

'BT' phone cut-off scam (14 June 2011)

Residents in Southend are being warned about a telephone scam currently doing the rounds.

The caller, who states they are from BT, threatens to cut off your phone line unless a payment of £31 is made, or a higher payment of £118 will be required to re-connect at a later date.

The criminal offers to demonstrate that they are genuine by asking you to hang up and try phoning someone. They then appear to disconnect your phone to prevent this.

However, the caller simply stays on the line with the mute button on so that you cannot dial out, but they can hear you trying. When you stop trying to make a call they cut the call and immediately call you back, which may convince you it is genuine.

BT says a number of phone companies have been targeted, and the police and BT Security are investigating the issues.

Residents are reminded never to give out any personal or banking details over the phone unless you are absolutely certain who you are talking to. If in doubt, hang up the phone and report the matter immediately to Consumer Direct on 08454 040506.