

Dorset Police warn against social media scammers



#TurnOn2SV

18,000 people reported their email or social media account hacked

Email and social media account passwords should be **strong and different from all your other passwords**. Enabling 2-step verification (2SV) will keep criminals out of your account, even if your password is stolen.

Action Fraud
National Fraud & Cyber Crime Reporting Centre
www.actionfraud.police.uk

Cyber Aware

As part of Cyber Security Awareness Month this October, Dorset Police are encouraging the public to turn on two-step verification for their email and social media accounts.

A recent report from Action Fraud shows that a number of people in Dorset have been targeted by scammers attempting to take control of their WhatsApp account.

Email and social media account hacking is the most reported cyber-dependent crime in the UK. Nationally, a staggering 18,000 people reported their accounts hacked in the 2021/22 financial year, with many more going unreported.

In the current scam affecting Dorset residents, criminals add their victim's phone number to a new phone, prompting the app to request a code for two-step verification (2SV). The scammer will then contact the victim and, one way or another, persuade them to provide the code. Once they have the code, the scammer can then take over the account and use it for further fraud.

Chris Conroy from the Dorset Police Cyber Crime Unit said: "Used correctly, enabling 2SV can keep criminals out of your account, even if they know your password. Never give your code to someone else, no matter how hard they try to convince you. The UK's National Cyber Security Centre recommends that people set up this extra level of security on their 'important' accounts - accounts that protect things that you really care about and would cause the most harm to you if the passwords were stolen."

Two-step verification is also known as two-factor authentication (2FA) and multi-factor authentication (MFA). 2SV is a way of 'double checking' that you really are the person you are claiming to be when you're using online services.

Chris continued: "Data from Action Fraud suggests that no one age group is more likely to be targeted. This can happen to anyone. Our free cyber awareness sessions are available to anyone in Dorset. We regularly speak to community groups, businesses, schools, and charities who want to feel more confident using the internet and online services."

The sessions offer impartial advice and guidance about common cyber threats like phishing, malware, and email scams, as well as providing advice on how you can keep your online accounts safe.

If you are interested in booking a cyber awareness session for you, your business or community group please visit the Dorset Police website: www.dorset.police.uk/cyber

For more information about protecting your accounts, visit the National Cyber Security Centre's Cyber Aware website: www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware/home



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