

If in doubt keep them out!

**Your guide to dealing with
unwanted callers at the door**



The All-Wales Doorstep Crime Partnership - Working to Protect You
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg, ac mewn ieithoedd a fformatau eraill ar gais.
This document is available in Welsh, and in other languages and formats on request.

Dealing with doorstep callers

Unwanted Doorstep Callers often aim to get into your home to steal your money or valuables by distracting you or catching you off guard.

They may call at your door posing as Bogus Officials claiming to be from the council, police, health carers, market researchers, gas, water, electricity, phone or TV companies. They can be very convincing and persuasive.

Rogue Traders may call at your door offering home improvement services such as window/gutter cleaning, path and driveway repairs, roofing or building work, gardening and tree lopping, and other types of goods and services, which you may or may not require.

Sometimes they try to take advantage of your good nature by saying they are collecting for charity, or they need something from your house such as water for their car or to use your phone.

They do all these things to DISTRACT you and TRICK their way into your house.

Remember

- They can be young or old, male or female, or even young children
- They can appear official and may be smartly dressed with uniforms, official looking paperwork and fake IDs
- They often work in teams and may pass your details on to another gang
- They will be very believable



Rogue home improvement firms often target older and more vulnerable people and can be very intimidating. Often they will demand more money than the original price. They may disappear once you have paid them without starting or finishing a job. They can be threatening and have been known to drive people to their banks as their demands for money get higher and higher.



Don't let doorstep callers pressurise you

- If you think a suspicious caller has been to your door report it to the Police immediately. Dial 999 or use your local police force general contact number.
- Try to remember a description of the persons, their vehicle or anything else suspicious as it may help track them down.
- Don't let a rogue trader try to pressure you by saying a neighbour has already had the work done or has bought what they are offering.
- Be wary if they say that they are only in the area for a short time and put pressure on you to make a quick decision.
- Don't trust anyone who knocks on your door and says you have something wrong with your house that they can fix. Ask yourself why you haven't noticed before.
- Don't be fooled by anyone saying they can do the job at a knock down or special rate.
- Think about asking traders who cold call at your door to leave some literature that you can look at in your own time so that you don't feel pressured into buying what they are offering.
- If you feel that what they are offering is a scam you may want to tell your friends and neighbours in case they try the same thing on them.

How to deal with callers at your door

STOP THINK

Follow the doorstep code

Before you go to your front door

Ask yourself:

- Are my doors locked?
- Am I expecting anyone?
- Can I take a look out of the windows or spy hole?
- Do I recognise this person?
- Have they got a vehicle I recognise?

If the answer is NO to any of these questions think:

- Is it a bogus caller at my door?

 **If in doubt keep them out!**

CHECK

Before going to the front door, take these important steps:

- Take a second look through a glass pane or spy hole
- Direct the caller to a secure window and display the NOMINATED NEIGHBOUR poster on the pull-out centrefold

Callers with an appointment

When expecting a caller you don't feel comfortable with try to have a family member or "nominated neighbour" (see the centre pages) with you. They can check the authenticity of the caller and telephone the organisation if required. They may also be good company for you when dealing with the visitor.

Check identity cards very carefully

Identity cards are very easy to fake these days. You must be careful not to rely on them without doing some extra checks.

- Take the card into the house with you and leave the caller outside the door with the door closed. Genuine callers won't mind waiting while you do this.
- Check they are from the company they say they are by ringing a number you get from Yellow Pages or Directory Enquiries. You may also find a number for your utility supplier on the back of a recent bill.
- Don't trust any number they give you, there could be an accomplice on the other end of the phone. Find the number yourself.
- Never ever trust a mobile phone number, they can be very difficult to trace. Rely on landline numbers only, and then only ones you have found yourself not ones that have been given to you by the caller.
- Consider setting up passwords with your gas, water and electricity suppliers.



The password scheme

Gas, Water, Electricity companies and some Council's have a password scheme for older and vulnerable customers. Customers can set up a memorable word or number with the company, which is known only to them. When you receive a caller at your door from one of your utility suppliers **THEY** have to be able to give **YOU** the password or number to get in.

Please contact your utility suppliers for more information on the scheme. You will find some useful numbers on the back of your bills from them. **REMEMBER** - a password is personal to you and you must keep it safe. Do not tell other people what it is.

Useful telephone numbers

Fill in numbers that are personal to you and keep this list safe for future reference.

Company or person	Services they provide	Phone number
My Gas Supplier		
My Electricity Supplier		
My Water Supplier		
My Phone Supplier		
My Local Council		
My Nominated Neighbour		
My Local Police Station	Non emergency calls and crime reduction advice	
POLICE EMERGENCY	Call if you feel afraid, harassed, threatened or intimidated	999
Consumer Direct Wales	Trading Standards Advice and help in dealing with Rogue Traders	08454 040506
Age Concern Cymru	Advice and practical support for older adults	02920 431555
Help The Aged	Support to help older people live independent lives	0808 800 6565
Pensions Service	Advice on benefits and Pension provision	0845 60 60 265
Victim Support	Free and confidential advice for victims of crimes	0845 61 21 900

Top ten tips for dealing with rogue traders

1. Follow the "Doorstep Code" with all unexpected callers (page 3).
2. Use the "Nominated Neighbour" poster in the middle of this booklet.
3. Never agree to having work done on the spot or part with any money. Don't pay cash on the doorstep!
4. Get written quotes from at least two traders for any work you want doing, to ensure you are paying a fair price.
5. You have 7 days to cancel any purchase you make in your home as long as it costs over £35. They must give you a written notice telling you how and to whom you must give your cancellation. If they don't give you this they commit a criminal offence.
6. Before any work starts in your home agree the price, payment arrangements and start/finish dates and get it in writing.
7. If you think you have been cheated or are at all concerned about the trader call Consumer Direct Wales on 08454 04 05 06.
8. Don't pay in full until you are completely happy with the work.
9. Make sure you keep your home and belongings secure if you have strangers working on your property.
10. Check with your local council and police crime prevention officer about any free services available to you to enhance you home security protection.

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Your Nominated Neighbour

Firstly...

Before you use the scheme arrange with a trusted neighbour or a member of your family who lives nearby to be a "Nominated Neighbour"

Then...

Ask them if they will be prepared to help you check out the identity of any person who calls at your door and accompany them into your home while they speak to you if you wish.

Now...

Once you have found your "Nominated Neighbour" write their address into the space provided on the poster.

- Keep the poster near your front door. **DO NOT** display it in a window.
- When someone calls at your home follow the 'Doorstep Code' (page 3).
- If you do not recognise them, either hold the poster up to the window so they can clearly read it or post it through your letterbox for the caller to read it. **DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR.**
- If you have a telephone, call your nominated neighbour, tell them you have had a caller and they are coming to speak to them.
- If for any reason you cannot contact your nominated neighbour and are concerned, contact **Consumer Direct Wales on 08454 040506.**
- Alternatively, if you feel the need you can contact your local police.

REMEMBER!

Genuine callers will not mind waiting.

It is your home. You do not have to let anyone in.


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