



Alresford and District Neighbourhood Watch Association



Garden ornaments and furniture

The theft of garden ornaments, furniture and planters is a Spring/Summer trend. Consider the security of your property and remember that valuable planters and ornaments are safer in the back garden where passers-by can't see them.

Secure garden furniture using an anchoring device making it harder to remove. These can also be used to protect expensive planters and ornamental trees. Use brackets to protect hanging baskets. Consider security marking your valuables. If they are difficult to mark, take a photograph of them to help with identification if the worst happens and they are stolen.

You can also protect your property by registering significant items at the 'Immobilise Property Register'. A list of benefits of registration and details how to register can be found on the website www.immobilise.com.

It's cold caller season

As the weather improves, there tends to be more cold callers knocking on doors. Cold callers may be offering work around the home and garden, asking residents to sign direct debits to donate to charities, offering small household goods for sale or travelling in vans offering carpets, beds or televisions. Telephone cold callers may include home and security companies trying to make appointments to visit and companies cold calling to offer solutions to cold telephone calls (for a monthly fee).

Some of the above will be genuine, but some may be rogue traders, distraction burglars, or there to gather information on the doorstep for their criminal associates. You can't tell by looking at someone how honest they are.

Dealing with cold callers you risk being overcharged for goods or services that may be poor quality from workers that can't be traced once they leave, or distracted while an accomplice steals from the address. If you deal with a rogue trader on the doorstep, your details could be passed to other cold callers so that you receive more visits.

If cold callers don't succeed in your area, they are less likely to come back, and although you may not be at risk, there are vulnerable neighbours in every area that may fall prey to unscrupulous callers. We can all help by not opening the door and not dealing with cold callers.

Anyone needing work around the home and garden is advised to get at least three quotes from different, reputable companies before deciding.

Members of Hampshire County Council Trading Standards Buy With Confidence scheme are fully audited to ensure their trading practices are legal, honest and fair.

All members have been checked for trustworthiness and compliance with consumer protection laws.

Details can be obtained by telephoning 01962 833620, emailing buy.with.confidence@hants.gov.uk or via the website www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk

If anyone has any information about traders who are cold calling or requires any advice on doorstep crime they can contact Hampshire County Council's Quick Response Team on 01962 833666 (Monday – Friday 0900hrs to 1700hrs) where specially trained officers are on hand to provide advice.

If assistance is required outside of these hours please contact Hampshire Police, on their non-urgent number 101 or dial 999 if you feel threatened or intimidated.