

Bogus callers

Bogus callers are people who come to your door and pretend to be someone they are not, like a workman, or someone from a utility company. Such callers could be looking to commit a distraction burglary: they want to trick their way into your home in order to steal. Also be aware that there are telephone bogus callers who will try and defraud you by pretending to be from your bank, HMRC or your pension company.

Don't let strangers into your home

Always check their identity first. If in doubt, keep them out!

Just because a caller says they are from a company, the council or even the police, it does not mean they are. It could be a bogus caller trying to get into your home to steal your property. You may feel rude to refuse entry to someone who comes to your door, but it is your doorstep and, therefore, your decision.

When answering a call at your door always remember to:

- stop and think if the caller is expected.
- look through a spy hole or window to identify who the caller is.
- put the door chain or door bar on before opening the door and keep it on while talking to the caller.
- ask for the caller's identity card and check it carefully – even if the person has a pre-arranged appointment.
- do not let visitors who are in a hurry and pressurise or confuse you, come into your home – leave them to wait outside while you confirm who they are. Genuine visitors will not mind waiting. Close the door and lock it when you need to leave a caller standing outside.
- never use a telephone number given to you by a caller – find the number in your telephone directory or check with a friend, relative or neighbour.
- ask the caller to return if you are not comfortable, making sure someone is with you when they come back.
- only use reputable workmen recommended by family and friends, or those who have worked satisfactorily for you before or those registered online. There are also several online registers where the workmen have been vetted prior to becoming members. See our [Getting repairs and decorating done](#) article.

Some utility companies have password schemes, which means that the caller will quote your chosen password to prove that they are genuine. You can find out more about these schemes in our sections on [Water supply](#) and [Gas and electricity](#).

Remember, when someone comes to your door, take the following steps:

- **stop** – Are you expecting someone? Do they have an appointment?
- **chain** – Put the door chain or bar on before you open the door.
- **check** – Always ask to see the caller's identity and check it carefully.

If you have been tricked into letting someone into your home, you **must** report it to the police. The police believe that as many as nine out of ten such incidents could go unreported, as people often feel ashamed or embarrassed that they have been tricked in this way. You should remember that the police will not judge you and that there is no shame in falling victim to a doorstep criminal.

If you think a caller is suspicious contact the police on 101, but if you think a crime is being committed call 999.

- For further advice visit www.northumbria.police.uk
 - For more information from Trading Standards please visit www.newcastle.gov.uk
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Bogus Telephone Callers

Not all telephone callers are genuine. Common telephone scams include investment, pension, HMRC or computer support scams. There's more information on InformationNOW about how to protect yourself from [fraud and scams](#).

The person calling is often extremely professional and may pretend to be from a trusted organisation such as your bank, the police or another company you recognise. The caller may have some information on you to make them seem genuine. If you would like to stop these criminals getting through to you, you can apply for a [free trueCall call blocker \(suspended for coronavirus\)](#)

Other Useful Information

Age UK England's Guide to [Staying Safe](#).

If you are suspicious about a caller inform the police on 101 or if you feel that you are in immediate danger please call the Emergency Services on 999.

Useful Organisations

Trading Standards – Newcastle City Council

Email: tradingstandards@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/tradingstandards>

Address: Newcastle Civic Centre, NE1 8QH

Victims First Northumbria

Email: enquiries@victimsfirstnorthumbria.org.uk

Website: <http://www.victimsfirstnorthumbria.org.uk/>

Telephone: 0800 011 3116

Address: Equinox House, 3.2 Silver Fox Way, NE27 0QJ

Northumbria Police

Email: central.ceo@northumbria.pnn.police.uk

Website: www.northumbria.police.uk

Telephone: 101

Northumbria Police – Neighbourhood Watch

Website: <http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/>

Telephone: 101

Crimestoppers

Website: <https://crimestoppers-uk.org>

Telephone: 0800 555 111

Address: Crimestoppers Trust, SM6 6BG

Related Articles

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[Personal Safety](#)

[Ways to report crime and community safety issues](#)

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