



VOLUNTARY SECTOR COMMITTEE – 4TH DECEMBER 2013

SUBJECT: VOLUNTARY SECTOR QUESTION ON COLD CALLING

REPORT BY: PRESS RELEASE FROM TRADING STANDARDS 15TH AUGUST 2013

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 A request was made by a voluntary sector representative who sits on the Voluntary Sector Sub Committee for the following information.
- 1.2 Is the Council aware of cold calling to pensioners purporting that they represent the Council in replacing free of charge the boilers in their homes. If this is true how can pensioners check their ID and legitimacy?

2. THE REPORT

- 2.1 Below is a press release Trading Standards put out in August warning Consumers regarding cold calling and the promotion of various schemes.
- 2.2 Trading Standards have had a few complaints/reports throughout the year, but none where the callers have claimed to be from, or representing the Council.
- 2.3 **Press Release :- Residents Warned To Watch Out For Scammers**

Unscrupulous companies are continuing to target residents of Caerphilly county borough, promoting government funded schemes of which they have no direct link to.

Caerphilly County Borough Council's Trading Standards Team is warning householders to be aware of these rogue cold callers who will call by telephone or drop leaflets through letterboxes promoting both the ECO Scheme and the Green Deal with hopes of making money through "one off fees" which might be completely unnecessary.

Both schemes above are promoted by the UK Government and allow homeowners to access either free energy efficiency works or works that are paid for through savings made on energy bills.

The Green Scheme involves accredited Green Deal Assessors looking at a property, suggesting what work is needed to ensure energy efficiency and then calculating the savings to be made. If the assessment is favourable, the work will be undertaken by an accredited Green Deal business, and the householder will pay for the work out of the savings made over a number of years.

The ECO scheme, or the Energy Companies Obligation Scheme, was introduced in January 2013 in response to a UK law imposing obligations on energy companies to reduce carbon emissions and provide affordable heating for low income households. Subject to certain conditions, homeowners may qualify for free energy efficiency work to their homes.

Cllr Dave Poole, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services, said, "It is important that residents are aware that third party companies who appear to be offering the Green Deal and the ECO Scheme by contacting customers are not controlled or regulated and may attempt to get consumers to part with cash that they need not spend. Always check if a business is accredited before allowing them to undertake any energy efficiency works to your home, and if you have any suspicions I would encourage you to contact Trading Standards."

To check that a business is an accredited Green Deal Assessor, Provider or Installer visit <http://gdorb.decc.gov.uk/> or for businesses offering the ECO Scheme contact your own energy supplier.

For independent advice on both schemes, contact the Energy Saving Advice Service on 0300 123 1234. To find out more about the Green Deal go to www.gov.uk/green-deal-energy-saving-measures/how-the-green-deal-works.

To find out more about ECO go to www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-households-to-cut-their-energy-bills/supporting-pages/energy-companies-obligation-eco

Any consumers who have any issues or suspicions with companies or businesses promoting either of the schemes should contact Trading Standards on 01495 235291 or by visiting www.caerphilly.gov.uk/tradingstandards

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