

Police warning over lottery scam

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The letters allegedly from the International Lottery Commission - have been dropping through letterboxes for weeks but it is believed that the Spanish-based crooks behind the scheme have stepped up their campaign in the run-up to Christmas.

The "Award Notice" claims that the recipients have won 815,810 Euros in the November draw from a total prize pot of 12,227,150 Euros. In order to claim the letter also includes a form for people to give full details of their bank account.

But police are warning that anyone replying was liable to find their bank account had been raided or even emptied by the fraudsters.

The conmen, based at an office address in Madrid, also give a phone number to call for information but people calling it are asked to send thousands of pounds before their claim can be "processed".

Det Insp Caroline Millar, of Suffolk police, which has already received more than 100 complaints about the scam, urged people to be on their guard for the letters which have mainly been targeted at older more vulnerable people.

Det Insp Millar said: "Such letters may look attractive and people may think they have won a lot of money - but if it sounds too good to be true then it probably is."

One letter was sent to the elderly mother of **Chris Leeder, from Monks Eleigh**, near Sudbury, who handed it to police - and discovered that they had already received more than 100 similar complaints.

He said: "It looks very convincing and is designed to trick people into revealing their bank details. Everyone could do with a little more cash just before Christmas and elderly people especially may be tempted to apply."