersecurity Competence Network and centre to monitor developments in the digital world, and a commission directive is helping to beef up criminal law responses by suggesting definitions and common standards of penalties for cyber attacks to member states.

German car riddle

AMONG hundreds of thousands of Volkswagen and Audi vehicles that were bought back by the manufacturer under terms of the diesel emissions scandal settlement, at least 69 have gone astray.

The cars were supposed to have been stored in the parking lot of the abandoned Pontiac Silverdome football stadium in Michigan with thousands of others.

Instead of sitting near the former home of the NFL Detroit Lions, these TDI-badged cars wound up with fake Michigan titles, parked near a wholesale auction in Indiana.



The real Andrew McCabe, acting director of the FBI

Make sure you're not trumped by this bogus FBI email

THIS is a photograph of the real acting director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Andrew McCabe who, in his capacity as head of one of the world's leading crime-fighting agencies, makes many decisions on the instruction of US President Donald Trump.

But offering me large sums of cash would not be one of those decisions so the email I received allegedly from him should serve as a warning to residents everywhere.

The email is quite a common one as it goes, but this fraudster actually claims to be the real Andrew McCabe and even uses the FBI address on Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington.

It came from the email address info@fbi.com-net and this is how it goes:

The Federal Bureau of Investigation Washington D.C (FBI) write to inform you that we operate 56 field offices in major cities through out the United States of America many of these offices are further subdivided into smaller resident agencies which have jurisdiction over a specific area.

These resident agencies are considered to be part of the primary field offices. FBI Headquarters, located in Washington D.C. The FBI have purposely create an office in order for

us to contact you personally, soon we will provide you with a line you can reach us with for more information about this compensation funds.

Our mission is to help protect you, your communities, and your businesses from the most dangerous threats facing our nation—from international and domestic terrorists to spies on U.S. soil...from cyber villains to corrupt government officials...from mobsters to violent gangs...from child predators to serial killers.

In regard to the previous mail sent to you concerning your compensation fund of \$750,000.00(seven hundred and fifty thousand United States Dollars) which was recently endorsed by the US government to compensate all the SCAM VICTIMS that have been scammed, This is an instruction from the Office of the U.S President Donald Trump.

In order for us to secure and protect your information's against impostor/impersonators.You are to contact the paying Bank for the releasing of your compensation fund directly into your account.

Therefore, we advise that you follow up their procedure as may be required from you as that will further hasten up the whole process regard

to the release of your compensation fund to you as instructed by government. Just keep us updated on anything you are ask to do by the corresponding bank. Note: this claim will end on the 31th of August 2017 ...The Bank Details will be released to you as soon as you get back to us

*Acting FBI Director Andrew McCabe
Federal Bureau of Investigation*

*J. Edgar Hoover Building, 935 Pennsylvania Ave,
NW Washington, D.C., 20535-0001, USA*

Clearly the FBI would not write or email me offering thousands of pounds from a special scam victims fund and they would only visit me, without warning, if I was on their wanted list. These scams are all too common and frequently come from people posing as ministers, MPs, Lords or Government officials.

If you do respond then you can wave goodbye to your savings because that's what 'Mr McCabe' and other crooks like him need your personal details for.

Andrew McCabe is real, but he will be horrified to know that fraudsters, usually operating from behind a desk in Nigeria, are posing as him just to try and make you part with your money.



Award for Bernadette

SUSSEX police officer Bernadette Lawrie has achieved national recognition for her work in protecting vulnerable people from crime.

PC Lawrie (pictured) won the NPCC (National Police Chiefs' Council) Excellence in Fraud Policing Award at the Serious and Organised Crime Exchange (SOCEX) Fraud Conference.

The award is in recognition of her work as part of Operation Signature. The main objective of Operation Signature, initiated and developed by Bernadette, is to identify and support vulnerable victims of fraud.

The SOCEX conference which hosts senior investigators from across the UK, introduced this new award to reflect the achievements of individuals and teams who have made outstanding, innovative contributions to fraud policing.

Operation Signature provides preventative measures to protect victims and safeguard them from further targeting; providing prevention advice and working with statutory and voluntary agencies both locally and nationally to influence change.

Bernadette identifies current fraud trends and the increasingly sophisticated methods being adopted by fraudsters. Her work ensures that she constantly liaises with force analysts and research staff to ensure that any reported offences that may involve a vulnerable or potentially vulnerable victim are identified and resourced accordingly.

Operation Signature offers both colleagues and external agencies training, including an introduction to all new police recruits and call handlers who have direct contact with victims.

Bernadette has significantly supported fraud prevention in Sussex by organising and producing promotional literature, presentations with senior officers and local communities, giving interviews with media and partner agencies, ensuring information is delivered to every home in Sussex.

Specialist Crime Command Detective Chief Inspector Steve Boniface said: 'I want to congratulate Bernadette on receiving this well-deserved recognition for delivering Operation Signature so brilliantly.

"She has raised awareness of fraud and its effect on victims within the community and her motivation to

deliver is an inspiration to all of those who engage with her."

Bernadette has effectively introduced a process that changes the way many police forces deal with vulnerable victims of fraud and in doing so, she has helped thousands of people and prevented individuals going through huge financial losses.

She has gained personal support for her work from the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Sussex (PCC) as well other non-governmental organisations.

PCC Katie Bourne said: "Bernadette has played a huge part in making the public aware that the financial exploitation of older people is a serious and harmful crime, as it is too often dismissed as a silly 'scam' or victims think they are at fault in some way.

"I'm really proud of the system she has established within the force which has seen huge success helping to protect our older residents here in Sussex."

For more information about Operation Signature see the Sussex Police website.

Sussex story

A MAN has been jailed for conspiracy to supply heroin and crack cocaine in Brighton and Hove.

Padodou John, 27, of no fixed address, was sentenced to four years imprisonment when he appeared at Lewes Crown Court. He had pleaded guilty to conspiracy to supply class A drugs in Brighton between 1 September 2016 and 9 March this year.

He was among 75 arrests made during a six-month long operation carried out by officers from Brighton and Hove Police's Community Investigation Team into the supply of drugs into the city.

Judge Charles Kemp said to Padodou John: "You and five others were six conspirators to supply class A drugs. You ran the Diggy drugs line from a distance and were responsible for sourcing the drugs from outside Brighton, preparing them for street sales, answering phones, taking orders and sending out the runners. Your DNA was on the packing of several transactions."

Detective Constable Jon Freeman said: "I want to thank everyone that contacted us in response to the public and media appeal about Padodou John. The information provided helped us find and arrest him."

Kevin Hume, 47, of no fixed address, was also sentenced to two years imprisonment suspended for two years and a given a six-month drug rehabilitation order for supply crack cocaine. He pleaded guilty to the charge on 30 October.

Sussex awards night

SUSSEX Police officers, staff, special constables, volunteers, colleagues from partner agencies and members of the public were honoured at this year's East Sussex divisional awards ceremony.

It was held at the East Sussex National Golf and Spa Resort, near Uckfield.

Divisional commendations were presented to 42 officers and special constables, four police staff, two police staff volunteers, two partner agency colleagues and five members of the public.

Chief Constable Commendations were presented to seven officers and two members of the public.

Certificates of Merit were awarded to six officers, two police staff, three partner agency colleagues and two members of the public and volunteers.

Royal Humane Society awards were given to two officers, one special constable and two members of the public.

The awards honour exemplary deeds of personal courage, outstanding service delivery, risking personal injury to save individuals from immediate harm, excellent leadership and communication skills and exceptional investigation of complex cases.

Chief Superintendent Di Roskilly, East Sussex Divisional Commander, said: "I am proud to be the divisional commander for such a dedicated team of people.

"Their selfless acts and professional behaviour are to be applauded. Whether they were involved in the prevention of harm, protecting the vulnerable or keeping our communities safe, each have earned their award.

"I never fail to be impressed and humbled when I hear the individual stories of bravery, professionalism, courage, personal responsibility and motivation to get the job done. For me this is my last year as Divisional Commander as I retire in few weeks. S

"thank you all for your hard work, commitment and determination to make our county a safer place. It really has been a privilege to work with you."

Have you got information?

POLICE in Crawley are trying to contact anyone who has information about an old informal project said to have been for young people with an interest in mountaineering.

The 'Crawley Mountaineering Club' was a project during the early 1970's, although its exact duration and any location is not clear.

Investigator Lucy Hailes said; "We are investigating allegations of indecent offences and would like to talk to anyone who has any information about it.

If you can help please contact us online or by calling 101, quoting reference 47170067235.

Cops assaulted three times

DANIEL Joyce, 25, of no fixed address has been jailed for assaulting three policemen on two different occasions.

He initially assaulted a police officer in April last year in Selsey after he was arrested to prevent a breach of the peace. The officer involved suffered minor facial injuries after being punched.

Joyce was charged with assaulting an officer during duty and resisting an officer during duty and was given a four week prison sentence for assault and two weeks for resisting.

„He was also sentenced for assault by beating on a woman in South Street, Chichester, on July 2. When he was arrested, Joyce kicked out at an officer and attempted to bite another. He was sentenced to eight weeks' imprisonment for assault by beating and four weeks for both assaults on officers.

Joyce was also sentenced to a four week custodial sentence after he damaged a bus windscreen and shop front at Chichester bus station on June 21.

All sentences are concurrent."



The Red Cross was duped out of almost £4m because of corruption

Red Cross conned out of £3.8m

THE Red Cross said more than \$5m (£3.8m) of aid money was lost to fraud and corruption during the Ebola epidemic in West Africa.

Auditors found overpriced supplies, salaries for non-existent aid workers and fake customs bills.

The disease, which raged between 2014 and 2016, claimed at least 10,000 lives.

It required a massive humanitarian operation costing hundreds of millions of dollars to bring it under control.

As Ebola spread across Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, the Red Cross Federation in Geneva was dispersing cash donations to the national Red Cross societies in each of those countries - altogether a sum of about \$100m.

An investigation by Red Cross auditors has revealed that in Liberia \$2.7m disappeared in fraudulently overpriced supplies, or in salaries for non-existent aid workers.

In Sierra Leone, Red Cross staff apparently colluded with local bank workers to skim off over \$2m while in Guinea, where investigations are ongoing, around \$1m disappeared in fake customs bills.

Charities targeted by fraudsters

CHARITIES are losing hundreds of thousands of pounds a month to fraud, with more than 800 instances of charity employees defrauding their organisations reported to authorities in a six months period last year, according to City of London Police.

Detective Chief Inspector Andy Fyfe of the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau at the City of London Police said 823 employee fraud cases against charities had been reported in the six months up to last October.

The largest of these involved a trustee who defrauded their charity of £1.2m, Fyfe said. He said there had also been 298 cases of victim donation fraud in the same period, worth approximately £200,000 a month.

Fraud remained a largely under-reported crime and is believed to cost the charity sector £2bn a year, attendees at the launch event heard, with cyber crimes alone now accounting for 50 per cent of all crimes in the UK.

Fyfe said the figures the police had were much lower than the actual prevalence of fraud in the sector, and the figures therefore did not fully

represent the scale of the problem across the country.

In cases reported to the police of chief executive fraud – which involves people pretending to be senior staff members or suppliers – there had been 4,154 reports by all businesses, including charities, in the past six months, Fyfe said.

This meant that average losses across the country in all sectors from chief executive fraud were approximately £12m a month.

Computer software service fraud – where fake technicians pretend to be from IT firms to gain access to computers and personal data – affecting organisations including charities had occurred 11,731 times in the past six months, Fyfe said, and cost approximately £1m a month.

He said a number of fake websites were set up in the wake of the Grenfell Tower fire, with 62 domain names associated with the fire set up in the first week to try to encourage people to make donations.

Fyfe said that ransomware attacks – where files are encrypted in order to get a ransom paid to decrypt information – accounted for about 50

per cent of all reports of cyber fraud.

Despite the risk of fraud, Dave Carter, head of counter fraud at the British Council, said he was one of only four heads of counter fraud employed in the entire charity sector, highlighting how even larger charities remained susceptible.

Helen Stephenson, chief executive of the Charity Commission, said a study by the regulator of a sample of charity frauds found that a third were perpetrated by charity employees, with the highest reported fraud to the commission amounting to £1m.

She said that weak financial controls and poor governance were among the most prevalent contributory factors to fraud in the sector, and that strengthening these areas was the "essential foundation for tackling fraud and developing a counter-fraud culture in charities".

She stressed the importance of reporting fraud to the police and the Charity Commission, and said doing so would be seen by the regulator as a sign of good governance at the affected charity.

Spotlight on Amazon

A FORMAL investigation into Amazon Prime's one-day delivery claims has been launched by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA).

The advertising watchdog has received around 200 complaints from consumers about Amazon Prime's one-day delivery claims, prompting it to start a formal investigation into the firm.

Complainants say that the company is misleading customers as items are not delivered within the one-day timeframe.

Amazon Prime is a monthly subscription service which offers unlimited one-day deliveries to customers, as well as inclusive music, film, and television streaming. It currently costs £7.99 month or £79 a year.

A statement released by the ASA says: "The ASA has now launched a formal investigation into complaints about Amazon Prime's "one-day delivery" claim.

"The general nature of complaints is that the claim is misleading because, in the complainant's experience, deliveries have taken longer than one day."

Bank scam blocker

LLOYDS Banking group has introduced a new online scam-blocker to help customers fight fraudsters attempting to steal their cash.

Designed to prevent people being duped into transferring money to fraudulent accounts, Lloyds have rolled out this new interactive protection, which will see customers of Lloyds, Halifax and Bank of Scotland being prompted to answer additional security questions before setting up new online payments.

The information could also be fed in to the Group's state-of-the-art detection systems to help predict where fraud might occur in the future.

Lloyds Banking Group blocked 250,000 attempts to impersonate customers in the past two years, but now criminals are turning to Authorised Push Payment (APP) fraud - convincing victims that they are dealing with 'genuine' bodies such as the bank, police or service providers.

MPs warn crooks are after your pension

URGENT action is needed to ban pensions cold calls to prevent people being conned out of their life savings, MPs have warned.

The Work and Pensions Select Committee also said guidance should be given automatically before retirees access their pension pot, unless they expressly opt out.

It welcomed a commitment made by the Government to banning pensions cold calling, but pressed for the move within six months.

Chairman Frank Field said pensions are "rich pickings" for scammers offering over-the-top returns or apparently clever advice.

He said: "Every day that passes without a ban, people are being avoidably conned out of their life savings.

"There is no need to overcomplicate this: our proposal would see an enforceable ban in place by summer, closing at least one door on rafts of scammers at a stroke."

Yvonne Braun, of the Association of British Insurers (ABI), said: "People's life-savings must not be left vulnerable to scammers and con artists.

"With mortgages already protected by a cold-calling ban it is high time pensions were given the same level of protection."

A clause in the Financial Guidance and Claims Bill would enable a ban on pensions cold calls.

But the plan is flawed because it ties the move to a new financial guidance body being set up, the committee said - potentially delaying the ban

until 2020.

The committee said: "It is much more urgent than that. We recommend a new clause which would require the Government to introduce a ban by June 2018 at the latest."

Mr Field added: "Making guidance the default option combined with the ban on cold calling would be a simple but big step forward in consumer protection in the era of pension freedoms.

"The Government should use the Bill that has just arrived in the Commons to legislate to protect pensions now."

The risks of being conned have been heightened since the 2015 pension freedoms, which give over-55s a wider range of choices over how they use their pension pot.

The Pensions Minister Steve Webb infamously backed retired people splashing their pots of cash on a sports car and then simply claiming the state pension.

He said: "If people do get a Lamborghini, and end up on the state pension, the state is much less concerned about that, and that is their choice."

The combination of high financial value and low saver engagement has made pensions a scammer's "perfect storm", MPs declared.



MP Frank Field said pensions are rich pickings for fraudsters



SelectDNA has been used by police forces across the country in the fight against crime

Now you are a marked man!

THE Metropolitan Police have found a new weapon in the fight against moped theft, acid attacks and the anti-social behaviour by scrambler bikes – it's called SelectaDNA.

SelectaDNA Tagging Spray is an innovative strategy that tackles many aspects of crime today.

However, it is not just a London problem, and other forces have already been using the proven spray technology including West Yorkshire Police, West Midlands Police, Cheshire Police and Merseyside Police.

But now London officers are beginning to use the product in the hope it will lead to more arrests in new and worrying areas of criminal behaviour.

Over the past 12 months, areas such as Wakefield in West Yorkshire, have seen a massive 41% increase in the use of stolen motor bikes and scooters.

Inspector Paul Sullivan of West Yorkshire Police said: "The primary problem in pursuing any prosecutions against suspected offenders revolves around lack of identification evidence.

"A lack of witness testimony and forensic opportunities means that it is very difficult to secure sufficient evidence to support charges."

One means of bridging this gap is to deploy a product that can resolve the identification problem. The SelectaDNA Tagging Spray can be sprayed by officers at suspected illegal and antisocial scrambler bikes, marking the bikes, clothing and skin of any riders and passengers with a uniquely coded but invisible dye.

If suspects are arrested or bikes recovered, the DNA code will link offenders to bikes and any associated criminal offences. Once deployed the spray can be detected under ultraviolet light, which is already a standard feature in police custody suites.

"The solution can be projected onto a suspect without causing any harm whatsoever and will remain detectable for weeks and months on clothing and indefinitely on footwear," said Inspector Sullivan.

Once the offender has come into contact with the solution, officers can later carry out follow up visits to known suspects' home

addresses armed with handheld UV lamps to detect the product on the person, clothing and footwear.

"Where there is a positive reaction to SelectaDNA, the suspect will be arrested and clothing will be seized.

James Brown, MD of Selectamark, the security company which produces the SelectaDNA Tagging Spray, said: "This is a great example of how innovative technology is helping police catch criminals and remove anti-social offenders and dangerous drivers from our streets.

"It only takes a tiny drop of DNA spray to tag and identify an offender and this tactic will undoubtedly lead to more seizures and prosecutions."

Selectamark also provides search dogs to detect SelectaDNA forensic markers on offenders.

In partnership with Search Dogs UK, the dogs are the first in the world to be trained to sniff out SelectaDNA markings and have assisted UK police forces in several operations.

Crackdown on fakes

THE European Commission will draw up a list of countries and online marketplaces which are the biggest source of fake goods and piracy coming into Europe, as they step up its fight against the multi-billion euro counterfeiting industry.

The European Commission plans to help curb the sale of fake goods in the EU, which make up 5 per cent of all imports into the continent and are worth /85 billion.

As part of the measures to protect intellectual property rights, the EU will draw up a “watch list” of the biggest non-EU markets involved in producing and selling fake goods and tighten up security at Europe’s customs borders.

China is the biggest single source of the world’s fake goods, according to the EU’s Intellectual Property Office, with Montenegro, Hong Kong, and Malaysia all big producers. Footwear, leather goods, clothing, electrical goods and watches are the main fake items seized by European customs authorities, according to the EUIPO.

Benefit fraud rises

BENEFIT fraud has reached record levels after it rose by £200 million in the space of a year, the Department of Work and Pensions has admitted.

Fraud swallowed up almost £2.1 billion of the department’s total budget of £174 billion – the equivalent of £40 million per week.

It means the DWP now loses almost twice as much money to fraud as the entire £1.1 billion yearly budget of the Foreign Office.

Sites closed down

OVER 15,000 websites have been suspended for selling counterfeit products

Between March and November 2017, 15,420 illicit websites selling counterfeit goods have been suspended by the Police Intellectual Property Crime Unit (PIPCU).

Europol’s Intellectual Property Crime Coordinated Coalition (IPC), the US National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Centre and law enforcement authorities from 27 EU Member States and third parties have suspended over 20,520 domain names in total, 15,420 of which were from the UK.

Fake iphone chargers could prove so lethal

IN the first study of its kind in the UK, Electrical Safety First, with the support of Apple, conducted a series of safety tests on counterfeit and lookalike iPhone chargers, including 50 purchased in the UK.

The findings, published in a new report, reveal that almost all (98%) of the chargers tested had the potential to deliver lethal electric shock and/or cause a fire.

The chargers were sourced from a variety of online marketplaces and independent discount stores and stalls across the UK.

Of those tested, all but one failed one or more of the tests and more than one in three chargers failed every part of the safety screening. After subjecting the chargers to a number of mechanical and safety tests:

Almost half (23) failed an electric strength test; meaning that there is a severe risk of electric shock when using these chargers.

Internal examination showed almost half failed basic safety requirements; these chargers contained sub-standard internal components or inadequate spacing, also presenting a serious risk of electrocution or fire for consumers.

Overall, two in three (68%) of the chargers tested carried a severe risk of electric shock due to lack

of insulation and poor quality internal components. 15 chargers that passed the electrical tests failed the plug pin strength test.

If a pin is not sufficiently strong, there is danger that it could break off inside a mains socket, resulting in a risk of electric shock from an exposed live pin.

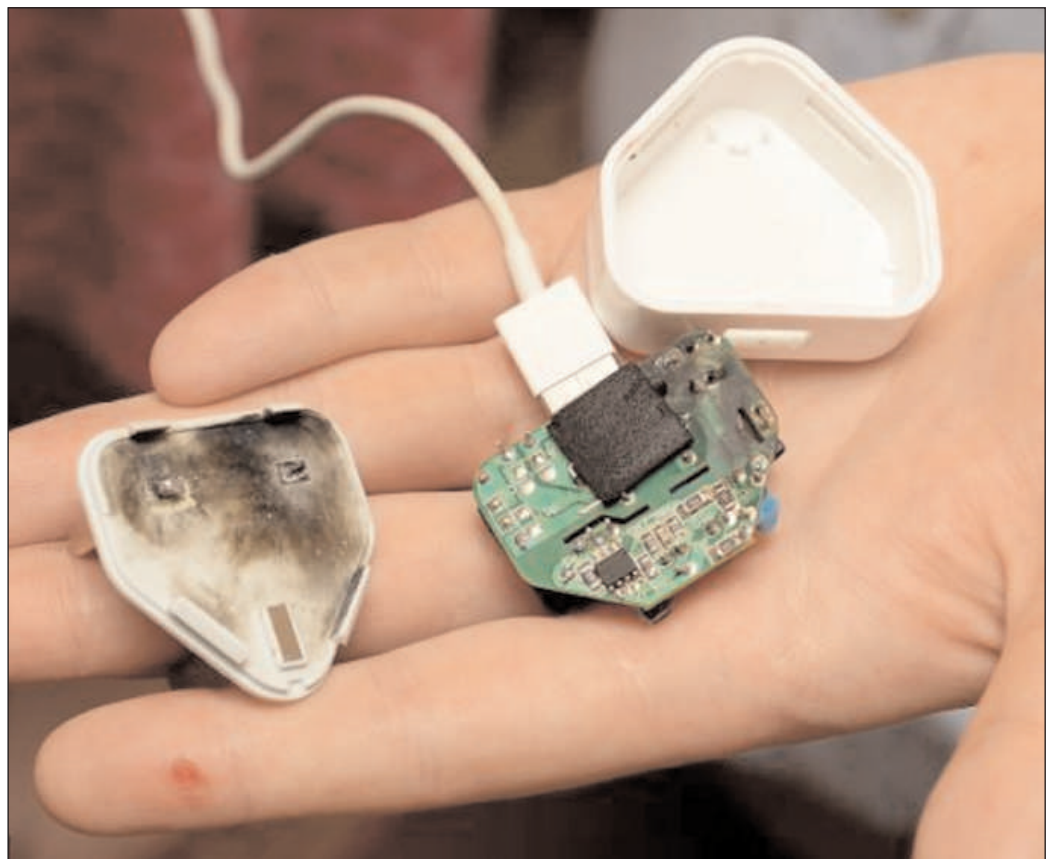
These results show that in the overwhelming majority of cases, counterfeit or lookalike chargers could overheat, catch fire and deliver a potentially lethal electric shock to any one at any point during their use.

A common thread between the 50 chargers was that they all had incorrect or fraudulent safety markings.

In a few cases, attempts to copy markings from genuine iPhone chargers resulted in errors, such as simple spelling mistakes.

Although this does not pose a direct risk of injury to the user, in Electrical Safety First’s experience this is indicative of other failings that may compromise safety.

For advice and tips on spotting a fake charger, visit electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/fakechargers or search #spotthefake on social media.



Fake iphone chargers could deliver a lethal electrical shock

Which? report claims product safety needs a major overhaul

THE United Kingdom's product safety and recall system is so fragmented and out of date that it could potentially be putting people's lives at risk.

That's the damning indictment contained in a special report by consumer champion Which? who are now calling on the Government to take swift action.

Their demands include urgent changes to the regime, including the establishment of a national body that can take control of dangerous situations as they arise and get products out of people's homes quickly, as well as creating a 'one-stop-shop' for information on product recalls before there is further tragedy or loss of life.

Which? claim the product recall and safety system is not fit-for-purpose and risking people's lives through the lack of joined-up national oversight and action.

The organisation is also concerned that Government has also been slow to respond to serious incidents and subsequent reviews following product related fires. They are currently awaiting the outcome of the Working Group on Product Recall and Safety set up in October 2016.

They have published our own report, highlighting a number of serious problems created by an overly-localised and confusing system, which has no single source of information on product recalls for consumers and uses an ineffective local solution to tackle what is a national problem.

The issues raised in the report were highlighted in practice when Peterborough Trading Standards initially failed to force Whirlpool to change its advice to consumers, despite more than 700 instances of Whirlpool tumble dryers catching fire.

The local authority only changed its position once Which? had threatened legal action, highlighting the lack of a proportionate and effective way to appeal or review trading standards teams' product safety decisions.

Problems in the regime are made worse by the lack resources for local trading standards teams, which have lost more than half (56%) of their full time equivalent staff and expertise since 2009.

Combined with an over reliance on manufacturers to self-check their products' safety, this paints a worrying picture.

Which? is now calling on the Government to urgently set up a new national body to take responsibility for product safety and recalls, which has the resources and expertise to identify dangerous goods and to make sure they are removed from people's homes.

A single, reliable and well-publicised website – acting as a 'one-stop-shop' – should also be created to provide authoritative information and advice when dangerous products are identified or recalls are required.

Peter Vicary-Smith, Chief Executive of Which?, said: "The product safety system simply isn't fit-for-purpose and its over reliance on a local approach to a national problem poses grave risks to consumers.

"The Government must now take urgent action and create a new national body that has all of the tools it needs to get unsafe products out of people's homes."

Responding to a report by Which? on the UK's product safety and recall system, Cllr Simon Blackburn, Chair of the Local Government Association's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, said: "Council trading standards team play a crucial role in removing unsafe products, prosecuting irresponsible sellers and helping to keep communities safe.



Peter Vicary-Smith - current system is not fit for purpose

Recall system is a potential killer

"Despite the significant budget cuts and resource pressures trading standards have experienced, they are still doing a key job on the front-line, and it would be unwise to think that their role could simply be picked up by a new national body.

"We mustn't forget that it is manufacturers who are wholly responsible for the safety of their products - especially when faults are entirely outside the control of the consumer – and for alerting them to any relevant safety information, including product recalls.

"With firefighters dealing with three tumble dryer fires a day and electrical products being recalled at a rate of more than one a week in the UK, consumers need all the help they can get in finding out about the safety of their electrical products quickly and easily.

"A new national database of product recalls should be supported by a major publicity campaign to help flag it up to consumers as a trusted one-stop site to check all electrical goods.

"Rather than a comprehensive overhaul, which is unnecessary, the product recall system needs realigning to best serve trading standards teams operating in local communities.

"Any change to the system should therefore consider how existing national regulatory resources, which are already working with local government, can better support trading standards team locally across the country."

