



**Lancashire
Constabulary**

police and communities together

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Police turn up heat on fraudsters with new reporting centre

LANCASHIRE Constabulary has become the latest police force to start recording fraud through a national reporting system.

From Monday 18 February, the majority of members of the public who contact the police about fraud or internet crime will be directed to **Action Fraud** – a UK reporting centre which aims to enhance investigations and slash the amount of time officers spend taking reports of the crime.

In most cases, victims will be directed to Action Fraud, where specially trained staff will take reports over the phone or online. The reports will then be used to help police forces detect fraudsters operating in their area.

In serious fraud cases where the victim is reporting a crime in action or the caller is believed to be vulnerable, reports will be dealt with by the police as normal.

The national scheme, which has been successfully trialled by a number of other police forces, will allow seemingly unrelated incidents from around the country to be linked, helping to identify networks of criminals.

Detective Superintendent Lee Halstead, from Lancashire Constabulary's Serious and Organised Crime Unit, said: "Action Fraud will greatly enhance fraud investigations allowing the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau to build a picture of the latest crime trends.

"The system will provide the public and businesses with just one point of contact, making the process of reporting fraud and internet crime much quicker and more convenient for victims.

"Fraud is often a hidden crime, but it affects all levels of society from large businesses and high street retailers to pensioners. People can be targeted in their own homes and we are all at risk of becoming victims. The effects can be at best annoying and at their worst devastating.

"I am pleased Lancashire Constabulary is now on board with this national reporting system. I would encourage people to report anything suspicious to Action Fraud – even if they don't lose any money. Their information can help to root out fraudsters and prevent crime."

Action Fraud can be contacted by visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040 between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm Saturday to Sunday.

Ends
18/02/13