



Tom Smith, Ellen Miller & Ellis House Safety Advice newsletter – December 2010

Welcome to Tom Smith, Ellen House and Ellis House Special Edition newsletter

Distraction Burglary Advice

Waltham Forest Police are appealing for assistance in relation to distraction burglaries. We would urge residents to check that elderly or vulnerable relatives, friends and neighbours are alerted that bogus callers are operating in Waltham Forest by posing as officials from the water board. The local safer neighbourhood teams are aware of these crimes and will be raising awareness about how to deal with bogus callers.

Not all burglars break into homes, some will try to trick or con their way in.

They are known as bogus callers and will pretend to be on official business from respectable concerns such as the Council, Police, Health Authority or Water, Gas or Electricity.

They may even claim to be tradesmen or workmen calling to carry out urgent repairs. Their only aim is to get into homes and distract people and steal their money or valuables.

Bogus Callers succeed because they sound believable, so don't be fooled.

- They can sound convincing and persuasive.
- They may be men, women or even children.
- They may ask for a drink of water, to use your phone or wash their hands.
- Some may be looking for a lost pet. In fact they use any believable story.
- Watch out for anyone who says they are in a hurry. Don't let them pressure or confuse you

You should always be aware when someone you don't know calls at your door. Make sure in your own mind that they are who they claim to be by following these simple steps:

- Think before you open the door.
- Ask caller for proof of identity.
- The Utility Companies now offer a password identification scheme. Any caller from one of these companies should be able to give a pre-arranged password as additional proof of identity.
- Beware of callers who attempt to distract you by claiming that they have seen something untoward in your rear garden or somewhere which may encourage you to leave your house – they may have an accomplice awaiting this distraction.
- If you are not convinced of the identity of the caller, don't let them in. Ask the caller to come back later and arrange for a relative, friend or neighbour to be present on their return or ask the caller to contact this person.
- There is no such thing as a water board.

Genuine tradesmen should carry an identification card with their photograph on. Check this carefully. If you are unsure, telephone the company the caller claims to represent. You needn't use the telephone number they give you, use the telephone number in the phone book. Genuine callers will not mind waiting while you do this. Look out of the window to see if you recognise them.

If you have a door spy hole or chain, use them. Ask who it is before opening the door and make sure your back door is locked, even when at home. Treat every stranger with caution. If you are still worried, dial 999 immediately and ask for Police.

The sooner Police know that bogus callers are working in the area, the quicker they can investigate.

IF IN ANY DOUBT, KEEP THEM OUT and DO NOT KEEP LARGE AMOUNTS OF MONEY IN YOUR HOME!

Ascham Homes Residents Conference

Saturday, 2 October 2010, marked Ascham Homes Residents Conference entitled 'Tell us what you think'. The conference was designed to enable residents to Contribute to the Company priorities for next year.

A number of workshops were held including: improving where we live; home safety; getting more for less; repairs, resident involvement, leasehold and financial inclusion.



Residents were asked for their views of the service and how it can be improved in the future. One resident was successful in winning £600 to carry out works to a local alleyway to improve access for people with disabilities and young families. Three other residents won raffle prizes of shopping vouchers.

Door step meter credit is a scam!

Police are warning residents with pre-pay energy meters that 'door step meter credit is a scam'. There is only one safe and secure way to buy credit for your pre-pay electricity meter. From official outlets such as the Post Office, PayPoint or Payzone.

If someone calls at your door offering to top up your meter, they are trying to involve you in illegal activity, and you could be letting a criminal into your home.

Don't be tempted. Energy companies can identify homes using electricity but not paying for it legally. You will get caught and end up paying twice.

If you know anyone illegally selling electricity meter top-ups, contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Any customer worried that they may have been affected should call Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06, or their energy supplier or to seek advice.

To find out more visit www.top-upsafe.com

Fire Safety



To keep your low-rise blocks of flats safe, including those with a single communal staircase, you must:

- Keep the communal areas clear
- Do not wedge open fire doors in the corridors
- Keep exits from your home clear
- Do not store anything there that would easily catch fire and cause a fire to spread on balconies
- Do not overload electrical sockets and cook safely
- If you are a smoker stub out cigarettes fully
- If you are a smoker do not smoke in bed
- Check your home smoke detector regularly

If there is a fire that breaks out in your home do not tackle the fire yourself. Close the door to the room where the fire is if you can do this safely. Leave your flat, shutting the front door behind you. Call 999. Do not go back into your flat. Leave the block. Do not use the lifts.

If there is thick smoke in the communal corridor call 999 and remain in your flat. Close the windows and wait for the emergency services to rescue you.

We work closely with the London Fire Brigade to keep your fire protection arrangements in good working order. We regularly check and fix communal fire doors. If you see a fire door in need of repair, please let us know.

Home Contents Insurance

Protect your home and belongings from fire, burst pipes, theft or vandalism from as little as 75p a day.

We have teamed up with Aviva Insurance to provide low cost contents insurance for all our residents.



For an application form or for more details contact the rents hotline on 0208 531 8097 or visit the rent area of our website at www.aschamhomes.org.uk and download our booklet.

Remember if you do not keep up to date with your payments your home will not be protected.

Area Contract Panel

Area Contract Panel 1 & 2 meets on a six weekly basis to deal with local issues that affect residents and comment on our performance on anti-social behaviour, repairs, customer care and estate improvement programmes.

Please feel free to attend and voice any concerns you may have on the next meeting date on: **Wednesday, 12 January 2011 at: Ascham Homes, Willow House, 869 Forest Road, London, E17 4UH**

To report any repairs on the day, there will be a repair surgery from 6.30pm till 7.00pm and the meeting will start from 7.00pm till 9.00pm.

Useful Contacts

Tenancy Services Officer

Tracey Trim
020 8496 4068

Rent Income Officer

Marcia McKella
020 8496 4026

Ascham Direct

020 8496 4197

Waltham Forest Direct

020 8496 3000

Community Development

Tracey Chandler
020 8496 4942

Gas leaks – TRANSCO

0800 111 999

Metropolitan Police

Free phone 24 hours
0300 123 1212

Wood Street Safer Neighbourhood Team

0208 721 2768 / 07766 440 407

In an emergency

(life threatening situation)
Dial 999

Customer Satisfaction Results

Residents have told us in August and September they have been highly satisfied with our ASB service. Our customer satisfaction results show that residents were:

- 83% satisfied with the support given to them
- 95% satisfied that their TSO had carried out their actions on time
- 82% satisfied with the final outcome of their complaint
- 90% satisfied how their case was handed

If you would like to report a repair, please call Ascham Direct on 0208 496 4197