

No cold calling

New 'No Cold Calling' zones are to be set up in the east of the city after it was discovered that this area was being targeted by doorstep callers.

Trading Standards Officers from the City of Edinburgh Council and officers from Lothian and Borders Police have been working in partnership to catch individuals, who try and sell hoax services on the doorsteps of vulnerable people.

Research undertaken by the Council and the police found that the east Edinburgh was a target area for sham workmen, offering services such as gardening or property repairs.

A questionnaire was sent out to local residents which found up to 30% of residents in the local area had been targeted.

Although the vast majority of doorstep callers are genuine, there are those who try and sell services at an inflated cost or don't carry out a job after money has changed hands.

This type of incident usually goes under reported because victims are often too embarrassed or intimidated to report the crime.

Now, 'No Cold Calling' zones have been set up in Coillesdene, the Durhams, Moira Park, Restalrig Avenue and Seaview Crescent.

Lamppost signage and window stickers are also being displayed in area to alert criminals to the fact that it is a 'No Cold Calling' area and that intimidating sellers will not be tolerated.

Councillor Robert Aldridge, Environment Leader, said: -"I am delighted to be launching this important partnership which will hopefully result in many more people, especially those in vulnerable situations, feeling more secure in their own homes.

“Doorstep crime is a callous and deceitful act and through our work with the Police, we know there are some unscrupulous characters out there who will take advantage of others if they get the chance.

“The formation of these zones in the east of the city will help prevent many of the problems associated with cold calling, high pressure selling and bogus workmen.”

Inspector Nadine Aliane, from Lothian and Borders Police, said: “While we recognise that the majority of people who sell goods from door to door are legitimate and law abiding members of our communities, Lothian and Borders Police support the City of Edinburgh Council Trading Standards Department in their endeavours to empower local communities with the choice to say no and ask that traders respect this.

“Doorstep crime is one, which can have a huge effect on victims because, by its very nature, it is personal and intrusive. Where there is crime or intent to commit crime we are committed to dealing with reports promptly and robustly and working with partners to minimise the risk posed by bogus door to door sellers.”

There are also plans to roll out the scheme city-wide which will give Edinburgh a total of 28 ‘No Cold Calling’ zones.