

Dealing with Unexpected Callers

Following a number of calls to the Police regarding people offering items for sale visiting door-to-door who appear to be targeting areas occupied by elderly residents and who have used aggressive sales methods the Police would offer the following advice.

Answering your door

- **LOCK** – Keep your front and back doors locked even when you are at home.
- **STOP** – Before you answer, stop and think whether you are expecting anyone. Check you have locked the back door and taken the key out. Look through a spy hole or window to see who the caller is.
- **CHAIN** – If you decide to open the door, put the chain or door bar on first, if you have one. Keep the chain or bar on while you are talking to the caller. With PVC doors, it can be difficult and costly to fit a door chain. Check with the manufacturer before you buy a PVC door, that a chain will be fitted.
- **FIRE SAFETY** – Only put on your door chain as you answer the door - don't keep it on all the time as this could delay your exit in case of fire.
- **CHECK** – Look at their clothing. Some official callers will have a uniform bearing their organisation's name or symbol. Even if the caller has a pre-arranged appointment with you, check their identity card carefully. Close the door while you do this. If you are still unsure, call the company concerned to verify their representative's identity. Don't use a phone number on the card, as it could be fake, so look up the company in the phone book if you can. If you're still not sure, ask the caller to come back later when someone is with you.

If things go wrong:

You have rights under the Supply of Goods and Service Act 1982.

For initial advice and information on all the aspects of buying goods and services contact Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06 or visit www.consumerdirect.gov.uk

Most utility companies operate a password scheme for older or vulnerable customers. You can register with the scheme and their representative will have to confirm your password when they visit to prove they are a genuine employee of the company.

If you are still not happy, phone the police on **999** and tell us what has happened. **Warn your neighbours and friends.** Information can also be given anonymously on the Crimestoppers number of 0800 555 111.

If you think a bogus caller has been to your home, call the police immediately on 999.

If you have any doubts KEEP THEM OUT!