



ISSUE 65

SCAMS AWARENESS NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026

WELCOME TO OUR

Monthly Newsletter

Doorstep fraud is on the rise this Spring



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As the weather improves and daylight hours get longer, more people are out and about in our communities. Unfortunately, this also means an increase in criminals targeting homes.

Trading Standards teams across Cheshire have recently seen a rise in doorstep fraud, particularly affecting older and more vulnerable residents. These scams can happen quickly, often with little warning. The people involved may appear polite, friendly, and even helpful - but their aim is to pressure or trick you into handing over money or allowing access to your home.

In this month's newsletter, we explain how these scams work, what to look out for, and how you can protect yourself and those around you.



What is Doorstep Fraud?

Doorstep fraud happens when someone comes to your home uninvited and tries to deceive you. Their goal may be to:

- Get money from you for unnecessary or overpriced work
- Gain access to your home to steal from you
- Collect personal or financial information

These individuals are often very convincing. They may dress smartly, use official-sounding language, or claim to be working in your area.

Some even work in teams, with one person distracting you while another looks for opportunities to steal. It's important to remember: You are never under any obligation to open your door or engage with someone you don't know.

Doorstep Safety Golden Rules

Keeping these simple rules in mind can make a big difference:

- Never buy from someone who knocks unexpectedly
- Never let strangers into your home
- Never hand over cash, cards, or valuables
- Always check identification carefully
- Take your time - never be rushed into a decision



Remember: If something doesn't feel right, trust your instincts.

Common Types of Doorstep Scams

1. Rogue Traders

These individuals may claim they've spotted a problem with your home - such as loose roof tiles, damaged guttering, or issues with your driveway or garden. They often offer to fix it immediately, sometimes at a "discounted" rate.

The work may be unnecessary, poorly done, or not completed at all.

2. Fake Utility or Council Workers

Scammers may pretend to be from your gas, electricity, or water provider, or even the local council. They might say they need to check something urgently inside your home.

Genuine workers will always carry identification and will not mind if you take time to verify who they are.

3. Impersonating Police or Bank Staff

Some criminals claim to be from the police or your bank. They may say your account has been compromised and ask to see your bank card, PIN, or valuables.

Remember: Real police officers or bank staff will never ask for your PIN, ask you to transfer or withdraw money, or request your bank cards or valuables at your door.

5. Unexpected Deliveries

Be cautious if someone tries to deliver goods you didn't order, especially if they ask for payment or personal details.

7. "Ex-Offenders" Sales Scam

There have been reports of individuals claiming they are part of a rehabilitation or probation scheme, selling items such as cleaning products door-to-door. This is not a legitimate scheme.

These individuals may:

- Pressure you into buying items at inflated prices
- Target kind-hearted residents
- Return repeatedly or share your details with others

You are not expected to support these sales. It is perfectly acceptable to refuse.

Warning signs of a Rogue Trader



Not all traders are dishonest, but it's important to recognise the warning signs of those who are. Be cautious if someone:

- Refuses to provide a written quote
- Pressures you to make a quick or immediate decision
- Asks you to go to the bank and withdraw cash
- Requests full payment upfront
- Cannot provide verifiable contact details, such as a genuine business address
- Has an online presence but no independent reviews or proof of previous work
- Claims to be working locally but cannot provide examples or references

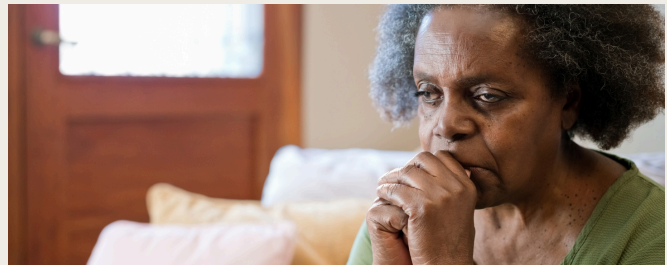
A genuine tradesperson will be happy to give you time to decide, provide references, and allow you to compare quotes before committing.

4. Pushy Door-to-Door Sellers

You may be offered products at a "special price" that's only available that day. Scammers often use urgency to pressure you into making quick decisions.

6. Fake Charity Collectors

While many charities carry out legitimate fundraising, scammers may pretend to represent a cause. They may be unable to provide proper identification or a registered charity number.



When someone knocks: STOP – LOCK – CHAIN – CHECK

If someone comes to your door unexpectedly, remember:

- STOP – Ask yourself: “Am I expecting anyone?”
- LOCK – Ensure other doors are locked before answering
- CHAIN – Use a door chain or look through a peephole
- CHECK – Ask for ID and verify it by contacting the company directly

If you feel unsure at any stage, you can simply choose not to open the door.

Resources to help keep you safe

- Display a “No Cold Callers” sign on your door or window
- Join the [Priority Services Register](#) for additional support
- Buy With Confidence – buywithconfidence.gov.uk
- Citizens Advice – citizensadvice.org.uk
- Stop! Think Fraud – stopthinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk
- National Trading Standards – nationaltradingstandards.uk

It's OK to say 'NO' & Reporting

Many people worry about being rude or unkind - but your safety comes first.

You are never under any obligation to engage with someone at your door.

It's perfectly acceptable to say:

- “No, thank you”
- “I'm not interested”
- “Please leave”

How to protect yourself

There are several simple steps you can take to reduce your risk:

- Never agree to work from someone who approaches you unexpectedly
- Always get at least three written quotes for home improvements
- Ask friends, family, or neighbours for recommendations
- Take time to think before making any decisions
- Never sign paperwork on the spot
- Do not accept deliveries you didn't order
- Never hand over bank cards, cash, or valuables
- Be cautious when using trader websites or directories - **listings and reviews are not guarantees of quality**, and should always be checked independently

If you feel uncomfortable, ask the person to leave and close the door.

If you are affected by the content of this bulletin, you can talk to us. Our Scams Awareness and Aftercare Team can offer free support, advice and guidance. Contact our team today on:



01625 612958 (OPTION 5)



scams@ageukcheshire.org.uk

Reporting scams helps protect not only you, but others in your community.

If you have concerns:

- Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline: 0808 223 1133
- Call 999 if you feel threatened or in immediate danger
- Call 101 to report suspicious activity in your area

If a trader refuses to leave your property or behaves aggressively, contact the police straight away.