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| NEWS RELEASE  | # |

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| 28 March 2024  |
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| **‘Are you scam savvy?’ sessions back by popular demand in 2024**  |
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| Are you scam savvy PR imageFraud is the most common crime in the UK, accounting for almost 40% of all crime in England and Wales.In West Sussex, during the last three months of 2023, a total of £3.5 million was lost to fraudsters, with 53% of victims being over the age of 75. In the same time frame the top three fraud types were courier/impersonator fraud, dating and romance scams, and sextortion which is classed as a form of blackmail. To support residents from becoming victims of fraud, West Sussex County Council’s Digital Safety Team has organised another round of their popular ‘Are you scam savvy?’ online and in-person sessions, which were launched last year.These free 1.5-hour sessions are open to anyone who wants to keep themselves, or friends and family, from falling victim to different types of scams, both online and offline.The dates available for the online only sessions are:* Wednesday 22 May: 1pm - 2.30pm
* Friday 5 July: 11am - 12.30pm.

In-person ‘Are you scam savvy?’ sessions will also be taking place in three West Sussex Libraries across the county:* Friday 19 April at Crawley Library: 10am - 11.30am
* Monday 20 May at Bognor Library: 10am - 11.30am
* Monday 17 June at Shoreham Library: 10am - 11.30am .

If you can’t attend the library events in person, there is also the opportunity to view these online.Booking is essential to attend any of the in-person or online sessions and free tickets can be ordered through [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk) by searching for ‘Are you scam savvy?’. Councillor Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue, at the county council said: “Our Digital Safety Team has been working across West Sussex for a number of years making sure that residents are advised on how best to remain as safe as they can from scams and fraud in the online space. This supports our [Council Plan](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/policies-and-reports/corporate-policy-and-reports/our-council-plan/) theme of keeping people safe from vulnerable situations.“The creation of the online and in-person ‘Are you scam savvy?’ sessions this year enables our residents to choose whether to receive the latest advice online or at one of our  libraries, which are amazing community hubs that many locals already rely on to get information, help and support from our trusted staff members.“If you aren’t 100% comfortable with keeping yourself safe online, or you want to learn more to support your family members, I would definitely recommend booking onto one of these free sessions with the team.”If you can’t attend any of the sessions, you can still visit [www.westsussex.gov.uk/staying-safe-online](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/staying-safe-online) where you can find more information on how the Digital Safety Team can support you, your family or business to keep safe online.**ENDS** **For further information please contact the news desk on 0330 222 8090 or email** **pressoffice@westsussex.gov.uk****. For urgent out-of-hours enquiries please call 07767 098415.** Facebook  Twitter |

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