

Bogus crime prevention calls and publications -Trading Standards Warning

01 October 2010

Lytham and St Annes:

Consumers are warned that unsolicited phone calls are being received by residents from a company that claims that it is operating on behalf of local Crime Prevention, and that the caller is looking to set up a Neighbourhood Watch Zone. The purpose of the phone call appears to be to find out personal details about the resident. Please be aware that these calls appear to be unconnected with either the police or Neighbourhood Watch. We advise people never to give out personal details on the phone when cold-called.

County-wide:

Small businesses are warned that unsolicited phone calls are being received by farm shops, hairdressers and hardware shops, selling space in publications variously claiming links with the council, the police or the fire brigade (sometimes just sold as 'funding the emergency services'). The claims are far-fetched to say the least, and it is unlikely that such publications will be distributed as promised. Be aware that any agreement on the phone or by email will result in the company claiming they have a binding contract with the business, often for three years. Our advice is to shop around for reputable publications and advertise in those, never just accept the word of a cold-caller discussing an unknown publication.

Please refer any complaints to Lancashire Trading Standards Service, 55 Guildhall Street, Preston, Lancs PR1 3NU via Consumer Direct tel 08454 040506. If anyone has lost money they should also contact the police, or alternatively refer to Action Fraud via their website www.actionfraud.org.uk or number 0300 123 2040.