



Crime Stoppers

Focusing on Bogus Callers

One crime that causes huge distress and is becoming more common is 'distraction burglary'. A person posing as an official, usually from one of the utility companies (water, electricity, gas, telephone etc), calls at the door. They start chatting to the owner and gain entry to the house "to read the meter" for example, or "to do a safety check". Once left alone, they can help themselves to purses, wallets, handbags, jewelry and other valuables. Sometimes there is even an accomplice who sneaks in while the first criminal is talking to the owner and, unseen, has free rein to wander around the rest of the house.

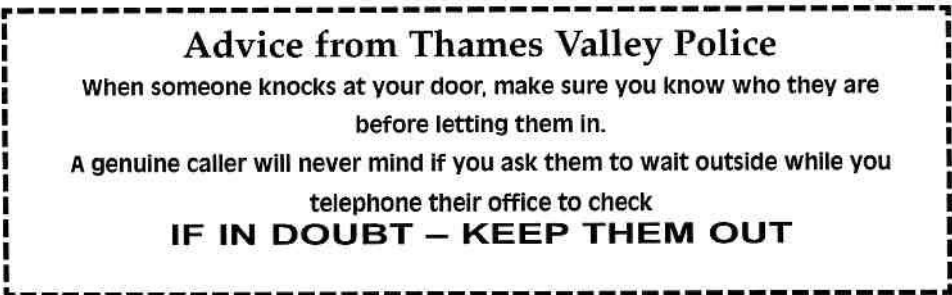
These conmen usually choose to call at the houses of elderly, often single people, who will often be very welcoming and happy to pass the time of day with the caller, even offering a cup of tea and a biscuit. Their hospitality is returned by this horrible act of burglary.

Many victims of this type of crime never report it to the Police.

They believe that they were in some way responsible for the crime, since they let the stranger into their house. They feel stupid and hurt, and too distressed to talk about it. So the criminal walks free to work the same trick on another vulnerable person.

This is where CRIMESTOPPERS comes in. Anyone with information about any crime can call Crimestoppers ANONYMOUSLY on the Freephone number 0800 555 111. They will not be asked their name, the call will not be recorded or traced. Callers who do not choose to be anonymous may be eligible for a reward should their information lead to an arrest and charge. In the Thames Valley last year, over 1000 people called Crimestoppers to provide information about a vast range of crimes. 140 suspects were arrested and charged as a direct result of these calls, making the Thames Valley a safer place for us all.

If you have any information about any crime, phone THAMES VALLEY CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111



Advice from Thames Valley Police

When someone knocks at your door, make sure you know who they are before letting them in.

A genuine caller will never mind if you ask them to wait outside while you telephone their office to check

IF IN DOUBT – KEEP THEM OUT