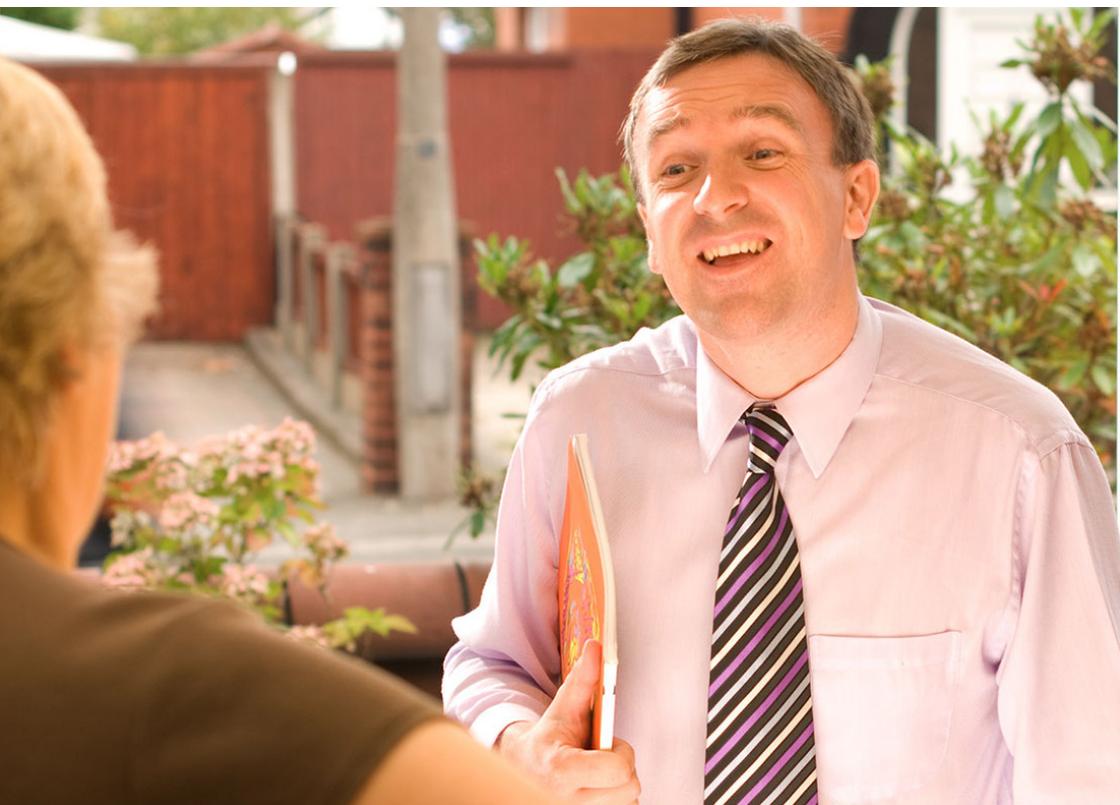


DOORSTEP SCAMS

Crime toolkits



DON'T BE A SCAM VICTIM!

Scammers will use any means to separate you from your money or your personal data – they operate over the phone, through the post, on the internet or face-to-face, often on the doorstep.

They will do their best to persuade you that they, or whatever it is they are offering you, are genuine – and will usually appear to be polite, friendly, and professional. It can be easy to be taken in by them – after all, they do this for a living!

However, there are also lots of signs that might indicate that all is not what it seems. Many scams follow certain patterns, and once you know what to look for, they can be easy to spot.

Here is one of the most common scams targeted at older people, and how you can avoid falling victim to it:

DOORSTEP SCAMS

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Someone knocks at your door and claims to be a tradesman of some sort. He says he's noticed your roof needs patching up or your trees need pruning or your driveway needs fixing (or similar). He says the work needs doing urgently and that he can do it now for a price. He'll even take you to the bank so you can withdraw the money.

There are many variations on this type of scam – sometimes the tradesman will actually do some work, though usually to a poor standard; sometimes he'll just take your money and disappear.

Sometimes the person is a salesman trying to sell you home improvements and pressing you to sign a contract on the spot.

They will do their best to persuade you that they are genuine

Sometimes he claims to be fundraising for charity and requests your bank details to set up a direct debit.

Or he might just distract you for a while on the front doorstep while his mate sneaks in through the back door and steals your purse.

HOW TO DEAL WITH PEOPLE TURNING UP UNINVITED ON YOUR DOORSTEP

Trading Standards advise all householders to NEVER BUY GOODS AND SERVICES ON THE DOORSTEP.

Keep your front and back doors locked, even when you are at home

Install a 'spy hole' or electronic viewer in your front door so you can see who it is before you open the door, or a door chain. The safest thing to do is simply not to answer the door to anyone you are not expecting.

However, if you do answer the

JUST SAY NO AND ASK THEM TO LEAVE

It's not rude to ask someone to leave. Here are some things you can say to get rid of callers on your doorstep:

"I never deal with cold callers at the door, please would you leave."

"I have a neighbour who helps me, so please go and knock on their door first."

"I don't know who you are so would you please leave"

door, and you don't know the person, just say 'no'. Tell them you have a friend or relative who can sort out any problems. If they persist, tell them to leave or you will call the police.

Remember – reputable traders don't need to knock on doors to get work

Trading Standards advise that you should only use tradespeople that have been recommended to you by people you trust, or pick one from the 'Approved Tradespeople' leaflets that are distributed by local councils.

REPORTING A SCAM

If you or someone you know has fallen victim to a scam, you should report it to the **Police** on **101** and to **Action Fraud** on **0300 123 2040**.



ourwatch.org.uk

DON'T BE EMBARRASSED

If you did fall victim to the scam, do not feel ashamed, or think that you were to blame in any way. Victims of scams are just like victims of any crime – they have been targeted by criminals and bear no culpability for the crime.

The quicker you act, the sooner you might stop someone else becoming a victim. You might even be able to get your money back – if you sent off a cheque, for example, the police may be able to ask Royal Mail to intercept it or require your bank to put a stop on it.

You should also tell your Neighbourhood Watch coordinator, so that they can warn others in your area that this particular type of scam is being attempted. They will not reveal to anyone else that you have been a victim of it.