

WHAT IS A NO COLD CALLING ZONE?

The Police, Trading Standards, Age Concern and other agencies have been working together looking at ways to reduce doorstep crime.

The crime involves BOGUS CALLERS turning up on your doorstep uninvited, and trying to get you to part with large sums of money for poor quality work or no work at all!

These criminals often target older, more vulnerable members of our community and can be extremely intimidating. Often they will demand more money than the originally agreed price, disappearing once you have paid them.

On other occasions the criminals may pose as officials. For example, they may say they are from the water, gas or electricity board, and that they need to gain entry to your home as a matter of urgency. Once inside, their intention is to steal money and valuables from you.

We are committed to reducing this type of criminal behaviour, and we are planning to set up a “NO COLD CALLING ZONE” in your area.

We will distribute leaflets and information to help you deal with such callers, and will erect lamppost signs, to deter businesses who cold call from operating in your area. With your support we hope that the scheme will help prevent doorstep crime in our borough.



Remember: Say “No” to Doorstep Callers!

Please note: The aim of the scheme is not to deter regular, familiar traders who call on you as part of a regular round.

Wigan & Leigh



Bogus Caller Group

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Doorstep crime: Cold callers, bogus officials, rogue traders, distraction burglary.

WHO'S THE VICTIM?

You – The residents are being targeted by bogus callers and distraction burglars.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

You – together with Trading Standards, the Police and other support agencies (Age Concern, Victim Support etc) can tackle this problem and set up a “No cold calling zone”.

WHO'S INVOLVED IN A NO COLD CALLING ZONE?

YOU – THE RESIDENTS

The most important members of the team:- you are the eyes and ears of this scheme, and you can tell us when there are people in your area knocking on doors or leaflet dropping.

TRADING STANDARDS

We are the main contact for you and any callers reported to us will be investigated.

We will share this information with our partners, and liaise between all other agencies and you.

POLICE

They will offer crime prevention advice and take action against criminals wherever possible.

OTHER AGENCIES

Age Concern, Victim Support, and other agencies can provide advice and security measures to make you feel safer in your home.

HOW DOES THE SCHEME WORK?

You - tell us of any suspicious callers or leaflet dropping in your area. We need as much detail as possible and the blue report forms will help you with this.

We – Will provide each household with an information pack (leaflets, stickers and “No Cold Calling Zone” hand out cards, report it forms and a list of useful contact numbers).

Street signs will be attached to lampposts at all entrances to the designated area and will tell any potential cold callers that they are not welcome in the area.

The signs should deter any would be callers and the information we receive from you will enable us to respond appropriately to any future incidents of Doorstep Crime.



WHO TO CONTACT?

Telephone Trading Standards 08454 04 05 06

- If someone calls without an appointment and offers to carry out work on your property.
- A leaflet is put through the door offering any goods or services.
- You receive a telephone call offering a “free survey” or other goods or services.

If the cold callers are still in the area, when you call us, someone from Trading Standards and/or the Police will attend whenever possible.

If the cold callers have already left the area, **please still report it to us**, using the blue report forms, and they will be sent a letter from Trading Standards/GMP.

KNOCK KNOCK . . .

If someone calls at your door to sell you something (goods or services):

Telephone trading standards on 08454 04 05 06

If you suspect the caller is bogus, or intent on burglary:

Telephone the police on 0161 872 5050

Or in an emergency dial: **999**

NOTE IT AND REPORT IT

Please use the blue report forms to fill in the details of anyone who calls at your door.

Any information you can give us will be very useful, and send the sheet off to us in one of the **Freepost** envelopes to Trading Standards.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS

Cold calling is NOT illegal ...

But the “**Doorstep Selling Regulations**” make it a **criminal offence** if a trader who **cold calls**, fails to give you a **written notice of your cancellation rights**.

With your help and information, **Trading Standards** will try to enforce this whenever it is possible to do so.

If a trader **cold calls**, and you agree to buy his goods or services:

- **There is a 7 day cooling off period in which you may cancel the agreement for any reason if the goods or services are for more than £35.**

DOORSTEP DO'S AND DON'TS

Don't let anyone into your home without first checking the caller is genuine. If an “official” calls at your home without an appointment, use the contact numbers provided to check him out. It is unusual for any official to call without a pre-arranged appointment, and even if he is genuine, he should be happy to return at a later date, on an arranged appointment.

Do ask for ID every time someone calls at your door.

Do lock the back door every time someone knocks at the front door.

Don't open the door without first putting the security chain on.

Do hand the caller a NO COLD CALLING ZONE card if the caller is unexpected and close and lock the door.

Do report it to TRADING STANDARDS on 08454 040506.

If you feel afraid, harassed, threatened or intimidated call 0161 872 5050 or 999 to report the incident to the Police.

HELPFUL HINTS

If you're considering having any work done on your property:

- **Think!** Do not be convinced that the stranger at your door is an "expert". Always get a second opinion especially if he suggests the work is urgent or essential. Contact a company or trader you trust, and ask their advice.
- **Always** get two or three quotations for any work you want done. Ask family or friends for personal recommendations of traders.
- **Get** a written quote or estimate on headed paper with the full name and postal address of the Company. Insist that all details of the work proposed is included, and a note of when the work will be started and finish. If VAT is charged then this amount should also be included in the written quotation.
- Obtain references where possible, and follow them up.
- Try to avoid making any payment up front and don't pay in full until the work is complete.
- Remember that you have rights in law and that the trader has legal obligations too (see those mentioned earlier).
- If you have any problems with the job, contact Trading Standards, with as much detail as possible about who you have been dealing with (names, descriptions, vehicle registrations etc).

IMPORTANT

Rogue Traders often put pressure on their victims to pay for any work done in cash. It is usually a large amount of money, and he might suggest that he can drive you to the bank to get it, even before the work has been done.

Rogue Traders can be very intimidating and if you find yourself in this position, don't hesitate to mention your plight to the cashier. They should be alert to this problem and will protect you while calling on the police to deal with the trader. You can also ask the bank to ring trading standards on your behalf, and we will do all we can to help you.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Company	Services	Telephone Number
Police – Emergency		999
Police - Switchboard		0161 872 5050
Trading Standards		08454 04 05 06
Wigan Council		01942 244991
Age Concern – Starting Point		01942 826079
Victim Support		01942 322033
Home Watch – Leigh		0161 856 7212
Home Watch – Wigan		0161 856 7053
United Utilities	To check Identity	0800 056 7693
United Utilities		0800 234 7000
United Utilities	To set up a password	0845 746 1100
Accuread	To check Identity	0800 393 499
Metering Services Limited	To check Identity	0800 169 4667
Meter Plus	To check Identity	0800 073 0030
Imserve	To check Identity	0800 328 9114
N Power		0845 601 1102
Powergen		0800 052 0346
Friends/Family/Neighbours		

