

How to Deal with Unwanted Callers

Keep front and back doors locked

Fit a door chain/bar and **use** it

Only deal with callers by appointment

Always ask for identification and check it

Do Not pay for goods or services in cash or keep large sums of money in the home

If you think a caller is bogus or feel threatened or unsafe:

- ring the police on **999**
- try to write down a description of any vehicle and registration numbers

Contact Police or Trading Standards

If your query is not urgent, or you have information about bogus workmen, ring:

Lothian & Borders Police
0131 311 3131

**West Lothian Council's
Trading Standards** 01506 776 410

Department of Works and Pensions
0800 854 440

Alternatively you can pass on any information anonymously to the independent charity **Crimestoppers**
Ring: 0800 555 111
or visit www.crimestoppers.org

If you would like a crime prevention survey of your property carried out contact your Community Officer at Linlithgow Police Station
Ring 01506 843 235

If you are aged 60 or over and live in West Lothian you may qualify for a free Home Safety package:
Ring: 01506 776 301
or visit: www.westlothian.gov.uk

For information on other scams contact the Office of Fair Trading:
Ring 08454 040 506
or www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/scams

This leaflet has been produced in association with Lothian and Borders Police, West Lothian Council and Newton Community Council

NO COLD CALLING

**DOOR STEP CALLERS
NOT WELCOME – IF IN DOUBT
KEEP THEM OUT**

DOORSTEP CRIME

You may have read in the local press recently about incidents involving bogus callers and rogue traders in West Lothian. Lothian and Borders Police and Newton Community Council are determined to tackle the problem of “doorstep crime” and to prevent such incidents in the future.

We need your support to protect the vulnerable members of our community from such crimes.

WHAT IS “COLD CALLING”

Cold Calling is a business practice used by some companies which attend at your home and use the opportunity of a face-to-face meeting to pressurise homeowners into purchasing their goods and services while not allowing quality or competitiveness to be checked.

This practice is especially used by **bogus callers** and **rogue traders** who prey particularly on the vulnerable in our community such as the elderly.

BOGUS CALLER CRIME

Bogus caller crime is committed by professional criminals who target and exploit the most frail and vulnerable members of our communities ruthlessly relieving them of their savings, self-respect and dignity.

Bogus callers use a variety of methods to gain entry to the victim’s house to steal from them. They sometimes pretend to be council officials, workmen needing to make repairs, employees of gas, electricity or water companies or even police officers.

ROGUE TRADERS

Rogue traders cold call people offering unwanted services or carrying out shoddy or unnecessary work for inflated prices. This may take the form of an offer to tarmac a driveway at a cut price, cleaning roof gutters, mono bloc or roof tiles, or doing casual gardening work.

HOW DO WE PREVENT THIS?

Your Community Council has agreed to make the Newton district a “**Cold Calling Control Zone**”.

Cold Calling Control Zones give local communities and local residents the confidence to say “NO” to uninvited salespersons and warn rogue traders and bogus callers that they are being watched. They are the single most effective measure in the fight against doorstep crime.

Although the zone has no legal basis its existence serves as notice that cold calling is not welcome in this area and that bogus callers/workmen and rogue traders will be watched and challenged by the community.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The initiative is not aimed at legitimate businesses, but it does give people the choice to say no to doorstep selling and aims to protect vulnerable residents who may be at risk from doorstep crime or rogue traders.

This leaflet comes with a red card, which tells callers that they are not welcome, preventing embarrassment or confrontation on the doorstep. A supply of cards will also be available from the Community Council.

You should tear out this card and place it in a visible location at the front door or, if you have no suitable place to display it, **show or hand the card to the caller**.

IF IN DOUBT KEEP THEM OUT

Be careful who you let into your house

Do not allow anyone access to your home unless you are sure they are genuine. A genuine visitor will usually make an appointment first, so you should be wary if someone turns up unexpectedly.

Use a door chain/bar

If someone calls at your home use a window or door viewer to have a look first. If you are unsure of them simply don’t answer the door. If you open the door always put on the door chain or bar and keep it on while you are talking to them. You should not feel embarrassed about using a door chain, a genuine visitor will not be offended and will expect you to take precautions. If you don’t have a door chain, get one fitted.

Check Identity

Always ask for proof of identity and check it carefully, keeping the chain on the door. Genuine callers always carry identification with their photograph and details of their company or business. Don’t assume just because the caller is wearing a uniform, or clothing with a badge or logo, that they are genuine. Always ask to see an ID card. Take your time to check the identification. If the caller is unexpected, ring their office to confirm their identity but always use the number in the telephone book rather than the one displayed on the card.