



# feel safe

information and advice for older people  
in northern ireland

age  
sector  
platform

This guide has been developed by Age Sector Platform to help older people in Northern Ireland feel safe in their homes and communities.



Department of  
**Justice**

[www.dojni.gov.uk](http://www.dojni.gov.uk)

It provides some useful crime prevention advice, as well as information on organisations that can help you feel safe.

The 'Feel Safe' project has been funded by the Department of Justice (DOJ), and supported by the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Policing Board.



For more information, or to download a copy of this guide, visit

[www.feel-safe.org.uk](http://www.feel-safe.org.uk)



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# burglary

Burglaries are often committed by opportunistic criminals. Open or unlocked doors and windows are used to gain quick and easy access to homes.



## Top tips for home security:

- Going out? Always close and lock external doors and windows.
- Double check that your windows and doors are locked when going to bed too.
- Be careful with keys. Don't leave keys near the door or where they could be reached from outside; and try not to leave them hidden outside (e.g. under doormats or flower pots).
- On older windows, you can add window locks to help stop people getting in. Use deadlocks for doors to make them more secure.
- Put burglars off. Visible burglar alarms, good home lighting and security lighting in the right places can put burglars off. Quality fencing and locking gates are also a good idea.
- Use timer switches for lights/radios when you're away from home.
- Fit a door 'viewer'. Fitting a peephole allows you to see who is at the door. A door chain lets you open the door a little way to talk to the caller.

Contact your local Crime Prevention Officer for free and impartial advice on the best ways to protect your property. Just call 101 (non-emergency number for PSNI).

# feel safe at home

As an older person, you may feel more vulnerable to some crimes. A few simple steps can help reduce your risk of crime:

- Don't keep large sums of cash at home – use a bank account.
- Think about joining a monitored telephone scheme. It allows you to call for assistance if you trip or fall, or are feeling at risk at home by simply pressing a button.
- Some companies operate a password scheme for older or vulnerable customers. Their representatives are expected to confirm a password to prove that they are genuine.
- Many areas run schemes aimed at assisting older people with their home security and general maintenance. You should ask for advice from the police, local council or voluntary group.



If burgled...contact the police

Dial 999\* if burglar is still around

Dial 101\*\* if burglar has left

\* Freephone

\*\* Calls charged at 15p (regardless of length)

# bogus callers

Most callers to your home will be genuine. However, there are some who may not be.

Do not go by appearances and always get proof of the person's identity - a genuine caller will be only too happy to provide this information.



If you are in any doubt simply check your caller out with Quick Check on Freephone 0800 013 22 90.

## Easy steps with Quick Check:

- Before you answer the door, make sure your back door is locked.
- If you have a door chain remember to use it.
- Ask the caller for their identification and check it carefully.
- Ask them to wait outside and close the door - genuine callers will not mind.
- Ring Quick Check on freephone 0800 013 22 90. Your call will be answered personally and promptly by a trained operator. They will check with the company on your behalf, that the person at your door is genuine. If they are not or they think that there is something suspicious, they will contact the police immediately.
- Do not let anyone into your home until you are satisfied as to who they are. If in doubt, keep them out!

## Don't want any cold callers?

Trading Standards can provide you with a 'No Cold Calling' sticker for your front door / window. Phone 0300 123 62 62\* to request one.

\* Costs no more than a local call to a landline - up to 9p per min; or between 8p and 40p from a mobile



**Is the caller at your door genuine?**

**Check their identity free of charge**

**Call 0800 013 22 90**  
**(24 hours)**

**In an emergency dial 999**



# rogue traders

Rogue traders are individuals or groups of people who cold-call householders, claiming to be a genuine business and claim to offer services, most commonly buildings maintenance and repair.

The offenders charge excessive fees for the work, yet the work that is carried out is either sub-standard or not carried out at all.

## Top tips for avoiding rogue traders:

- Do not agree to any cold caller doing work for you.
- Always use reputable companies and get written quotes from at least three.
- Individuals selling door-to-door should have a Pedlar's certificate, although some trades are exempt (sale of food, fish or fruit, and commercial travellers).
- Friends and family may be able to recommend companies that they have used and are pleased with.
- If you feel that you are being pressurised to hand over money, keep your door closed and dial 999.
- It's OK to say no - it's your doorstep and your decision.



Call Trading Standards on 0300 123 62 62\*  
for more info about Rogue Traders

\* Costs no more than a local call to a landline - up to 9p per min; or between 8p and 40p from a mobile



# anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) can describe a wide range of inconsiderate and nuisance behaviour, such as excessive noise, graffiti, littering and disputes with neighbours.



While this type of behaviour may not, in itself, be a criminal offence, it can have an effect on the quality of life of individuals and communities. It is therefore important to report your concerns about anti-social behaviour you are experiencing at an early stage, before a problem appears to be getting needlessly out of control.

A number of agencies can take action to deal with ASB:

## The Police

Phone 101\* or report online via <https://report.psni.police.uk>

## Crimestoppers

Phone 0800 555 111 (free)

## NI Housing Executive

Phone 0344 8920 900\*\*

## Your Local Council

Speak to your anti-social behaviour co-ordinator or PCSP Manager by ringing your council. In the case of excessive noise, report to the local Environmental Health Officer at your local council.

No matter how you report anti-social behaviour, all complaints are treated as confidential. Your identity will not be revealed.

\* Calls charged at 15p (regardless of length)

\*\* Costs no more than a local call to a landline - up to 9p per min; or between 8p and 40p from a mobile

# protecting your identity

If criminals find out your personal details, they can use them to open bank accounts or get credit cards, loans and state benefits in your name. Information that is helpful to criminals includes your name, date of birth, address, National Insurance (NI) number, and bank and credit card details.

## Top tips for protecting your identity:

- Destroy unwanted documents that contain personal details before you dispose of them. Use a shredder or burn unwanted personal documents.
- If your passport, driving licence or credit card has been lost or stolen, report it to the issuing authority immediately.
- If you move house, tell your bank, credit card companies and all others with whom you do business. The Royal Mail's redirection service can ensure your post arrives at your new address.
- Check bank and credit card statements as soon as they arrive. Report any unfamiliar transactions to your bank or credit card companies.
- Never give personal or account details to anyone who contacts you unexpectedly, either by phone, post, email or in person.

[www.cardwatch.org.uk](http://www.cardwatch.org.uk)  
[www.identitytheft.org.uk](http://www.identitytheft.org.uk)  
[www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)  
[www.thinkjessica.com](http://www.thinkjessica.com)



# **WE NEED YOUR HELP TO SPOT AND STOP FRAUDSTERS**

## **Fraudsters target you in many ways:**

- × Cold-calling, scam mail and texts
- × Through pushy sales techniques
- × Demanding money up-front

## **You can help stop them by:**

- ✓ Saying no to offers if unsure
- ✓ Never sending money to claim a prize
- ✓ Protecting your personal information

## **Report all fraud and get advice from Action Fraud on:**

**0300 123 2040**  
**[www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)**



# internet fraud

The internet has become such an integral part of everyday life that it can be easy to forget the importance of personal security.



There are a number of ways in which you can protect yourself from online crime. By following this advice, you can enjoy the massive benefits of being a 'silver surfer' whilst ensuring you remain safe online.

- When shopping online, make sure the web page you are using to enter personal and credit card details is secure by checking that the address starts with 'https' and there's a padlock or unbroken key symbol in the browser window.
- Never use a public/shared computer or internet to make a payment.
- Make sure you have the latest anti-virus and firewalls downloaded on your computer.
- Avoid opening and responding to unsolicited emails, particularly if they appear to be from your bank or building society asking for your security or personal details.

- Never share your passwords with anyone; avoid obvious passwords which can be guessed; regularly change your passwords; and avoid using the same password in various websites.



- If you use social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter), limit the amount of personal information you give away and set up strict privacy settings.
- Be aware of email scammers who try to get you to visit illegitimate websites in order to steal your passwords and credit card details. Never click on links in emails that you are unsure about.
- Find more advice at [www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)

Action Fraud is the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and internet crime where you should report fraud if you have been scammed, defrauded or experienced online crime.



\* Costs no more than a local call to a landline - up to 9p per min; or between 8p and 40p from a mobile

# telephone scams

## Top tips for avoiding telephone scams:

- Never give personal details over the phone.
- If you have a concern about a telephone call you have received to your home, you should report it to your telephone service provider, for example BT, Virgin, Sky etc.
- Consider registering your number with Telephone Preference Service (TPS Online).



The Telephone Preference Service (TPS) is a free service. It is the official central opt out register on which you can record your preference not to receive unsolicited sales or marketing calls.

Telephone Preference Service

0845 070 07 07\*

[www.tpsonline.org.uk](http://www.tpsonline.org.uk)

\* Calls charged at between 1p and 12p per min depending on the time of day from landlines, plus a call set-up fee. Calls from mobiles cost between 5p and 40p per min.

# mail scams

There are many different types of mail scams, such as fake lotteries and prize draws, get-rich-quick schemes, bogus health cures, investment scams and pyramid selling, to name just a few.



Scam mail is sent for the sole intention of obtaining money through deception and/or fraud.

## Top tips for avoiding mail scams:

- Beware of unwanted mail from outside the UK or from a post box address from within the UK. Lottery and cash back fraudsters are increasingly using these.
- Never send cash, disclose personal details or buy goods to claim a prize.
- Always seek professional advice before signing up for any type of investment scheme including land, wine and property.
- Consider registering with Mail Preference Service. Visit MPS online at [www.mpsonline.org.uk](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk) or call 0845 703 45 99\*.

If you have sent money because of any such scam, contact the PSNI Fraud Unit on the 101 non-emergency number.

[www.thinkjessica.com](http://www.thinkjessica.com) - Protecting older and vulnerable people from scams which come through the postal system and by phone.

\* Calls charged at between 1p and 12p per min depending on the time of day from landlines, plus a call set-up fee. Calls from mobiles cost between 5p and 40p per min.

# elder abuse

Elder abuse includes actions intending to harm, the harming without intent, and the neglect that leads to harm of older people.

Forms of abuse include physical abuse, psychological abuse, financial abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.



## Tell-tale signs

- unexplained bruising, fractures, open wounds or untreated injuries.
- poor general hygiene and weight loss.
- helplessness and fear – or any sudden change in behaviour.
- unexplained changes in a person's finances or material well-being.
- questionable financial or legal documents, or the disappearance of those documents.

It could be ...a wife or husband, child or grandchild.  
...someone who regularly visits to provide help.  
...a member of staff in a care home or hospital.

## Reporting abuse

Contact your GP or the PSNI in complete confidence, or alternatively contact your local health trust and ask for the adult protection or safeguarding co-ordinator. *Action on Elder Abuse* offer a confidential and free elder abuse helpline on 0808 808 8141.

If you want to complain about how a relative/friend is treated in a nursing or residential care home, contact the home manager. If the complaint is about elder abuse, they must inform the local health trust, the PSNI and Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA).





## Defending our Elders

**Action on Elder Abuse (AEA) works to protect and prevent the abuse of vulnerable adults**

An estimated half million older people are abused and neglected everyday in their own homes by people they thought they could trust

**CONFIDENTIAL FREE PHONE NUMBER**

Open weekdays from 9am - 5pm  
providing emotional support, advice  
and information on elder abuse

**ELDER ABUSE RESPONSE  
FREEPHONE  
0808 808 8141**



# violent crime

The chance of you becoming a victim of violent crime is very low.

Last year's crime figures show just 2% of all violent crime was against someone aged 65 or over. Many of the stories we read about or hear in the media are rare, and should not cause unnecessary fear.

## Top tips for feeling and staying safe:

- Stay alert and confident even when you don't feel it.
- Avoid going out alone and always tell others where you're going.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times and trust your instincts.
- Plan your journey and have your mobile phone with you.
- Do not carry much cash, credit cards or jewellery.
- Have your keys in your hand when you reach your home or car.
- Always consider the safety of yourself first.
- Do not challenge or face perpetrators yourself.
- Carry a personal alarm and use it.
- Dial 999 if you feel threatened or in danger of violence.



# neighbourhood watch



Neighbourhood Watch involves a group of local residents agreeing to look out for each other.

A Neighbourhood Watch scheme can cover a full housing estate or just a street. Residents keep an eye out for anything suspicious and tell one another or the police.

Neighbourhood Watch can:

- Help to reduce crime and the opportunities for crime.
- Help people feel more secure in their neighbourhoods.
- Encourage neighbourliness and closer communities.

Everyone within a Neighbourhood Watch scheme plays an important part in making their neighbourhood a safer, more friendly and pleasant place to live.

One of the most important things members do is to look out for activity in their neighbourhood that seems unusual or suspicious. When you belong to a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, you are given advice about the sort of things to look out for. Any information, no matter how minor, may help the police solve or prevent a crime.

If you are interested in establishing a Neighbourhood Watch scheme or want to find out if there is an existing scheme in your neighbourhood, you should contact your local council office and ask for the PCSP Manager. Alternatively, information is available by contacting the Crime Prevention Officer at your local PSNI station.

# good morning service

Good Morning is a free, community based telephone support service for older and vulnerable people across Northern Ireland, helping them to remain independent in their own homes.

It provides daily phone calls, alerting others if a call is not answered, thus providing service users and their families with peace of mind.

Good Morning callers provide reassurance, person centred support and appropriate guidance, enabling users to share concerns. They also inform and connect the recipient with local community activities and services.



*"I feel very secure in the fact that I get a call every morning. Someone is looking out for me."*

*"Knowing someone is calling to check on me gives me peace of mind."*

*"I feel safer in bed at night."*



To register yourself or someone you know for a call, visit [www.goodmorningni.org](http://www.goodmorningni.org) or phone 028 9075 1070\*.

\* Calls cost up to 9p per min; or between 8p and 40p from a mobile

# bringing generations together

Whilst crime rates and anti-social behaviour incidents across Northern Ireland are falling, attitudes and perceptions about crime are harder to tackle. Bringing young and older people together to address community safety issues builds trust between generations, promotes positive perceptions of young people and helps to reduce fear of crime.



The intergenerational approach promotes mutual benefits for young and old, builds understanding and respect and leads to more unified, confident communities. It provides opportunities to address social isolation and affords a lens through which participants discover the positive contribution they can make to their community.

Linking Generations NI (LGNI) work across NI to facilitate linkages between age groups, provide advice and guidance on projects and initiatives, help sustain good practice and provide training and development support.

If you are interested in developing an intergenerational approach to tackling fear of crime in your community or want information about existing projects, contact LGNI by phoning 028 9181 3022\* or emailing [info@bjf.org.uk](mailto:info@bjf.org.uk).

\* Calls cost up to 9p per min; or between 8p and 40p from a mobile

# local policing

Within the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), the country is divided into local Districts or Command Units.

Each District reflects the boundary area of a local council. This is designed to allow for greater partnership working between the PSNI and other statutory bodies and agencies.

Each District is further divided into local Command Areas and again into smaller Sectors. Dedicated Neighbourhood Police Teams are responsible for delivery of policing services within those Sectors.

Every neighbourhood has a Police Officer who is the dedicated Neighbourhood Police Officer for that particular area.

Further information on your Neighbourhood Police Team can be found through the PSNI website at [www.psnl.police.uk](http://www.psnl.police.uk). Just follow the 'My Neighbourhood' link.

Alternatively, ring 101\* and ask for your Neighbourhood Police Team by providing your locality.



Ring 101\* and  
ask for Neighbourhood  
Police Team

\* Calls charged at 15p (regardless of length)

# what to expect from the police

Following a crime, you should expect:

- To be seen, in most cases by a Police Officer who will record your statement.
- To be treated fairly, honestly and with respect at all times.
- To be kept informed of what's going on throughout the case.
- To have the incident investigated professionally.
- To be contacted by the Officer in the case.
- To be informed of the outcome of the investigation.
- To be contacted by Victim Support – unless you wish otherwise.
- To be told by the police if someone is charged for the offence.

It's advisable to keep a record of the below information:

Police station

Telephone number

Name of case officer

Rank and number

Crime reference number



**CALL THE  
POLICE**

**101**

**IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS CALL 999**

**101** is the new number to contact the police replacing the existing non-emergency number. Using **101** for situations that do not require an immediate police response helps keep **999** available for emergency incidents.

### When to call **101**

When sharing or seeking information or reporting:

- Minor traffic offences
- Minor damage to property
- Theft of property  
(When a crime has already taken place)
- Giving information about issues affecting your community (including drugs and anti social behaviour)

### When to call **999**

- When there's a danger to life
- When violence is used or being threatened
- When someone is injured
- When a crime is in progress
- When there has been serious damage caused to property

For more information about **101** or **999** visit [www.psnipolice.uk](http://www.psnipolice.uk)

Keeping People Safe







# Policing & Community Safety Partnerships

making our community safer

Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) are statutory bodies, set up to help make communities safer. They ensure that local people's voices are heard on policing and community safety issues.

There is a PCSP in each council area in Northern Ireland; and they aim to make your community safer by focusing on the policing and community safety issues that matter most in each local area.

## Get involved

- Make yourself aware of your local PCSP, its members and its Partnership Plan
- Contact your PCSP members on local policing and community safety issues of concern to you
- Follow your local PCSP on Twitter and Facebook
- Attend public PCSP meetings; details will be advertised in the local media and on the internet
- Engage in consultation exercises and events your PCSP may be organising
- Volunteer to assist in projects being delivered in your area to address policing and community safety issues

## Contact your local PCSP

Your local PCSP can be contacted via your council. Alternatively, you can visit [www.pcsp.org](http://www.pcsp.org).



SCAN FOR MORE INFO

## HAVE YOU BEEN A VICTIM OF **CRIME**?

WE CAN HELP....GET IN TOUCH

TEL: 028 9024 3133

[WWW.VICTIMSUPPORTNI.CO.UK](http://WWW.VICTIMSUPPORTNI.CO.UK)



### WE PROVIDE

- EMOTIONAL SUPPORT
- PRACTICAL HELP
- CRIMINAL INJURIES  
COMPENSATION SUPPORT
- HELP IN COURT

# DID YOU KNOW?

- **Crimestoppers is a charity**
- **Crimestoppers is anonymous**
- **No one will ever know you called**



[www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)



#CrimestoppersUK



Crimestoppers



Age Sector Platform represents a strong unified voice for older people in Northern Ireland. It is the charity responsible for the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament.

Back in 2011, the Parliament highlighted 'fear of crime' as a top concern for older people in Northern Ireland.

Since then, Age Sector Platform and the Department of Justice have been working to reduce fear of crime among older people. As a result, levels of fear have fallen, and this important work continues.

As part of the 'Feel Safe' project, this guide has been developed to help older people in Northern Ireland feel safe in their homes and communities.

### Get Involved

If you are interested in supporting Age Sector Platform and the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament, there are many ways in which you can get involved:

- Become a member of Age Sector Platform
- Join the Pensioners Parliament Research Panel
- Attend NI Pensioners Parliament events
- Donate



### Platform Membership

There are two categories of membership - group membership and individual membership. The annual cost of membership starts at just £12 a year.

### Pensioners Parliament Research Panel

The panel gives you the chance to express your views on issues of relevance to older people all year round; rewarding you for taking part.

### Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament

The Parliament allows older people from across Northern Ireland to make their voice heard on the issues that matter to them. Visit [www.pensionersparliament.org](http://www.pensionersparliament.org).

### Donations

We welcome any investment in our vital work, and offer several flexible ways to contribute. Visit [www.pensionerstrust.org](http://www.pensionerstrust.org).

- W:** [www.agesectorplatform.org](http://www.agesectorplatform.org)  
[www.facebook.com/aspni](https://www.facebook.com/aspni)  
[www.twitter.com/aspni](https://www.twitter.com/aspni)
- T:** 028 9031 2089\*
- E:** [info@agesectorplatform.org](mailto:info@agesectorplatform.org)

\* Calls cost up to 9p per min; or between 8p and 40p from a mobile

# my telephone numbers

In case of emergency: \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

Neighbourhood Police Officer: \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator: \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

Police Service of Northern Ireland



101\* for non-emergency queries / 999\*\* for emergencies

Crimestoppers (freephone)



0800 555 111

Quick Check (freephone)



0800 013 22 90

NI Housing Executive



0344 8920 900\*\*\*

NI Trading Standards



0300 123 62 62\*\*\*

Victim Support NI



028 9024 3133\*\*\*

Action Fraud



0300 123 20 40\*\*\*

Age NI Advice Line (freephone)



0808 808 75 75

Council



\_\_\_\_\_

\* Calls charged at 15p (regardless of length)

\*\* Freephone

\*\*\* Costs no more than a local call to a landline - up to 9p per min; or between 8p and 40p from a mobile





Department of  
**Justice**  
[www.dojni.gov.uk](http://www.dojni.gov.uk)

[www.feel-safe.org.uk](http://www.feel-safe.org.uk)