

3. Keeping safe at home

Crime prevention

If you read the local and national newspapers it's easy to think that every person who knocks on your door is up to no good, or that every young person lurking on the street is waiting for a chance to mug you.

The good news is crime has fallen by 25% in the past four years. This means the chances of becoming a victim of crime are amongst the lowest since records began.

Government research tells us people over 60 are less likely to be a victim of crime than other age groups. While that's good to know it is still important to take precautions to reduce the risk of you becoming a victim. For example:

- don't leave doors and windows open or unlocked - around a third of burglars get in through insecure doors
- take care of your keys - thieves often use your keys to take your vehicle
- consider fitting extra locks and lights to your property, including timer switches which make people believe there is someone home
- be a good neighbour, join a neighbourhood watch scheme or if you don't have one, find out how to start one
- always ask door step callers for identification - if they are genuine, they won't mind
- make sure you have smoke alarms fitted and have a safe route out of your house
- mark your belongings with your postcode

- keep your garage and shed secure with proper security locks and keep tools and valuables out of sight
- trim back any overgrown hedges or bushes that a burglar could hide behind.

Doorstep crime

Older people in particular can be at risk from bogus callers and doorstep rogue traders. These problems are well known to organisations such as West Yorkshire Trading Standards and the police.

Unfortunately many older and vulnerable people fall victim to rogue workmen or plausible sales people whom then demand large amounts of money for little or no service. Often the work carried out is unnecessary and sub-standard. Isolated and pressured into paying, people can be driven to the bank or building society to withdraw the cash.

'Traders' can call uninvited to your home with the intention of tricking you into letting them in so that they can steal or otherwise persuade you to hand over money. They often pose as officials from utility companies, try to sell you something at an inflated price for a once in a lifetime offer, or seek payment for doing a job, for example gardening, resurfacing the drive, or roof repairs.

If you are a victim contact the police immediately. Police and West Yorkshire Trading Standards are working together to tackle these criminals.

Call:

- West Yorkshire Trading Standards, Tel: 08454 040506
- Police Headquarters, Wakefield Tel: 0845 6060606



Many people can fall victim of door step crime

Abuse of vulnerable adults

A vulnerable adult is someone who is not able to care for or protect themselves from harm. It might be because of age, mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss, or physical or learning disabilities. It might be someone who is usually able to manage but is unable to do so because of an accident or illness.

A vulnerable person might be abused by almost anyone:

- a relative or unpaid carer
- a paid or professional carer or advisor
- a person who is receiving the same services, for example day care, residential care
- a stranger

Abuse can:

- be an act which goes against your human rights
- be a single act or repeated acts
- happen in any relationship
- result in harm
- take advantage of someone's vulnerability

There are six main types of abuse:

- physical
- psychological
- financial
- sexual
- neglect
- discriminatory abuse, including racist, sexist and other forms of harassment

A vulnerable adult might also:

- neglect themselves or deliberately harm themselves

If you think someone you know is being abused, speak out and call:

- Gateway to care Tel: 01484 414933 or text 0778148231 email gatewaytocare@kirklees.gov.uk
- In an emergency outside office hours, call Kirklees Council Adult Services on 01924 326489

Carephone Home Safety Service

If you feel isolated or live alone and want to feel safe and secure in your home, then the Carephone Home Safety Service might be able to help you. A wide range of 'Telecare' equipment is available designed to meet your individual needs and includes:

- intruder alarms- passive infrared movement detectors
- smoke detectors
- carbon monoxide and gas detectors
- temperature extreme sensors

For more information call:

- Gateway to care Tel: 01484 414933 or text 07781482321 email gatewaytocare@kirklees.gov.uk or visit www.kirklees.gov.uk and click on the health and social care link.

