

Rogue Traders

Alert: Intelligence suggests cold callers may be operating in your area, offering services like guttering repair and driveway tarmacking. They may be very persistent when trying to get work.

- Don't agree to work offered by unsolicited doorstep callers.
- Don't rely on posts or recommendations on social media sites or trader approval platforms without doing your own research.
- Don't be swayed by glossy flyers or impressive websites as they may not show the trader's own work.
- Don't pay cash or agree to be taken to the bank or immediately transfer money before any work is started.
- Don't be rushed into making a decision.

If you want work doing in your home or garden, make sure you:

- Get three written quotes from reputable businesses.
- Research the companies e.g. ask for references and look online.
- Ask friends and family to recommend local traders or search via Buy With Confidence <https://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk/>
- Decide who to use in your own time and make sure you have confidence in their skills and abilities.
- Make sure you have the full name of the company and the person doing the work and their contact details (address, phone number, email).
- Ask to see professional qualifications, public liability insurance and if applicable Waste Carriers Licence.
- To check the service you use has a Waste Carriers Licence, go to: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/public-register/view/search-waste-carriers-brokers>
- Unlicensed carriers will often fly-tip your waste at roadsides and beauty spots. You could face an unlimited fine if your waste ends up fly-tipped and you cannot show that you took reasonable steps to prevent it.
- Always ask exactly what is going to happen to your waste and seek evidence that it is going to be disposed of appropriately. A legitimate, professional waste carrier should not object to being asked reasonable questions.
- Get a proper invoice and receipt for your waste and retain this as proof.
- Check if you're entitled to your 14-day cooling-off period – see this guide <https://www.devonsomersettradingstandards.gov.uk/tsi-single/?frmClient=C7096C0D-1185-6B25-FCF1A4CEB5800E48&frmItemID=309636&frmShared=1>
- Ask if the company has an Alternative Dispute Resolution policy – is there any independent body to complain to if things go wrong?
- Pay by bank transfer so the payment is traceable. If you can, use a credit card for payments between £100 and £30,000 because if you have a claim for breach of contract or misrepresentation against the supplier of the goods or services, Section 75 gives you the same claim against your credit card company.
- If you are concerned rogue traders are operating in your area, always report it to Citizens Advice <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/report-to-trading-standards/>
- If you are concerned someone is at risk, always call the police.
- If someone knocks on your door and you're not sure, don't open the door.
- Find more information here: <https://www.devonsomersettradingstandards.gov.uk/consumer/scams-rogue-traders-and-doorstep-crime/>