



## **PRESS RELEASE FROM The Blue Lamp Trust**

Contact: Theresa Pratt

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### **Bobby Scheme returns to full service as vulnerable are hit by lockdown scammers**

A Hampshire charity which promotes home safety and security for vulnerable people are warning about heartless lockdown scammers offering bogus Covid-9 tests online.

Research by the organization Citizens Advice has revealed that over a third of UK adults have been targeted by scam emails since the lockdown started. This proportion rises to 45% for people with a disability or long-term illness and 50% of people with an increased risk of coronavirus or who are shielding.

Many of these scams play on people's concerns about coronavirus, offering fake testing kits, vaccinations and government financial support. People report receiving a phone call claiming to come from an NHS track and trace service warning that they have been in contact with a Covid-9 carrier. They are then asked for their credit card details to pay for a testing kit, even though the NHS is testing people for free.

And many of the people being targeted fall within the group eligible for support from The Bobby Scheme, which visits the homes of crime victims, vulnerable and elderly people across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

The charity has been operating a reduced service throughout the lockdown, its mobile fitter teams visiting high priority cases only, but they are reinstating their full service this week and will be warning clients about the dangers of online and telephone scammers.

Theresa Pratt, General Manager of the Blue Lamp Trust which funds the Bobby Scheme, said: "Our fitters don't just give advice and fit fire alarms or security locks, they also talk to the people they visit about staying safe online, explaining about email scammers.

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**The Blue Lamp Trust**

**Police & Fire HQ, Leigh Road, Eastleigh SO50 9SJ. Tel: 0300 777 0157**

Charity No. 1137786. Registered Company in England and Wales. Registration No. 07267846. VAT No. 110741266

Registered Address : 1 London Road, Southampton SO15 2AE

Patron of The Blue Lamp Trust  
**HM Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire, Nigel Atkinson Esq.**

President of The Blue Lamp Trust  
**Mrs Lindsay Fox MBE DL**



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“We are pleased to be getting all of our fitters back on the road because the need for our services within the community is as great as ever, if not greater.”

Bobby Scheme fitters are now able to call on anyone in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight over the age of 65 who is vulnerable or disabled to give them general security and fire prevention advice.

To reassure clients, they will be taking extra health precautions. People being visited are now being asked to ensure all internal doors are left open and that there is good ventilation throughout their property. Bobby Scheme fitters, who are all uniformed, vetted by the Hampshire Constabulary and carry identification cards, will also wear masks and gloves and will disinfect any hard surface they touch. As far as possible they will also ask clients to keep two metres away.

The Bobby Scheme is funded by the business activities of the Blue Lamp Trust, a not-for-profit organization, which provides training and assessment for taxi license applicants and private hire car drivers, as well as raising local sponsorship and donations.

However, many of the Trust’s training and fundraising activities have been suspended in line with Government lockdown guidelines, which means the Bobby Scheme currently depends solely on donations from businesses and individuals to keep its fitters on the road. Donations can be made via Virgin Money giving <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charity-web/charity/finalCharityHomepage.action?charityId=1004047>

The Bobby Scheme is ready to respond to requests for assistance from eligible people, their relatives or carers. Anyone who is eligible for the scheme can request a visit from a Bobby Scheme fitter via the website <http://bluelamptrust.org.uk/referralform/>

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## Notes to Editor

### Photographs:

Bobby Scheme fitter for the Isle of Wight John Eldridge fits security locks to a client’s front door.

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### **The Bobby Scheme**

Supported by the emergency services and local authorities, The Bobby Scheme provides a free service to elderly and vulnerable people, promoting crime prevention and fire safety initiatives. For over 20 years its trained fitters, who are all vetted by Hampshire police, uniformed and carry ID cards, visit homes to carry out full home crime-prevention surveys, give reassurance and offer specific crime-prevention advice to improve safety. They also fit locks, spyholes, door chains and smoke alarms where needed.

### **The Blue Lamp Trust**

The Blue Lamp Trust, based in Eastleigh, provides driving assessments and other training for taxi licence applicants and fleet driver training nationwide. Through its activities it funds and operates The Bobby Scheme in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

### **Contact:**

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Follow us on Twitter [@BlueLampTrust](https://twitter.com/BlueLampTrust) and on Facebook at: The Blue Lamp Trust - Bobby Scheme

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