RUCKINGE NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2025

This month I will focus on the need to alert the community to BOGUS CALLERS and ROGUE TRADERS
It may well be that Ruckinge does not have this as a major concern however through the winter where we face storms and high winds and then into the spring when we start to clean patios and driveways the risk can suddenly appear.

Rural areas go for long periods with no problems but then these persons come into a village and look to strike.
They will especially seek out our very elderly and vulnerable in the community. They will especially look to find persons who live alone.

NEVER EVER AGREE TO UNSOLICTED WORK ON YOUR DOORSTEP NO MATTER HOW ATTRACTIVE THE PRICE. What starts out as a £100 job is suddenly £500 or a £1000.
These criminals can be very persuasive, then pushy and then aggressive with violence.

They will look to pick up on the name of neighbours and start conversations with " Mary from down the road used us and said you might be interested in your gutters cleaning out for £50 ". That might seem a bargain especially to an elderly person who does not want to be climbing ladders.

They will climb the ladder and out of sight loosen the guttering or worse loosen a roof tile and with a bottle of water hidden in their pocket sprinkle the water on the tile and report to the householder about a broken tile and a water leak. Now the resident panics thinking there is a major problem, and the costs are on an upward move.

These criminals have absolutely no moral compass at all and would see vulnerable people as just easy targets and fair game.

If these sorts of people come to your door always engage your door chain if fitted. In an ideal world lock the back door too as sometimes a **"distraction burglary"** can take place whilst you are engaged in conversation a second persons slips in the back door.

Ask the person to withdraw and leave. Do not be persuaded to enter discussions about work. If they fail to leave close the door and call 999, giving as much of a description of the person and especially any vehicles they are using. Please remember you may be strong and resist further down the road a vulnerable person living alone may become a victim of a crime. If the criminals know you are calling the police they will leave the area! You may never know what you have prevented!

Anything like a storm causes a business opportunity for these criminals!
Schemes to provide better loft insulation is another.

If a criminal says they are from the council to assess better loft insulation which the council will provide for free people can be a scam/con.

ROGUE TRADERS

Rogue Traders

TO STOP FRAUD™

We have seen reports this week of Rogue Traders cold calling at people homes around the county, stating that they have noticed a problem with their roof or driveway etc and that they can fix the problem.

Remember the following advice, you must NEVER -

- agree for work on your house or garden by someone who knocks at your door uninvited.
- give money to or sign any forms for people who turn up on your doorstep.
- open the door to strangers or allow uninvited callers into your home.
- let somebody take you to the bank to get money for them.



Always,

- Get three written quotes.
- Ask family and friends for recommendations.
- Agree payment arrangements and start and finish dates in writing beforehand, and never pay in full until you are completely satisfied with the work.

If you think that you may have been a victim of this or any other type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

For further information about Fraud, visit our website at Advice about fraud | Kent Police

Even if you send the persons away and they leave please report the matter, as I said earlier, they may target another vulnerable person nearby.

By reporting the matter, it will come to people like me on Neighbourhood Watch which means I can issue an alert/ warning and further crime prevention advice.

Police Force Control may be able to deploy a patrol immediately and intercept the criminals.

Without taking any risks a description of the vehicle and especially a registration number would be a massive help.

Kent Fraud Alert System

TAKE FIVE TO STOP FRAUD™

Rogue Traders

We have seen an increase in reports of this type of criminality recently.

Opposite is our leaflet on how you can protect yourself against these types of scams.

If you think that you may have been a victim of this type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.



Protect yourself and others against rogue traders

Most people who call at your home are genuine. But sometimes people may turn up unannounced and try to sell you services or items you do not want or need or carry out unnecessary repairs to your home at inflated prices.

If you're concerned about someone calling at your home, **don't open your door**.

You can:

- Ask for identification and call their company yourself (not on a number they provide) to check they are genuine
- Ask the visitor to return another time when someone can be with you
- Get three written quotes
- Ask family and friends for recommendations
- Agree payment arrangements and start and finish dates in writing beforehand, and never pay in full until you're completely satisfied with the work.

Preventing fraud

Together, let's stop scammers.

Remember, ABC:

never Assume

never Believe

always Confirm

Get the latest scam advice: **@KentPoliceECU**

Pressurised selling on your doorstep is a crime and you can report it:

- **kent.gov.uk/tradingstandards** or call 0808 223 1133
- For advice: **www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/**
- Follow **@kent_ECU** or email **kfas@ecis.police.uk**

Kent Police

Contacting Kent Police

Report a non-urgent crime online **www.kent.police.uk/report**

Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 **www.kent.police.uk/contact**

In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**

If deaf or speech impaired, text '**police**' and your message to **60066**

www.kent.police.uk

Beware of **suspicious callers**

Most people who call at your home are genuine.

But sometimes people may turn up unannounced and try to:

- Trick their way into your home to steal valuables or money
- Sell you services or items you do not want or need
- Carry out unnecessary repairs to your home at inflated prices.



If concerned about someone calling at your home, **don't open your door.**

You can also:

- Ask for identification and call their company yourself (not on a number they provide) to check they are genuine
- Never leave your door unattended
- Ask the visitor to return another time when someone can be with you.

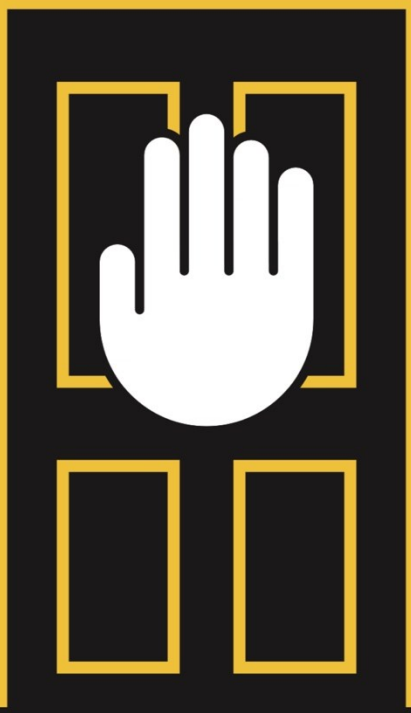
Kent Police

Contacting Kent Police

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www.kent.police.uk

Anyone can buy a yellow coat and carry a clip board. I.D. Must be seen and even then you can ask for the person to leave and ask for an appointment to be made.

You don't have to open the door to unexpected visitors



You can also:

- lock the rest of your home before opening the front door
- use a keychain and spy hole and check their ID
- stay with them when they are in your home
- ask them to come back later if you are worried

Find out more **www.kent.police.uk/burglary**

Kent Police



Please do not take any chances on your doorsteps.
Stay safe, secure, alert and vigilant. Don't forget to email me to join RUCKINGE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH, everything is free.

Thank you for your support
Peter

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Community Neighbourhood Watch