



Doorstep Crime and Scams

Doorstep Crime

The Problem Areas

Sales People

Sales people who call at your home may seem friendly and genuine. They may use high-pressure sales techniques by telling you scare-stories, or offer you a special discount or a 'free gift'. They only want one thing and that is to sell you something so they can make money. You do not have to buy anything and you will probably get a better deal by shopping around and buying from a reputable business.

Casual Workman

Another type of caller you may get is the casual workman who is in the area. Sometimes they will tell you they have spotted a problem with your roof or chimney. Others say that they have some paving slabs or tarmac left over from another job. Often they promise a bargain.

Doorstep Callers. What should you do?

Trading Standards advice is never to buy goods or services from a trader on your doorstep.

Don't answer your door if you are not expecting a caller. If the person needs to contact you urgently, they will put a note through your door or have your contact details and be able to contact you via other means.

If you are expecting a caller:

Use a window or a door viewer to see who the caller is.

Check the identity of the caller. Do not let the caller into your house until you have verified the caller ID.

Do not rely on the telephone number they give you as it may not be genuine. Verify their identity by ringing their employer using the

telephone number listed in the phone book or look for the number on a bill.

If you have any concerns or suspicions then ask the caller to leave, close and lock your door. If the caller will not leave and tries to gain entry then call the Police on 999.

IF YOU'RE NOT SURE DON'T OPEN THE DOOR

What Cancellation Rights Do I have?

If you agree to buy goods or services from a doorstep seller, in most circumstances, you will be entitled to a 14 day cancellation period which should be provided to you in writing. During these 14 days, you can change your mind about the contract for any reason. This applies to visits made by a trader at your request as well as cold calls.

If you are unsure as to whether you are entitled to a 14 day cancellation period, then you can obtain further advice from the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 03454 04 05 06 who will provide you with impartial and confidential advice.

Report a Trader

If you are contacted by such traders or are aware of any in your area, if it is safe to do so, please contact Trading Standards via the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 03454 04 05 06 or the Police (999 if a crime is in progress or someone's life is in danger, otherwise call 101)

How do I protect myself or others?

Display a 'No Cold Calling' sticker on your door. If you would like a sticker for yourself and your neighbours you can order one from Trading Standards by contacting the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 03454 04 05 06 who will refer your enquiry through to Northamptonshire County Council Trading Standards Service.

Northamptonshire County Council Trading Standards promote the Buy With Confidence approved trader scheme to help Northamptonshire consumers choose a trader they can trust and rely upon. Please have a look at the information on their website <https://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk/find-a-business/>

If you do not have access to the internet please telephone Northamptonshire County Council on 0300 126 1000.

Scams

Scams affect the lives of many people across Northamptonshire. They come in many forms and it is impossible to know about all of them.

Anyone can fall for a scam, but some people are more vulnerable due to their circumstances and are therefore more likely to be targeted by criminals. People who lose money to scams often also experience loneliness, shame and social isolation. There is no need to feel ashamed, there are agencies that can provide help and advice.

If you are a carer or have an older relative, please be on the lookout for any signs that they have been scammed. Each situation is different but typical signs could include:

- Receiving lots of unwanted calls
- Unusual transactions on bank statements
- Becoming unwilling to go out (just in case they miss the next phone call telling them what they have won)
- No money to buy food /pay bills
- Lots of mail about prize draws, lotteries, or unwanted catalogues
- Unwilling to throw any old post away.

If you receive a phone call or letter that causes you concern, talk about it with a friend or contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 03454 04 05 06 for advice. It's always worth talking to your bank and letting them know your concerns.

If you have elderly relatives, friends or neighbours, you can help protect them from

scams by becoming a Friend Against Scams. <https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/>

Contact information:

For general consumer enquiries and advice please contact:

Citizens Advice Consumer Service:

03454 04 05 06

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Textphone: 18001 03454 04 05 06

(Calls to the helpline cost up to 9p per minute from a landline. If you're calling from a mobile, it will cost between 3p and 55p per minute - if you have inclusive minutes, it's the same as calling a landline).

Northamptonshire County Council

Enquiries:

0300 126 1000

Monday to Friday: 8am to 6pm

(Calls cost no more than calls to a standard geographic number and will also be included in inclusive minutes and discount schemes).

Email: tradestd@northamptonshire.gov.uk

Website:

<https://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councils/ervices/business-and-economy/trading-standards/Pages/default.aspx>