

★ JOIN THE FIGHT ★

Suffolk Consumer Champion
Weekly Bulletin

28/04/2017

This week's top features



Bid for Loan Shark Money

Local charities, community groups, organisations and schools are being encouraged to bid for up to £5,000 of proceeds of crime money, to spend on a project of their choice which will help combat unscrupulous loan sharks.

The England Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) have put forward multiple pots of £5,000 to fund projects that will assist in raising awareness of loan sharks, in the hope of preventing more people from falling victim of these criminals.

This large sum of cash, which has been confiscated from convicted loan sharks through the Proceeds of Crime Act, is being used to fund local community projects which meet the IMLT's criteria.

The team will vote on which applicants will be granted the funding to support their community project. The aim of this national scheme is to see the illegal earnings these loan sharks once made, used wisely, to benefit key areas.

Last year, the national funding scheme was extremely popular, with the IMLT receiving over 150 bids for the available pots of money. As a result, 100 projects were funded and more work was carried out across England, in a bid to get rid of loan sharks in local communities.

Applicants are welcome to apply for the cash, to spend on any worthwhile community project which does at least one of the following:

- Contributes to raising the awareness of the dangers of using 'loan sharks'
- Prevents crime and disorder and publicises the Stop Loan Sharks message
- Promotes the work of the Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) in communities
- Encourages reporting of loan sharks

Loan sharks often trap borrowers into spiralling debt by charging astronomical rates of interest and arbitrary extra charges. In some cases, loan sharks have been known to resort to bullying tactics such as intimidation, threats and even violence to enforce repayment amongst borrowers.

Groups can apply for up to a maximum of £5,000 per project idea. Applicants can submit more than one project idea if they wish.

For more information about this funding scheme and to receive an electronic application form, please contact LIAISE Manager Cath Williams on Catherine.wohlers@birmingham.gov.uk
The closing date for applications is Friday 30th June 2017.



Allergy Awareness

Allergic conditions take on many forms & vary in severity from the mildest of hayfever to life threatening anaphylaxis.

Allergies are life changing and can be fatal. Although there are no cures for food allergies, having the information to eat, order food and shop wisely can make a great difference.

It is estimated that 21 million people in the UK suffer from at least one type of allergy. Up to 8% of children and 2% of adults are diagnosed with a food allergy and at least 1 in 100 people has coeliac disease.

If you have a food allergy you need to check what foods have been recalled on a regular basis. [We list all recalls on our blog here.](#)



Fraudsters Steal your ID on Facebook

Fraudsters need just three pieces of personal information to steal your identity, most of which can be found on your Facebook profile.

All it takes is your name, date of birth and address for fraudsters to steal your identity and access your bank accounts, take out loans or take out mobile phones in your name.

Recent YouGov research from [Equifax](#) has revealed that a high proportion of social media users risk identity theft by giving fraudsters easy access to this type of personal information.

The survey found that almost 30% of adults with a social media account include their full name and date of birth on their profile pages.

Even if you don't publically show your age on your Facebook profile, fraudsters can still work out your age from

people wishing you well on your timeline. Once they have your date of birth, they can find out where you live too.

You should review your privacy settings and ensure you are not revealing too much. If you need some guidance, this [complete guide](#) will help you keep control of your Facebook account.

If you have been a victim of identity theft, you should act quickly and not ignore the problem, [follow this advice](#).

[Product Recalls](#)

[Fraud and Scam Advice](#)

[Consumer Rights](#)

Checkatrade.com
Where reputation matters

