



SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY
Taking pride in keeping Suffolk safe

Babergh East Safer Neighbourhood Team

DISTRACTION THEFTS at SUPERMARKETS or BANK ATM'S

Suffolk Constabulary are asking members of the public to be aware of Distraction Thefts at large Supermarkets and Bank ATM's and to assist the police in preventing distraction thefts at these premises.

The offenders are known to target older people or people parked in disabled parking areas.

Known to work in pairs or more, it is thought the organised groups identify their victim and follow them whilst shopping, taking note of their PIN at the check-out.

The victim is then approached either at the till, at their vehicle whilst unloading or when returning their trolley, by someone advising they have dropped some money, have a nail in their tyre or asking for directions.

Whilst the victim is distracted a second person will steal their bank card from their pocket, car or trolley.

The offenders leave without being noticed and the bank card is often used within a few minutes to withdraw money from a nearby ATM using the PIN number seen at the check-out.

Are you being scammed? People are watching people for their PIN numbers and then stealing their debit/credit card. Elderly or vulnerable people are being targeted please be vigilant.

What to look for:

- People who are likely to be observing customers/shoppers and may not appear to be shopping themselves
- One offender often loiters around the bagging side of checkouts. They will use a seat if available and will observe customers/shoppers
- The offender will loiter on the store side of the checkouts and will join the queue directly behind potential victim who is usually elderly
- This offender will stand close to the victim as they enter their PIN and may attempt to distract the cashier by asking questions
- The victim will then be approached in the car park and their bank card will be stolen

What to do:

- Call 999 immediately if a crime is in progress otherwise call 101
- Observe offenders – Make a note of their description and any vehicles they use including:
 - Vehicle – registration/make/model/colour/occupants/damage/stickers
 - People – clothing/tattoos/scars/hairstyle and colour
- Speak to the victim and ask them to return to the store

HOW DISTRACTED ARE YOU?

Distraction thefts have occurred recently in supermarket car parks.

Protect yourself by:

- Taking care when entering your PIN number. Cover the pad and don't let anyone see it.
- Don't keep your PIN in the same place as your cards.
- Put your purse or wallet straight back into a zipped bag across your body or zipped pocket.
- Be cautious and don't be distracted if anyone approaches you.

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