

Press release

17 August 2007

Keep the chain on and ask for ID before you open the door

They say they want to check the gas or the electricity. They have identification and they are carrying tools. But you are not expecting them. Before you let them in, phone the company they say they work for to confirm whether they are who they say they are.

Bogus callers or distraction burglars often target residents who are elderly, disabled or live alone. Hackney Homes and Hackney Borough Police are advising all residents to keep the chain on when answering the door. If you have an entry phone system, don't let people you do not know in.

Bogus callers will use any means necessary to gain entry to homes – they may say they have come to check electricity, water or gas meters, or they may say they are from the Hackney Homes or the police. When phoning the company the caller says they work for, use the number from the phone book or your latest bill and not the number on their ID card.

To support elderly residents, Hackney Borough Police runs a Nominated Neighbour Scheme where residents are encouraged to seek the help of a neighbour or relative in checking that unexpected callers to their door are genuine. If you or a neighbour would like to take part in this scheme, please contact Hackney Borough Police's Crime Prevention Office on 020 7275 3344.

Hackney Homes Estate Safety Manager, Wayne Hylton said "All our residents should feel safe in their homes and on their estates. We ask residents to always ask callers to prove their identity before letting them in. All Hackney Homes staff and contractors have identity cards and if suspicious, you should call the police immediately".

Ends

Press queries to Olaide Oyekanmi on 0208 356 3522, 0777 2565514 or email Olaide.Oyekanmi@hackneyhomes.org.uk

or

Colette Douglass on 020 7275 3249, 07881 460 568 or email colette.douglass@met.police.uk