



THE VALLEYS and VALE



Introduction To A No Cold Calling Area



What is cold calling?

“Cold calling” or doorstep calling is when someone calls at your home without a prior invitation. It is normally carried out by traders or sales people trying to sell a product or service and is a legal method of doing business. Other organisations which cold call on the doorstep include charities, religious groups and political parties at election time.

Some people are happy to receive such callers. However, some find cold calling to be annoying, unacceptable and an invasion of their privacy. In addition, cold calling is a known method used by rogue traders, bogus workmen, high-pressure sales people, and bogus officials whose aim is to con householders out of their hard earned money.

There is a proven link between instances of cold calling and instances of burglary particularly distraction burglary. A seemingly innocent doorstep caller may actually be checking things out for a return visit at a later date to carry out a burglary or they may be distracting the householder, while an accomplice enters there premises to steal. It has been proved in Gloucestershire that a reduction in cold calling leads directly to a reduction in instances of consumers being deceived and of burglary.

A national Trading Standards Institute survey involving feedback from 9,000 randomly selected households showed that nationally 96% of people simply did not want doorstep cold callers, and none of those surveyed actually welcomed them.

That is not to say that all cold calling leads to problems for householders. There are cold callers who operate legal and acceptable businesses and are welcomed by residents, such as Avon who operate a thriving business and vast sums of money are raised by charities from people willing to donate on their doorstep.



What you can do?

Keep an eye open for suspicious activity in your neighbourhood

This type of crime can impact on anyone in any place and no one should feel ashamed if they become a victim. Research shows that older people are particularly vulnerable, especially those living alone.

The number of serious doorstep crime incidents reported to both the police and trading standards services has grown significantly over the past few years.

Incidents involving older people losing thousands of pounds are now not unusual, but even a crime costing its victim just a few pounds can have a profound effect on that person's life and health because they feel that the security and safety of their home has been invaded. Therefore please keep an eye on vulnerable

neighbours and report any suspicions that you have to Gloucestershire Police on 0845 090 1234. In an emergency, where you believe that there is a risk to public safety or an actual fraud is taking place, please dial 999.

Door stickers

One method to stop cold calling to a home is to place a notice on the front door indicating that the resident does not wish to receive cold callers. This can be hand written using our suggested wording or you can use your own wording. Limited supplies of stickers are also available.

Displaying this sort of notice will let cold callers know they are not welcome and will go some way to preventing cold calling at any individual home.

No cold calling Area

In addition to using door stickers, another method is the establishment of a 'No cold calling Area'. This is where a group of residents (one or several streets, or the residents of a block of flats for example) get together and declares their area a no cold calling Area. This means that the residents do not want cold calling in that specified area.

Please remember that cold calling is a legitimate method of trading, however, we believe that to call on a person uninvited who is living in a area, or is displaying a door sticker indicating that they do not wish to receive cold callers, is anti-social and persistent calling by the same person could be harassment and a breach of the householder's human rights.

While supporting the residents of Gloucestershire, and wishing to reduce all instances of crime, we have a duty to encourage legitimate business and therefore can only support the setting up of an area where there is a clear need and it is a distinct possibility that the establishment of an area will achieve an end to a problem.

This need may be;

- Instances of burglary in the area
- Instances of the residents being deceived by cold callers
- A large number of vulnerable residents in the area (elderly, infirm or disabled, and of course there must be a wish by the residents to have the area set up.

The effect of establishing a no cold calling area

Once an area has been established, residents can feel confident to say "no" to cold callers and this will lead to reduced doorstep crime and burglary in the area. Instances of cold calling in the zone should be reported to Gloucestershire Police on 0845 090 1234, who will deal with the information as appropriate.

In an emergency, where you believe that there is a risk to public safety or an actual fraud is taking place, please dial 999; you can also report crimes anonymously by calling **Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111**



