

Kent Fraud Alert System



TO STOP FRAUD™

Good News Story

A criminal who conspired to launder money from victims of fraud has been jailed for five years. Detectives from the Kent and Essex Serious Crime Directorate launched an investigation after receiving reports that trade customers had been tricked into paying money into the wrong bank accounts.



Mayowa Christopher, 30, was a member of an organised group with links to Thanet that gained access to people's finances by pretending to work for their bank or legitimate businesses they owed money to.

Through chat messages exchanged with an associate, officers were able to link Christopher to several offences including one in July 2019 in which a woman received a call from someone claiming to work for her bank. They gained her trust by demonstrating knowledge of her direct debits and standing orders, and even sent convincing emails containing supposed one-time passwords. This led to £4,200 being stolen from her account, with Christopher sending a text to his associate shortly beforehand instructing him to 'hurry up' as she was calling her bank back. He was also linked to two other victims who lost a total of £7,369, with photos and videos of Christopher's computer being used to log into their bank accounts being shared with his associate. He was sent in return images of bank cards that were being used to launder the money. Christopher, of no fixed address, pleaded guilty to conspiring to acquire criminal property and was sentenced at Southwark Crown Court on Tuesday 26 March 2024. He received 16 months' imprisonment for the Kent offences and a further three years and eight months for several other cases investigated by City of London Police.

Step ahead

Detective Sergeant Adam Stallard of Kent Police's Serious Economic Crime Unit said:

'Criminals like Mayowa Christopher and his associates use a range of sophisticated measures to gain access to people's savings and care little for the distress they cause along the way.' However, as this case demonstrates we are always a step ahead and have our own means of tracking down those responsible for fraudulent activity and ensuring they are brought to justice. Christopher is now deservedly behind bars where he will no longer pose a financial risk to innocent members of the public.' There are lots of things we can all do to protect our personal data and savings from such offenders, including having strong passwords and being careful not to open attachments or click on links unless you are absolutely certain it is safe to do so.' Do not believe anyone who calls you out of the blue, claiming to be from your bank or the police – no matter how convincing they sound or if they appear to be in possession of information that only your bank or another official body could have. Instead take their details, hang up and dial the organisation concerned using a different phone, or ring a friend first to ensure the line has been cleared.'



**Kent
Police**

Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report

Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact

In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**

If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use our textphone service **18000**.

Or text us on 999 if you've pre-registered with the emergency SMS service.

www.kent.police.uk   