

Aircraft model con artist escapes jail

A MAN who tricked model aircraft enthusiasts into paying hundreds of pounds for items which were never delivered has escaped jail.

Despite having a previous conviction for fraud, conman Kevin Crellin was given a suspended sentence by a Judge at Warwick Crown Court.

The 48-year-old, of Tyne Hill House, Sibford Gower, near Shipston, had earlier pleaded guilty to eight charges of fraud.

Crellin, formerly of Mill Lane, Newbold-on-Stour, was also ordered to do 200 hours of unpaid work and pay a total of \$830 compensation to his victims and \$1,200 costs.

Prosecutor Simon Ward said none of the eight complainants had got their money back and they were all 'really quite upset'.

In 2009 Crellin responded to wanted adverts posted by model aircraft enthusiasts on the website of the British Model Flying Association and

to two others on a camping website.

Among his victims was Philip Tibbitts who was after a particular glider, and Crellin offered to sell him one for £95, so he sent off his payment but never received the glider.

John Bromsgrove wanted a model aircraft engine which Crellin, using the false name John Hardwick, offered to sell to him for £45, and again that did not arrive.

Others sent him payments which included £30 for a model aircraft engine exhaust, £150 for a model helicopter engine and £160 for a radio-controlled model Lancaster bomber.

The court when the items did not arrive Crellin 'fobbed people off' with long and convoluted excuses.

One customer who did get his money back was the man who had paid for the model Lancaster, whose refund was sent after Crellin had been arrested and interviewed by the police.



Conman Kevin Crellin walks free from court (s)

Crellin was jailed back in 2005 for two years after conning meals and other treats from his victim by claiming he was dying of cancer.

Edward Soulsby, defending, handed in a medical report from an endocrinologist, together with a photograph of Crellin's condition, which he did not specify in court, but which he said would lead to 'torment in a custodial environment.'

Mr Soulsby added Crellin had started a job and his first pay cheque was due at the end of the month.

Sentencing Crellin, Judge Paul Farrer QC told him: "The offence amounted to 'a calculated and persistent fraud'.

But he accepted the offences were committed against 'a severe financial background' and that Crellin was a man who had serious medical problems.

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