



Doorstep Crime

Doorstep crime is the name given to crimes carried out by bogus callers and rogue traders who call uninvited at people's homes under the guise of legitimate business or trade.

This can be a particularly distressing type of crime because the perpetrator may have directly deceived you in getting into your home or extracting money from you. Victims are often older or vulnerable people, and may be left feeling betrayed, foolish and very distressed.

Legitimate doorstep selling involves someone selling you goods or services in your home or on your door-step. Many **HONEST** businesses use this technique but so do **FRAUDSTERS**. Buying on your doorstep can be convenient. However, a salesman who uses clever tactics can pressurise you into buying something you actually don't want or something that's poor value for money.

Door-to-door frauds can take many forms, including:

- Pressure selling
- Unfair contracts
- Overpriced or substandard home **maintenance** or improvements
- Phoney consumer surveys
- Bogus charity collections

Such frauds involve promoting **GOODS** or **SERVICES** that are either never delivered to you or are of a very poor quality. Fraudsters may also demand money from you for work that you didn't agree to.

There are specific laws about door-to-door sales. Many are required to give you a '**COOLING-OFF**' period (where you can change your mind or request your money back). Bogus tradesmen will offer none of these, and even if they do, you can be sure their 'guarantee' will not be honoured.

BOGUS sales people will provide **FALSE** identity of contact information, making it impossible for you to identify or contact them.

In an emergency call **999**

For non emergencies call **101**



Rogue doorstep traders will use a trade as a means to extract large sums of money from people.

Common services they may offer include driveway re-surfacing, block paving, roofing, guttering, gardening or selling goods such as furniture, alarms or mobility aids. They may claim you have a loose roof tile or say a tree in your garden is unsafe and needs to be trimmed.

They will often give a very low quote that will increase when work begins. Sometimes they will drive victims to the bank and will often come back on future occasions to get more money.

Distraction burglars or bogus callers are criminals who call at a house with the intention of tricking their way inside to steal money and/or other valuables. They may be smartly dressed and claim to be from the water board, the council, the police, health organisations or charities.

Methods they may use to get inside your home can include saying they need to turn off the water because of a leak, use the phone because their car has broken down, or perhaps say they have lost a pet.

The caller may be a man, a woman or even a child and they will use any story they can to try and gain access to the property.

The most common type of distraction burglary is the water board method. This is where someone tells you there is a burst main nearby and they need to check your sink. Whilst you are distracted, they steal goods before escaping. These people can seem very genuine and may even look the part with a fluorescent jacket. Passwords can be set up with utility companies to help prevent this type of crime from happening.

“If you’re not sure, don’t open the door”

This is our motto. If you don’t know who is at the door, and you haven’t asked them to visit, do not answer the door.

Who to call

If a crime is in progress or you feel imminently threatened dial **999**.

Report suspicious callers to the doorstep crime team on 0345 23 07 702.

For non-urgent enquiries or to report any concerns or suspicions to the police call **101**.

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www.northants.police.uk



Northamptonshire Police

Fighting crime, protecting people

Protecting yourself

- Make sure you can see who is at the door before you answer it. Where possible fit a spy-hole to identify callers. Alternatively talk to them through an adjacent windows
- Don't feel pressured into opening the door. Don't feel you are being rude, genuine callers won't mind
- Remember that sadly not everyone is who they say they are, or may have ulterior motives, especially if they knock at your door to point out a supposed problem, such as damage to your roof
- Don't let people you don't know into your home, even if they say they need help. If more than one person is at the door, one may try to keep you talking while the other slips away to see what they can steal
- Set up passwords with your utility companies, genuine callers will need to recite this password to you. Always ask to see an ID card too
- Don't use telephone numbers on ID cards, if the person isn't genuine the ID and the telephone number won't be either. Obtain telephone numbers direct from the phone directory. Alternatively make a list of your important numbers and keep them near the phone
- If you're still not sure that a caller is who they say they are, turn them away. Legitimate companies and callers will not mind
- It's always worth having a trusted neighbour on call. A genuine caller will not mind being challenged and will be happy to talk with anyone. They will also not mind coming back if you are feeling in any way uncomfortable and will happily pre-arrange an appointment
- Display a 'No Cold Callers' sticker on your door or in your window

If you would like further advice about preventing doorstep crime email the Northamptonshire Police crime prevention team on

crimeprevention@northants.pnn.police.uk

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Useful Contacts

www.northants.police.uk
www.northants.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/

www.actionfraud.police.uk or
tel 0300 123 2040

OR for Covid-19 specific advice
www.actionfraud.police.uk/covid19

www.met.police.uk/search?q=The+little+book+of+scams

www.victimsupport.org.uk
tel 01604 603477 or 0845 3030900

www.voicenorthants.org or
tel 0300 303 1965

www.citizensadvice.org.uk
(Consumer & Scam Advice)
www.nationaltradingstandards.uk
www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk

Trading Standards approved
businesses

www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/

www.cifas.org.uk/coronavirus-fraud-advice

www.crimestoppers-uk.org or
tel 0800 555 111

www.getsafeonline.org

www.cyberaware.gov.uk

www.ageuk.org

www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart

www.ncsc.gov.uk/

(National Cybercrime Security Centre)

www.nationaltradingstandards.uk

Check HMRC-related phishing, or bogus, emails or text messages against gov.uk/government

For latest information on Universal Credit go to

www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk



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