

## What Is Doorstep Crime?

Doorstep Crime is the name used to catch a range of crimes all of which involve attempting to obtain money from the victim in their own home. It includes-

- 'Rogue Traders', who will persuade the home owner to have work carried out on their property. This work is often unnecessary, may be charged at grossly over-inflated prices, normally is very poorly done and often the trader will charge for work that hasn't been completed. Typically it will involve roofing, guttering, gardening or driveway repairs.
- Distraction burglary where the offender will trick their way into the home on false pretences in order to steal money or possessions whilst the occupier is not looking.

Doorstep criminals target older people living alone, knowing that they can use scare tactics ('Your roof will leak if you don't get it fixed soon'), bullying or intimidation to get money from their victim.

## Rogue Traders

Here in Oxfordshire our Doorstep Crime team receives, on average, more than one report every day of a new instance of doorstep crime. By the end of 2008/9 there had been an increase of 45% in reported doorstep crime, with a staggering figure of nearly £1 million paid out to rogue traders. Thanks to the vigilance of Oxfordshire residents and the quick reporting of these crimes, the Doorstep Crime team has, in conjunction with Thames Valley Police, made 28 arrests and managed to save £71,700 in total for the victims of these crimes.

### Buy With Confidence

To help you and the person you care for beat the rogue traders we can supply you with details of reliable local tradesmen and women to carry out work around your home and garden.

For details of firms you can trust, call **0845 051 0845** or visit the website at **[www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk)**

## What to look out for

- Rogue traders will be insistent, they will be reluctant to leave when their victim answers the door and will not allow their victim to take a few days to think before agreeing to the work being done.
- Sometimes they may try to use fear and intimidation to get their way.
- They will claim that something needs urgent attention so that their victim will engage their services on the spot.
- Any cost will often be much more excessive than any quote that may have been given.
- Look out for vague addresses and details on paperwork; or there may well be none at all!
- They will often say they have materials left over from another job.

If you believe that a rogue trader has called at the house of someone that you care for, contact Trading Standards immediately on **0845 051 0845**.

## What should I do?

In your role you are the person in regular contact with the person you care for. You are in a unique position to help prevent that person from becoming a victim of doorstep crime.

### Rogue Trader Checklist

- Were you expecting the person you care for to have some work done to their house?
- Do you feel they have paid, or will be asked to pay, a fair price for the work?
- Are all of their money and valuables safe?
- Did the tradesman provide them with written information on their rights to cancel the work?
- Are you sure you know who the trader is?

If you have answered 'no' to any of these questions then contact Trading Standards on **0845 051 0845** or by using the website: **[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards)**

- **Is the trader an approved Buy With Confidence Trader? If not, see the box inside to find an approved trader.**

## Who we are?

Oxfordshire Trading Standards' Doorstep Crime Team works closely with the Police, district councils and other agencies to disrupt the activities of traders such as rogue builders and property repairers.

Intelligence is gathered to build up a picture of rogue activity and any criminal offences are investigated.

The Trading Standards Doorstep Crime Team will:

**I**ntervene on the doorstep, to support a consumer dealing with traders

**D**isrupt the activities of rogue traders by sharing information with other agencies such as the police

**E**nforce the law and work with our partners

**A**dvice consumers and traders on the legal requirements, and

**S**upport victims

## Oxfordshire Trading Standards Service

Phone: 0845 051 0845

Email:

[trading\\_standards@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:trading_standards@oxfordshire.gov.uk)  
[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards)

# Doorstep Crime

## what to look out for

### A guide for carers and support workers

[www.safefromharm.org.uk](http://www.safefromharm.org.uk)

Oxfordshire's Safeguarding Adults Board  
website for helping vulnerable people  
who are at risk of abuse

**OSAB**  
Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board

 **OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**  
[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Working for you