

Following a number of reports in the Newbridge Hill area of Bath where some of the door-to-door sellers have become aggressive or pushy when turned away, Police in Bath and North East Somerset are reminding householders not to be taken in by companies making “cold calls” over the telephone and on the doorstep.

Never give personal details over the telephone to anyone you do not know and definitely never give out your Bank details. If you receive an unsolicited telephone call purporting to be from your Bank or other financial institution and you are suspicious about the legitimacy of the call, disconnect and ring the telephone number provided on your statement or card. No Bank will ever ask you for your pin number – never disclose it over the telephone or to any one at the door.

New scams from the UK and overseas appear every day, so it is important to be sceptical and suspicious. If something sounds too good to be true then it most probably is. Be particularly wary if you are asked to send money up front, to give financial details or to ring a premium rate number (all UK premium rate numbers start with 090). If you discover a scam tell your family and friends. If you have been a victim of a scam you should report it to Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06 www.consumerdirect.gov.uk or contact the Police. You can also get clear, practical advice from Consumer Direct.

If you received unsolicited telephone calls you can prevent them by registering with the Telephone Preference Service (TPS), by telephone on 08450 700 707 or on line at www.tpsonline.org.uk or write to The Telephone Preference Service Ltd, DMA House, 70 Margaret Street, London, W1W 8SS. You could also report such incidents to your telephone provider.

If you receive an unexpected caller at the door try to look through a window or spy hole. If you do not recognise the caller and are not expecting them then you should consider not opening the door. If you have a door chain then this should be used before opening the door. Legitimate callers should have identification badges and these should be checked and a telephone call made to the company to verify that the caller is genuine before allowing them into your home. Please be sure to look up the telephone number yourself and not use a number given to you by the caller.

If you have any doubt, keep them out!

Never buy goods or services on the doorstep from someone who you do not know. Know your rights! If you do decide to allow a salesperson to enter your home following a telesales appointment you have numerous rights. These include: The right to ask someone to leave your home at any time. (They must do so immediately). The right to a written notice explaining that the customer has a “7 day cooling off period” during which time they can change their mind. This

notice HAS to be provided every time. And many more rights under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Regulations 2008. Bath and North East Somerset Council produce a Trading Standards directory of approved traders, called Buy With Confidence. Copies are available at your local library or by Calling Trading Standards on 01225 396753.

If you are concerned about a call or visit you have received, please report it to the Police on **101** or ring Trading Standards on 01225 396753.

Visit the Force website on www.avonandsomerset.police.uk where you can also sign up to receive local news and alerts, Crimestoppers appeals and job details, direct to your inbox – on <http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/Interactive/>