

Nominated Neighbour Scheme



How does the Nominated Neighbour Scheme work?

In Cumbria, the 'Nominated Neighbour Scheme' helps householders within the community to feel safer when dealing with unwanted or unexpected callers to their home address. The Scheme can be independent of, or run in conjunction with, other activities such as Neighbourhood Watch.

Sometimes a bogus trader or doorstep criminal will target the elderly or vulnerable. The Police and Trading Standards work hard to tackle this crime but there is a scheme that residents can get involved in to help to deter these criminals.

The scheme works by the vulnerable person being given a specially developed card that they hold up to a window or door which advises any unidentified or unexpected caller to go to the address of a 'Nominated Neighbour' who will check the callers identity and if they are genuine return with them and supervise the visit to make sure that nothing untoward takes place and will remain there until the caller has left.

When the card is shown to the caller it replaces any need for the occupant to enter into conversation with that person and a genuine caller will not mind following the instructions. We believe no criminal who preys on the



Benefits of the scheme?

This scheme will help limit the opportunity for rogue doorstep callers to con their way into homes or persuade residents to have unnecessary home improvements, once they fail to gain access and know the local community are alert to their activities it will act as a strong deterrent to stop them returning in the future.

This scheme will mean that people will be protected by someone they know and trust, such as a neighbour or a relative. It will also encourage residents to look out for each other and to report suspicious activity.

The scheme is free to householders and Trading Standards will provide further information and support to both the nominated neighbour and householder as necessary.

How is the nominated neighbour selected?

The nominated neighbour is chosen freely by the householder and will be readily available to help. It will often be someone who is already looking out for the householder or a relative. They will be given simple and clear guidance by the scheme on what action they should take with different kinds of callers and whom to contact to report any incidents. Nominated neighbours are advised to register to receive free crime and incident alerts on Cumbria Community Messaging. This provides them with up to date information about current scams and suspicious activity.

If you would like a Nominated Neighbour Scheme pack sent to you or a vulnerable neighbour or relative within Cumbria please contact Cumbria Trading Standards via the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on **08454 040506** who will take the details.

The role of the nominated neighbour

- When you receive a caller for your neighbour, check their identity. **DO NOT LET THEM INTO YOUR HOME;**
- When you are happy that they are genuine, return with them to your neighbour's home. **SECURE YOUR HOME BEFORE YOU LEAVE;**
- When you arrive at your neighbour's home, stay with the caller while they conduct their business (unless the neighbour specifically asks for privacy);
- Secure both front and back doors and ensure no one else can enter your neighbour's property undetected;
- Never allow the caller to move from one room to another;
- Never leave the caller alone;
- When they have completed their business, escort the caller off the premises;
- Utility companies can arrange passwords to ensure that only genuine officials gain access to their customers' homes.

If you are out

Tell your neighbour that if the caller returns to their home and says that you are not at home, then they should simply tell them to make an appointment by letter and come back another day. Tell them not to argue, but simply walk away from the door.



Remember!

All genuine callers will not mind waiting while you confirm their identity. If they argue – be very suspicious. Most criminals will be put off by the scheme, and not call at your home. However this cannot be guaranteed, so you cannot afford to be complacent. If you are uncertain or have doubts about the identity of the caller, call the Police immediately. If you wish to speak to the police but it is not an emergency, please contact the Police on their **Non Emergency Number: 101**

In an emergency or for an incident requiring urgent Police attention dial 999.

Your rights when you buy on your doorstep

The 'Doorstep Selling Regulations' offer some protection against cold callers but many householders are unaware of their rights. If you do decide to deal with cold callers, these are your legal rights:

- These regulations only apply where goods or services cost over £35;
- If you bought something following a visit by a trader to your home or workplace you are entitled to a 7 day 'cooling off' period in which you may cancel the agreement for any reason;
- The seller must provide a notice setting out your cancellation rights. It is now a criminal offence, enforceable by Trading Standards, if a trader fails to deliver the required written notice of cancellation rights;
- In certain circumstances, the contract may be void and, even if the work has been completed, there is no requirement to make any payment.

Remember: Many cold callers want their money as quickly as possible and will offer to take you to the bank – **don't take them up on the offer.**

Useful Information

There are a number of steps you can take to help you feel safer in your home and reduce the chances of becoming a victim of a scam.

For consumer advice about your rights, if you are concerned about a doorstep seller/rogue trader or if you wish to report a doorstep crime please contact Cumbria Trading Standards via the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on **08454 040506**.

To request a free home safety visit including the fitting of a free smoke alarm contact **Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service** on **0800 3584777** or visit **cumbriafire.gov.uk**



Other useful contact numbers:

CUMBRIA FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Scams are sent by post, telephone, e-mail and mobile phone text message. If you feel you have become a victim of a scam report it to Action Fraud .	T: 0300 1232040 W: actionfraud.police.uk
To reduce unwanted telephone sales calls register with the Telephone Preference Service .	T: 0845 0700707 W: tpsonline.org.uk
To reduce unsolicited mailings register with the Mailing Preference Service .	T: 0845 7034599 W: mpsonline.org.uk
To receive warnings of scams and rogue traders in your area join the Cumbria Community Messaging Service .	W: cumbriacommunitymessaging.co.uk If you don't have internet access you can register at your local Police Station.
For free and impartial advice regarding problems with goods or services contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline .	T: 08454 040506 W: adviceguide.org.uk
For advice on various campaigns to help older adults contact Age UK .	T: 0800 1696565 W: ageuk.org.uk
For crime prevention advice including security of your home and how to set up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme contact Cumbria Police .	T: 101 W: cumbria.police.uk
Looking for a reputable trader? Consider the Cumbria Trading Standards Buy with Confidence Scheme	T: 08454 040506 W: buywithconfidence.gov.uk