

Personal Safety & Bogus Callers

- An honest face or a good story can hide a trick to get into your home. Never let someone into your house because you don't want to seem rude or unsympathetic– it has been known for thieves, male or female, to use small children or even a faked heart attack as a ruse. By all means be a good Samaritan but remember your own safety first.
- Consider fitting a door chain and spy-hole on your front door; outside lighting can also help you identify callers. Never let anyone into your home unless you are satisfied about who they are and what they want.
- Public Service employees are required to show identity cards when they come to your home. Examine the card carefully as fake cards have been used. The card should have a photograph and the name of the organisation. If you are at all worried, ring the organisation to check the caller is genuine. Use the telephone number given in the phone book or on your utility bill, rather than the one printed on the identity card. A genuine worker won't mind waiting.
- If you need to have your meters checked, but have difficulty reading identity cards, ring the number given on your bills and ask if they operate a free password scheme. This would mean that when a meter reader called they would identify themselves by the password you have given.
- Be wary of employing workmen who come to the door offering bargain prices for work they say you need done to your house. If you need building work done, it is usually best to ask for several written quotes from trustworthy and established firms.
- If you have a back door, make sure it is locked before answering the front door. Some thieves work in pairs and one will keep you talking at the front door while the other tries to enter by the back door.
- Your local council may provide a community alarm scheme for elderly or disabled people. Ask at your local police station or council offices.
- If you are at all nervous, you could ask whoever is at the door to come back at an appointed time and arrange to have someone with you.