

ROGUE TRADERS

Complaints about rogue builders and tradesmen rise along with the temperature during the summer months, so Birmingham residents are being urged to attend a series of roadshows.

Birmingham City Council's Trading Standards officers will be visiting community venues across the city to provide advice and tips to help people avoid being scammed.

Crime data analysed by Birmingham Trading Standards has identified a number of hotspots - with officers set to host a roadshow on;

**Wednesday 15th July (10am - 3pm)
at Shard End Community Centre, 170 Packington Ave,
B34 7RD**

Officers receive complaints from consumers about a wide range of rogue traders, who often move temporarily into an area using bogus names and addresses to sell their goods or services.

These types of traders often make unsolicited visits to homes, quoting a low 'bargain' price for work they claim needs to be done, which can quickly rise as they find additional 'urgent' work or offer unnecessary goods or services.

Be it roof repairs, tarmac driveways or shoddy garden or landscaping work, such traders are often aggressive and target vulnerable members of the community, often leaving them with heavy financial losses.

Traders who offer goods or services in a customer's home will be committing criminal offences if they mislead, hide their identity or fail to give the customer the right to cancel their order or contract.

Traders who conduct their business by visiting people's homes, whether solicited or unsolicited, are required by law to issue a cancellation notice, which allows cancel a contract without incurring any charges during a 14-day 'cooling off period'. Without this a trader's contract may not be enforceable by law.

Cllr Barbara Dring, Chair of the city council's Licensing and Public Protection Committee, said: "The clear message I want to send out to home owners is to take their time when looking for traders to do work to their property or when buying goods or services.

"Your home is your castle, so we don't want people to feel intimidated or threatened by rogue traders who try to strong arm or mislead them into agreeing to unnecessary or shoddy works.

"These roadshows, which are taking place during Scam Awareness Month, will provide people with the opportunity to get advice that could help protect them from unscrupulous traders."

Trading Standard tips;

- Ask friends and neighbours for recommendations when looking for a trader
- Get three or more quotes from reputable traders, to ensure you pay a fair price
- Don't be rushed into making a decision or handing over cash on the spot
- To find reputable tradesmen in Birmingham, Solihull and Wolverhampton visit the No Rogue Traders Here website www.noroguetradershere.com
- If in doubt about trader's activity, contact Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 03454 04 05 06