

TIPS TO STAY SAFE ONLINE

Recently I attended a briefing about how to stay safe online and these were the take home messages.

The Cyber Aware section of the National Cyber Security Centre website outlines six straightforward actions that will make a real difference to your cyber security. [Cyber Aware - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

Has someone stolen your details? You can check if your email address or phone number has been involved in a data breach. [Have I Been Pwned: Check if your email has been compromised in a data breach](#) If you are one of the 12 billion stolen accounts then you will need to change your password. (note - pwned is not misspelled!).

Wherever possible use two factor authentication. Many websites including amazon have this facility. When you log on and after entering your password the organisation you are logging onto sends you a text with number to your mobile phone. You then enter this number to complete the logging on process. Your Bank may already do this.

Be very careful when using public wireless networks (such as hotels, airports, etc) as wireless routers are extremely easy to compromise. Using the mobile data provided on your mobile phone is safer than using a wireless network that you do not control. If you have to use a public wireless networks for shopping or anything sensitive, you can make the process more secure by creating a Virtual Private Network (creates a secure encrypted tunnel through the internet). A programme that has been recommended to me is NordVpn (I have no connection with the company) [Best VPN service. Online security starts with a click. | NordVPN](#)

A problem that I have is multiple passwords and the constant need to activate the forgot password protocol! One way to overcome this is to use a password manager. The one that has been recommended to me is NordPass (I have no connection to the company). [Securely Store, Manage & Autofill Passwords | NordPass](#)

For older people who find dealing with computers a challenge there is an excellent charity called AbilityNet who have a network of disclosure-checked volunteers who provide free IT support to older people and people with disabilities of any age. [Request Free IT Support At Home | AbilityNet](#)

The internet has changed the world and enables us to do many things at home and at work, BUT it is also used by criminals & fraudsters. If it looks too good to be true then it is likely to be a scam. Fraudsters often try to get you to agree to something before a deadline; if you are tempted by the deal on offer it is a good idea to get advice from friends or family before agreeing to anything. If you apply the same standards of suspicion and due diligence to things on the internet as you do to people knocking on your front door, it will help you avoid the many scams that unfortunately exist online!

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