

HOW TO BEAT THE BOGUS CALLER

Most people who call at your home will be genuine. But sometimes, people turn up unannounced, with the intention of tricking their way into your home. They are known as “**distraction burglars**” or **bogus callers**” who’s only aim is to get into homes to distract people and steal their money or valuables.

You should always be aware when someone you don’t know calls at your door. By using advice given, you can protect yourself and vulnerable members of your family.

- ✚ Bogus callers may be smartly dressed and claim to be from the council, the police, health organisation or utility companies.

- ✚ They can be convincing and persuasive.

- ✚ They may be men, women and even children.

- ✚ They may ask for a drink of water or to wash their hands.

- ✚ Some may be looking for a lost pet.



- ✚ In fact, people may use any story - my grandmother lives next door but is out at the moment can I come in to so I could write a note to put through her door



They often use “props” like an identity card or wear overalls with a company logo.

If you are expecting the caller, remember to check their identification very carefully against the letter you have been sent or the password you have agreed before you let them in

And if you are in any doubt, Keep them out!

These official visitors should always arrange an appointment with you before had. If you are not expecting them and are alone, ask them to call back when you have someone with you.

Do not keep large amounts of money in your home.

Bogus callers can also turn up as builders or gardeners and try to trick you into paying for unnecessary work.

You should never agree to having work by someone who is just passing, or take their word that work need to be done at all.

Do not accept any offer from them to drive you to the bank to withdraw money. If you think works need to be done, get quotes from trusted companies (two or three should be enough (and also ask a friend or relative for a recommendation. You can check whether the company is reputable by contacting the local council’s trading standards office Telephone: [01895\) 250164](tel:01895250164) Open Mon-Friday 9-5pm

LOCK, STOP, CHAIN and CHECK

When someone calls at your door and offers to do repairs to your home or to ask for urgent help, or when someone official knock on your door, follow these simple steps to help protect yourself and your home from bogus callers.

LOCK: keep front and back doors locked even when at home.

STOP: before you answer, stop and think if you are expecting anyone. Check that you have locked any back doors and taken the key out. Look through the spy hole or the window to see who it.

CHAIN: if you decide to open the door, put the door chain or bar on first. Keep the bar or chain on while you are talking to the person on the doorstep.

(Normally when the door is shut and locked leave the bar or chain off in case you need to get out and in an emergency)

CHECK: If someone who look official calls at your door, always do the following

- ✓ Ask for and carefully check their identity card, even if you have a prearranged appointment
(all genuine callers carry one)
 - Do they look like the person on the card?
 - Is the card name the same one as that on your letter?
 - Close the door while you do this.
- ✓ If you are not expecting them and they have shown you and identity card, do not let them in until you have checked and double-checked that the caller is genuine.

You can do this in three ways

- 1 Look up the phone number in the phonebook and check it against the card the caller has given you. Do not attempt to just ring the number on the card as it may be a fake.
- 2 Phone directory enquiries. It will help you check whether the company is genuine.
- 3 Look at a recent bill to check the phone number. You should also think about keeping a list of useful numbers, Gas, Electricity and water services in a handy place. Many now have free phone numbers to help you check the identity of their workers

If in any doubts

KEEP THEM OUT !!!!!!!

If after these checks, you have any doubts about the caller, especially if they came unannounced, tell them to call back later when someone can be with you. You can also tell them to contact you by letter to arrange a more convenient time. Only let them in when you are absolutely sure they are genuine.

Genuine callers will always be happy to make an appointment to call and will carry an identity card with a photograph. They won't mind waiting if you want to phone and confirm their identity or want to rearrange the appointment.