Twitter refuses to help Autism Ambassador fight internet abuse and impersonation

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To protect his Autism Awareness charity from online impersonators and 4 years of abusive messages about his disability, high-profile campaigner Kevin Healey has urged Twitter to verify his account.

Twitter refused to give Healey the website's official stamp, which confirms a user's identity and limits the impact of fake Twitter profiles.

Staffordshire MP Paul Farrelly and MEP Phil Bennion have contacted the Social Media website, requesting the company take action to protect its users. A further petition has attracted 1,200 names, and support from High Profile celebrities and uptake of the Social Media hashtag, #verifykevhealey.

Healey said:

"People who want to support Autism Awareness are being misled by fake accounts and malicious messages about autism. This damages our charitable efforts."

Twitter explained it only verifies the accounts of celebrities and public figures. However, charitable campaigners of a similar profile to Healey - Denise Fergus and Dr.Sarah Payne - have been verified. Healey, who has met the Queen for his achievements, said:

I don't understand why Twitter can't. Twitter verification would let our supporters know which accounts are real. It would also stop my name being attached to the offensive messages that are published about me every day."

Multiple Twitter accounts have been setup fraudulently in Healey's name. One such profile reads:

"Kevin Healey -

Dropped on my head from a very young age. (By my mother on purpose)."

Tweets sent from fake accounts bearing Healey's name include:

"I can't get my words out. #DroolingVegetable."

Staffordshire Police and the Criminal Investigation Department are investigating the identity of the internet trolls. Healey said:

"The police have been extremely helpful, they're fantastic. I have a lot of supporters on and offline who I really appreciate, I just want to feel safe when using Twitter."

Healey's Twitter petition can be found at www.kevinhealeycampaigner.tumblr.com

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