

DOORSTEP CRIME / BOGUS WORKMEN

What is Doorstep Crime?

Bogus Callers: Will attempt to get into your home or obtain personal details by pretending to be someone they're not, including:

Council Staff

Meter readers

Charity collectors

Police officers

in reality, they are criminals trying to steal your cash and valuables.

Rogue Traders: Usually cold callers, offering to make repairs or carry out work on your house, garden or driveway. In reality they charge inflated prices for shoddy or often completely unnecessary work.

We do not recommend dealing with cold callers for property maintenance and repairs to your home and garden areas.

Contact your local council to see if they operate a trusted traders scheme or similar, where you will find a list of accredited trades people.

Below is some useful advice and considerations.

Think:

Be on your guard if someone turns up unexpectedly.

Be aware of methods used by criminals to distract you such as being asked to make a phone call, to use your toilet, for a glass of water, or being asked to check your water or gas supplies.

Do not keep large amounts of money at home.

Does your premises or garden really require work to be carried out.

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Be vigilant for vulnerable neighbours who may fall foul of these criminals.

About calling the police when you see anything suspicious.

Never let someone you don't know into your house, if you're not sure don't answer the door.

What can I do?

SECURE:

Use a door chain or bar: Always put the chain on before answering the door, and keep it on while talking to callers

If you have a door viewer- use it.

Keep rear, side doors and windows secure.

Don't feel embarrassed- genuine callers expect you to be careful

Ask for identification, whether you expect anyone or not.

Remember- ID's can be fake and shouldn't be relied upon.

Don't assume a caller is genuine because they are wearing a uniform

Obtain a written quote before agreeing to any work

If you have any doubts, tell the caller to come back when someone else is home, genuine callers won't mind rearranging

IF IN DOUBT KEEP THEM OUT

Don't feel pressurised into agreeing to immediate work- Never listen to scare stories, beware of traders who suddenly appear after storms or floods and claims of low prices if you sign up immediately.

Don't agree to buy from the first person who calls- do you really want or need these goods or services

Don't pay cash up front- never pay for work before it is completed and do not hand over large sums of money

Shop around if you decide you need work done- Get a minimum of three quotes from reputable traders or recommendations from people you trust

Cancellation rights- Any job over £42- traders are required to provide written notice informing the consumer that they have a 14 day cooling off period during which time the consumer can cancel the contract.

Should you require any further information please log onto

www.policescotland.co.uk

or contact Police Scotland via 101 or Trading Standards at your local authority on the following numbers

Clackmannanshire Council (01259) 450000

Falkirk Council (01324) 506070

Stirling Council (01786) 404040.