

NO UNINVITED SALES PEOPLE



Say NO
to doorstep
callers



Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Trading Standards in the Western Isles regularly receive complaints, especially during the summer months, from consumers who have bought goods from, or who have had work carried out by, rogue traders.

Recently we have had complaints about traders calling uninvited at the door offering to carry out work on the house, such as repairs, external painting, tarmac driveways, fixing guttering and fascia boards.

We also regularly receive complaints about unwanted doorstep callers, selling cleaning products, furniture and even generators.

We have also investigated doorstep buyers, who have purchased antique goods from consumers at very much below their real value.

Very often the trader has left the Western Isles with the consumers' cash, before having finished the service, or having sold faulty goods.

We have also had examples of victims of rogue traders being driven to the bank to withdraw cash for payment.

Doorstep callers can sometimes be aggressive or use intimidating

sales techniques. Often costs start out low, but it soon begins to spiral as rogue traders find more "work" to be done.



Unwanted doorstep sales persons may pressure you into signing an agreement for goods or services, such as a new kitchen or double glazing . Once the sales

person has left you may realise that you do not need the goods or cannot afford them.

The law has tried to balance this disadvantage by giving you the right, in most circumstances, to cancel contracts for the goods or services that have been sold in the home.

Your Rights

If the goods or services you buy cost more than £35, and you did not invite the seller to call, then you generally have seven days to change your mind and cancel the contract.

Responding to an advertisement in the paper or a leaflet dropped through your door counts as inviting the seller to call.

If you agree to a visit after the seller rings you up or sends someone round to ask if he or she can visit, you still have the right to cancel within seven days.

By law, the seller must give you written details of your right to cancel (there are exceptions to this). Failure to do this is a criminal offence, and the contract cannot be enforced

against you. The details of the right to cancel may be set out in the contract, or you may be given a separate form.

If you are entitled to cancellation rights but are not given details in writing then the agreement cannot be enforced and you don't have to pay a penny, even if the goods or services have already been supplied.

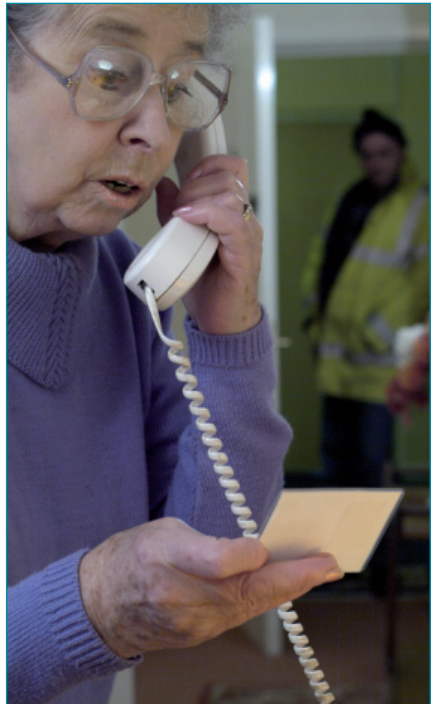
If you do cancel the contract, and goods have already been delivered, you must keep them safe and let the seller collect them.

If you are given written details of your rights and decide to cancel the contract, you can get back any money you paid. But if you have received certain goods or services which would be awkward or virtually impossible to hand back (eg perishable goods or home improvement services), then you will have to pay for what you received, even if you cancel the contract.

If you make first contact with the seller, and invite them to call, you have no legal right to change your mind and cancel the contract.

There are two exceptions:

1. If the contract specifically gives you cancellation rights;
2. If you bought the goods or service on credit, in which case you will generally have five days to cancel.



Beware

Doorstep sellers may use lines like these in order to get into your home:

“Congratulations! You’ve won a prize! If you could just sign here for it...”

“I noticed you’ve got a few loose tiles on your roof...”

“There have been a lot of burglaries in the area recently.....”

“This cut-price special offer is only available if you sign today....”

“I’m doing a survey....”

Remember, doorstep sellers can be extremely persuasive. Once you let a doorstep seller into your home, they will expect a sale – and they won’t give up easily.

Always ask doorstep callers for ID, and check the card carefully. Reputable callers will have an identity card with their photo and a telephone number which you can phone to check their authorisation.

We want to encourage you to report any doorstep sellers whom you are concerned about. It is always helpful if

you can note down details such as vehicle registration numbers and a brief description of the callers to pass on to the Police and Trading Standards when you call.

- To report doorstep sellers please use our 24 hour number on 01851701702 or call Crimestoppers on 0800555111 or in an emergency dial 999 for the Police.



Calamity Calum says:

**"Say No to
Rogue Traders!"**

This leaflet is intended for guidance only. For further info visit the Consumer Direct Website or tel 08454 040506 Trading Standards, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Tel 01851 709577