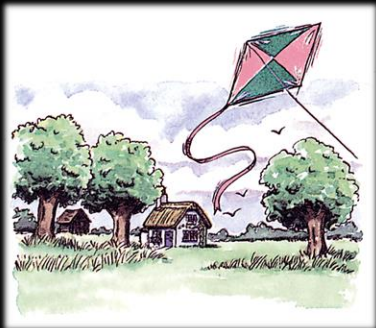


# Personal Safety for Councillors



**Miranda Smythe**  
**The Baikie-Wood Consultancy Ltd**



**#DebateNotHate**

# Programme overview

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1. Principles of personal safety
2. Use of mobiles and technology
3. Personal safety tips:
  - Safe pedestrianship
  - Unsolicited visitors to your home
  - Surgeries and public meetings
  - Visiting people in their own home
  - Canvassing.



# Introduction to Personal Safety

# Introduction to Personal Safety



# Introduction to Personal Safety



# Introduction to Personal Safety



Health & Safety Risk Assessment

Description of task:		Assessed by:	Assessment No:				
Location:		Date:	Review Date:				
Hazard	How might harm be caused	Persons at risk	Existing control measures	Risk rating			Proposed control measures (if any)
				S	L	R	

A hand is holding a black pen, writing on the table.



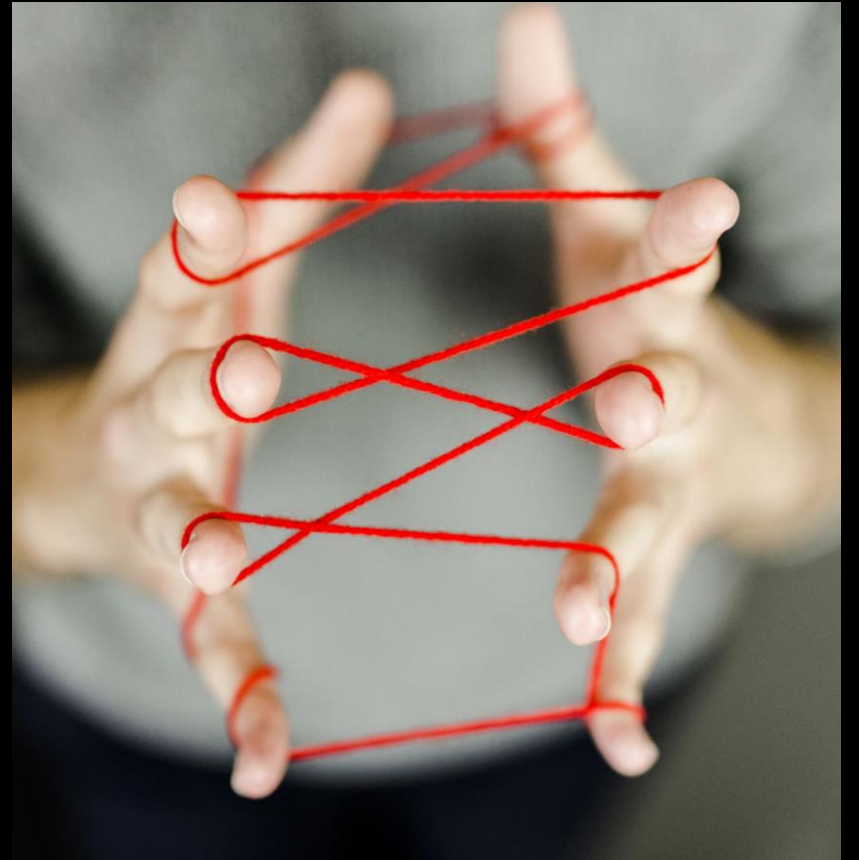
# Introduction to Personal Safety



# Bio feedback

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- Sharpening of senses
- Tensing of muscles
- Changes to breathing
- Hairs standing up on the back of the neck
- Stomach churning
- Increased heart rate.





# Mobiles and personal safety

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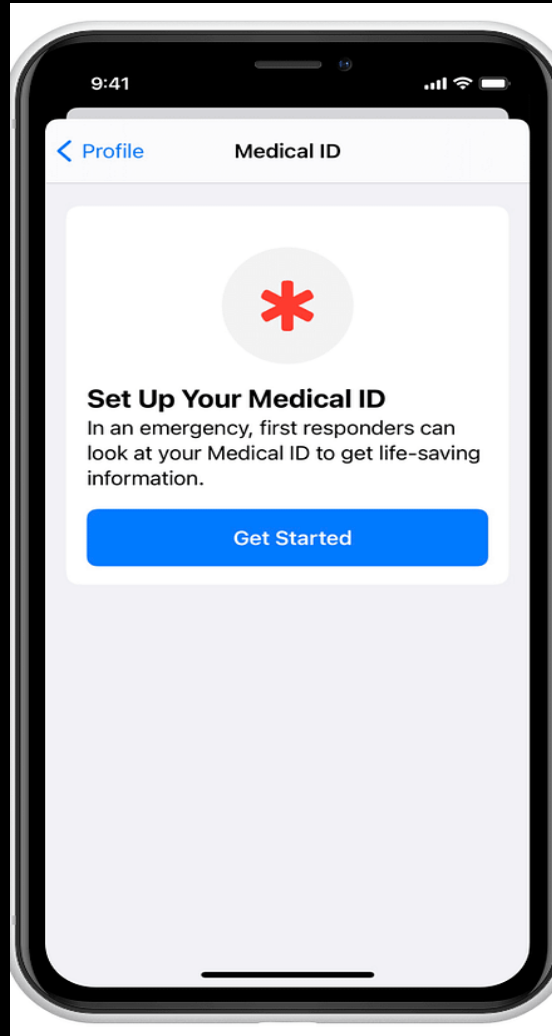
- False sense of security
- Cause a disconnect
- Attractive to thieves
- Useful for calling for backup
- But rely on receiving a signal.



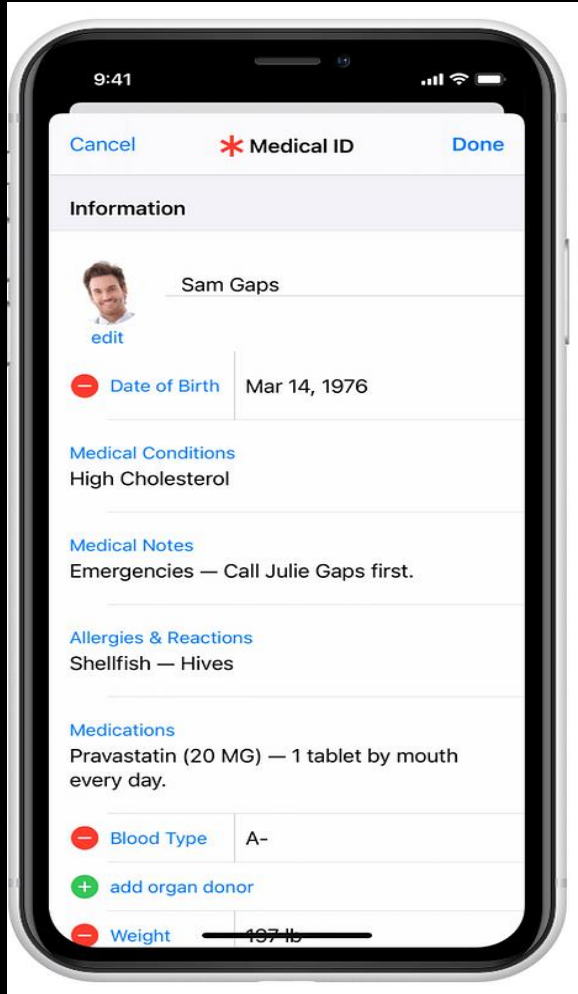
# Setting up your mobile for emergencies



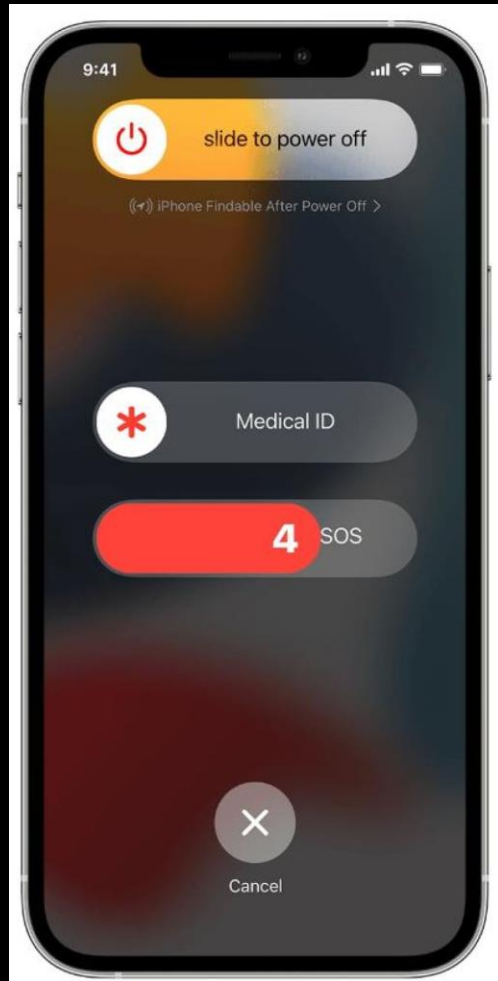
# Setting up your mobile for emergencies



# Setting up your mobile for emergencies

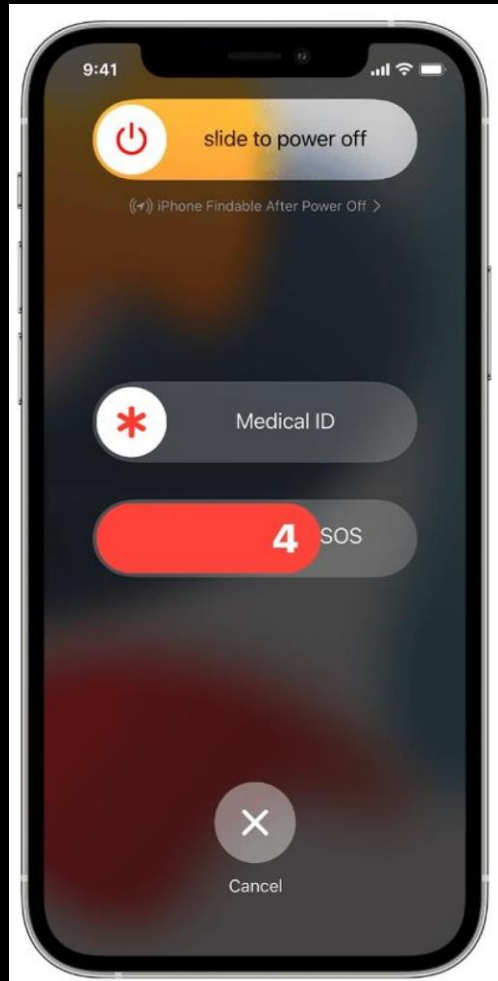


# Setting up your mobile for emergencies



Press **Power** and  
**Volume up** buttons  
simultaneously

# Setting up your mobile for emergencies



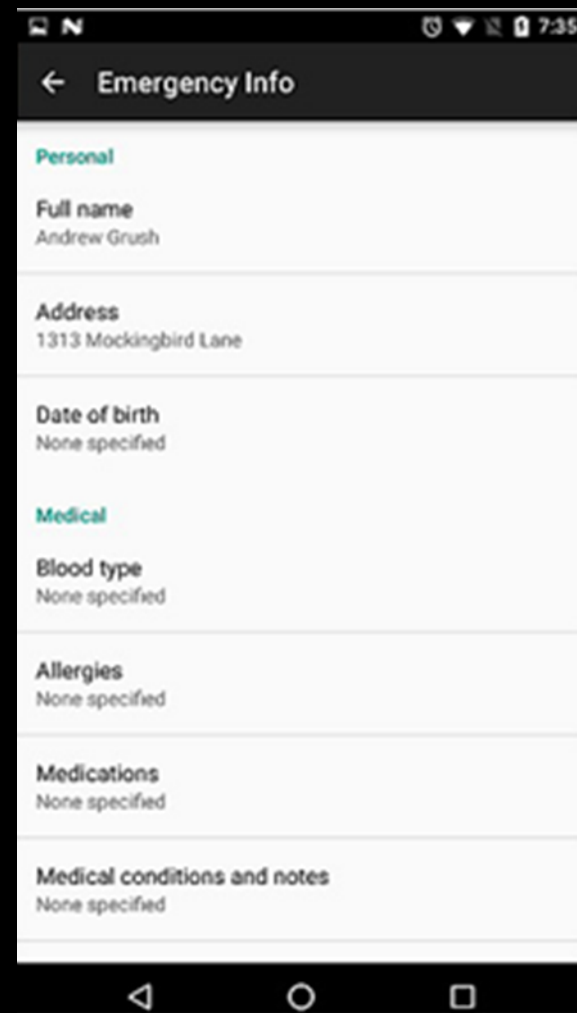
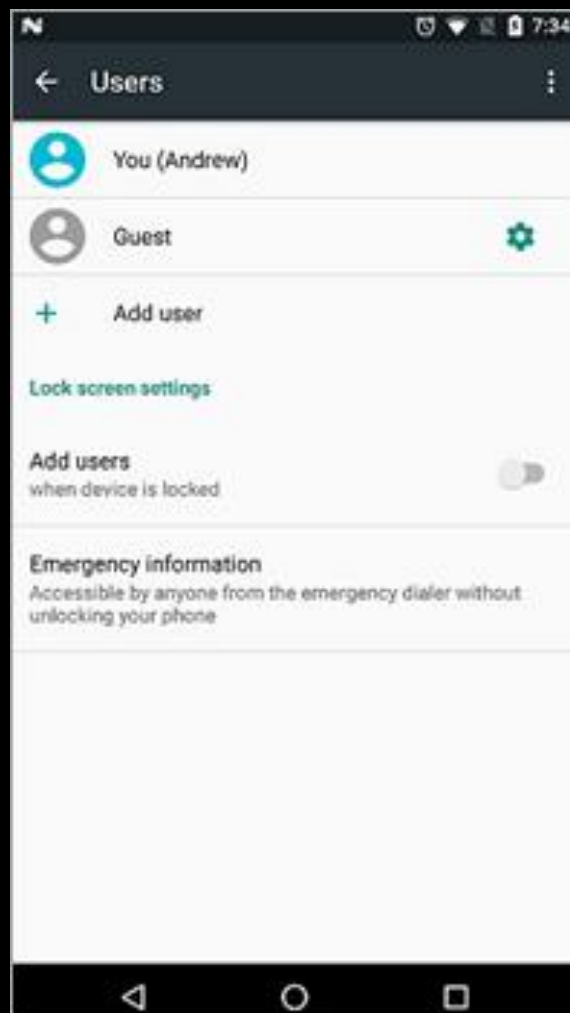
Press **Power** and **Volume up** buttons simultaneously

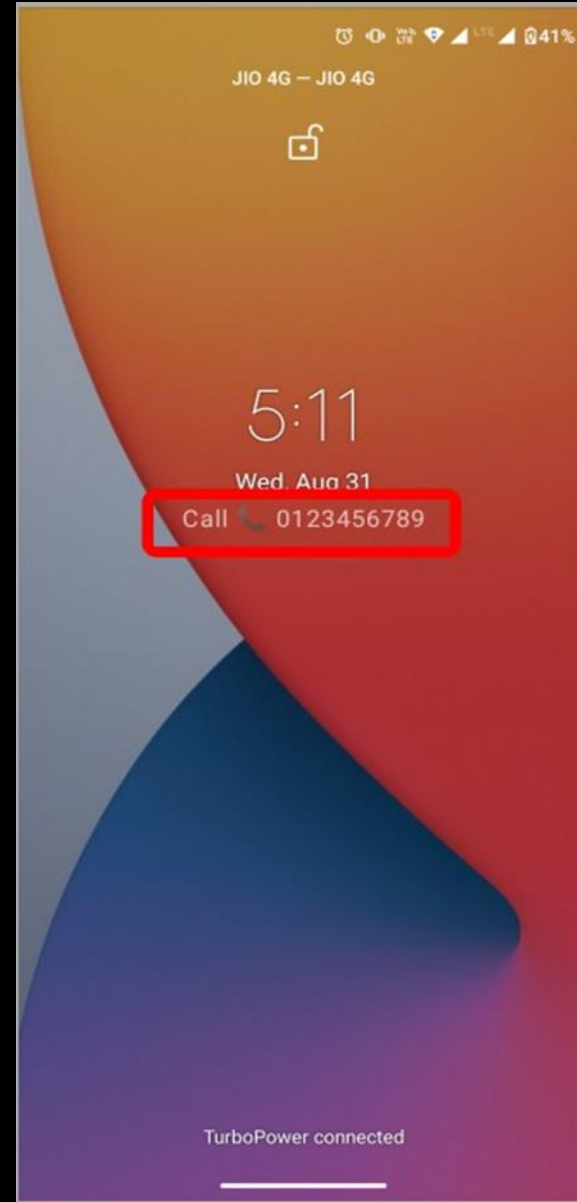
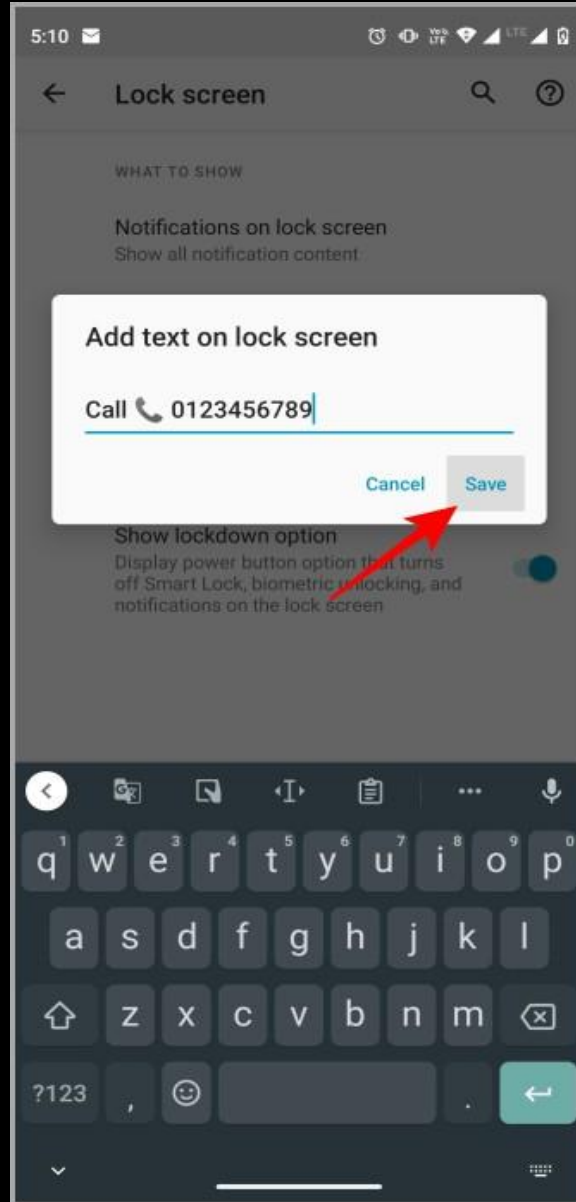






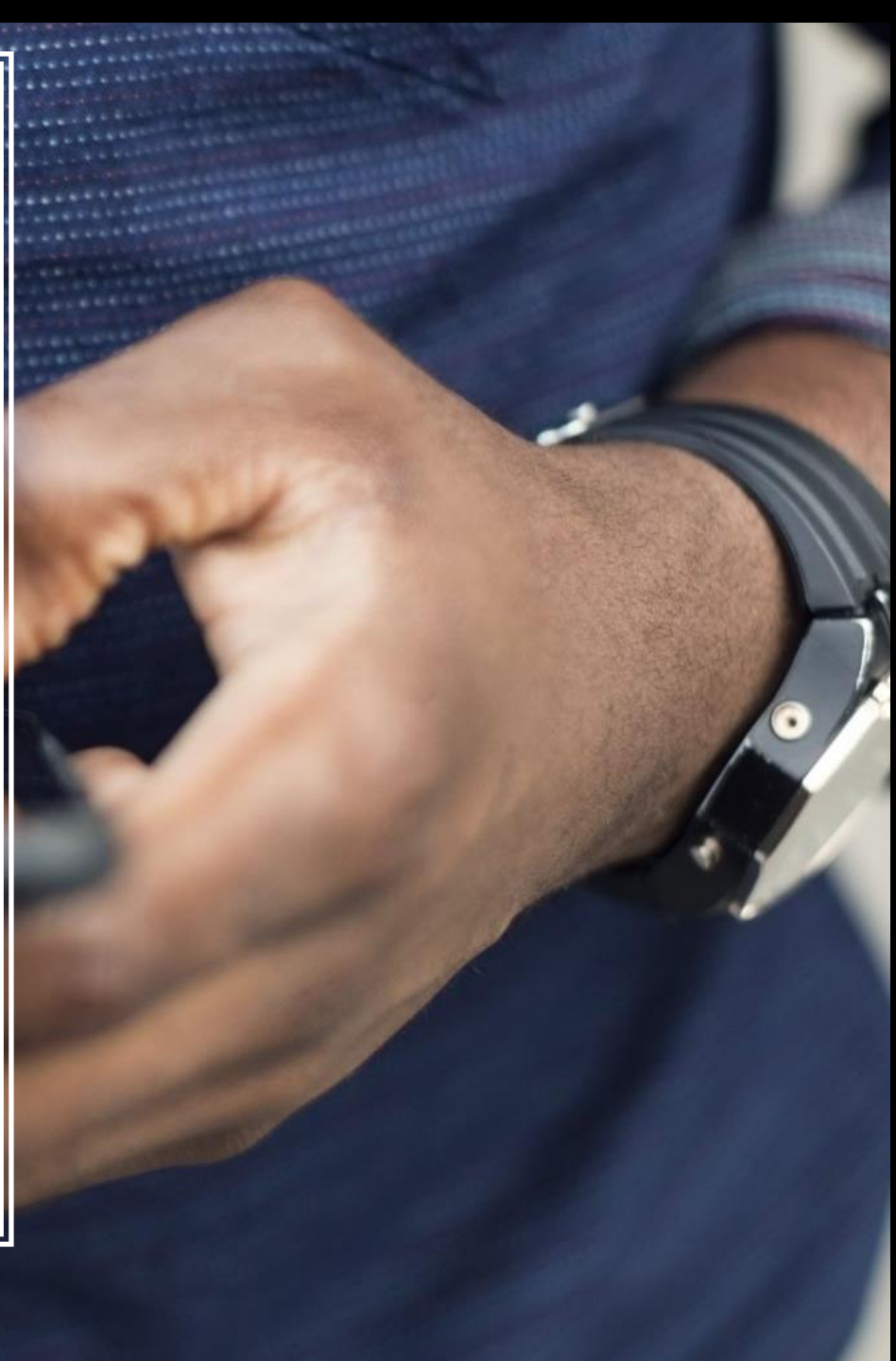
# Android...





## Useful to know...

ICE	In Case of Emergency
101	Non-emergency police
999	Police, fire, ambulance, coastguard
112	Police, fire, ambulance, coastguard
999 55	Silent solution (and 112 55)



# Texting 999 or 112

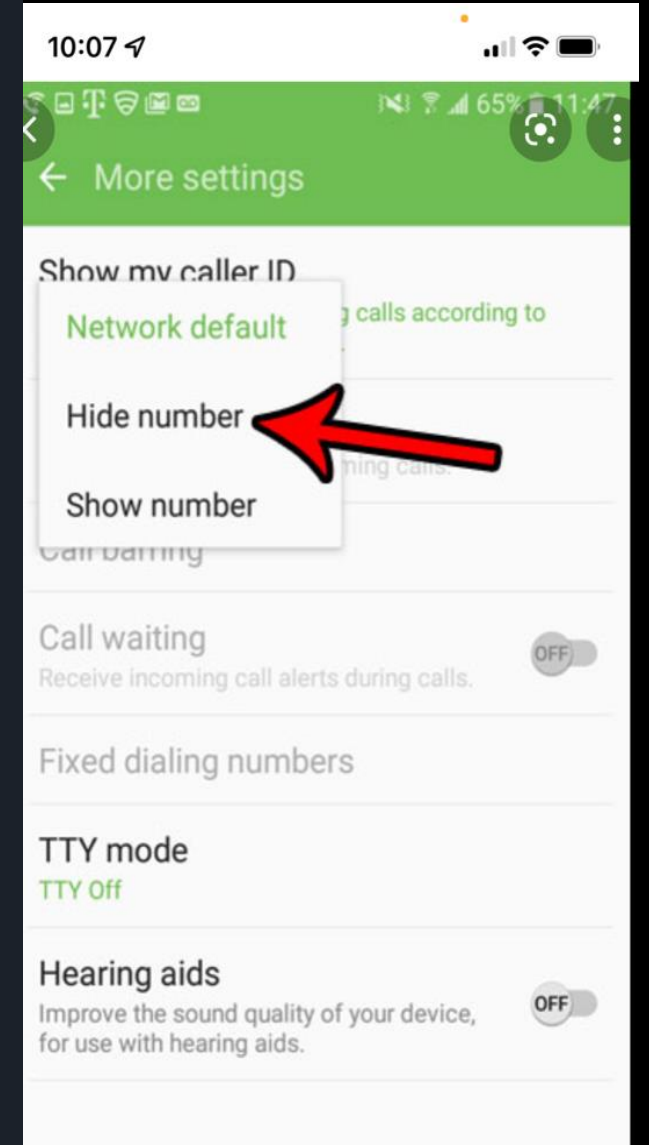
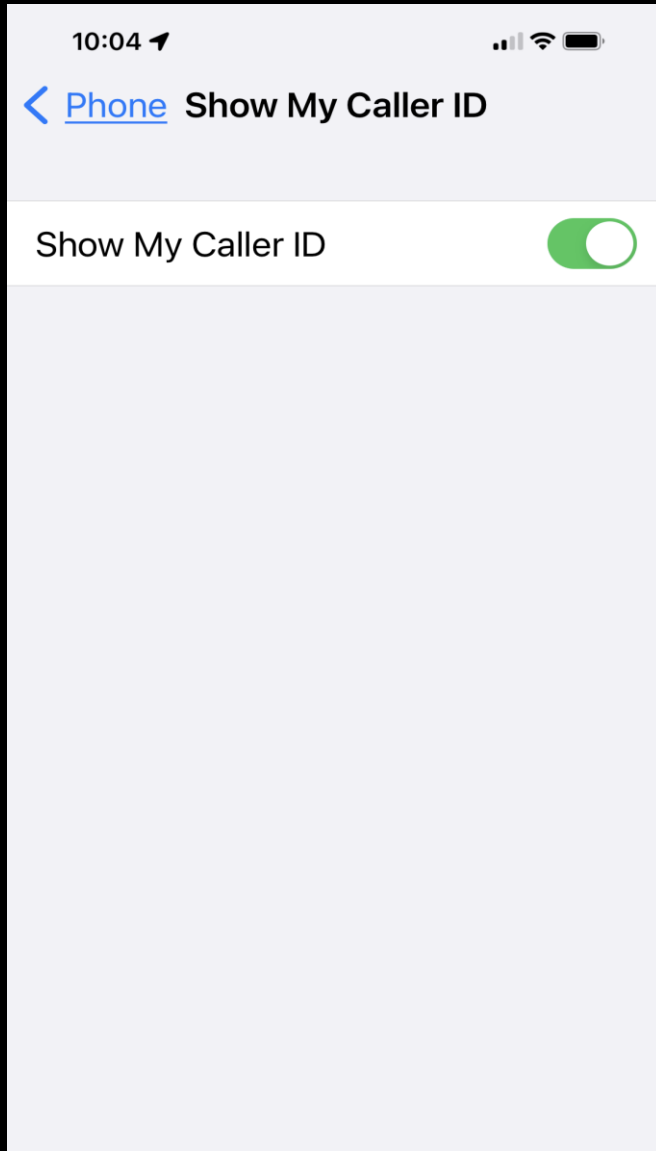


To withhold a number from landline OR  
mobile, dial...



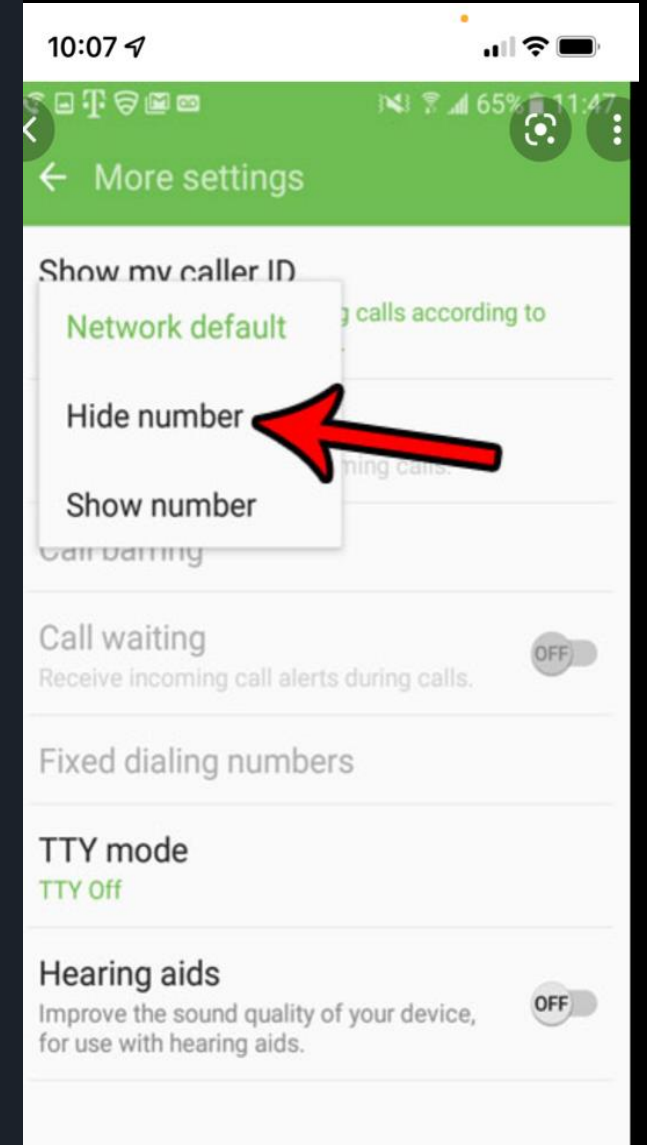
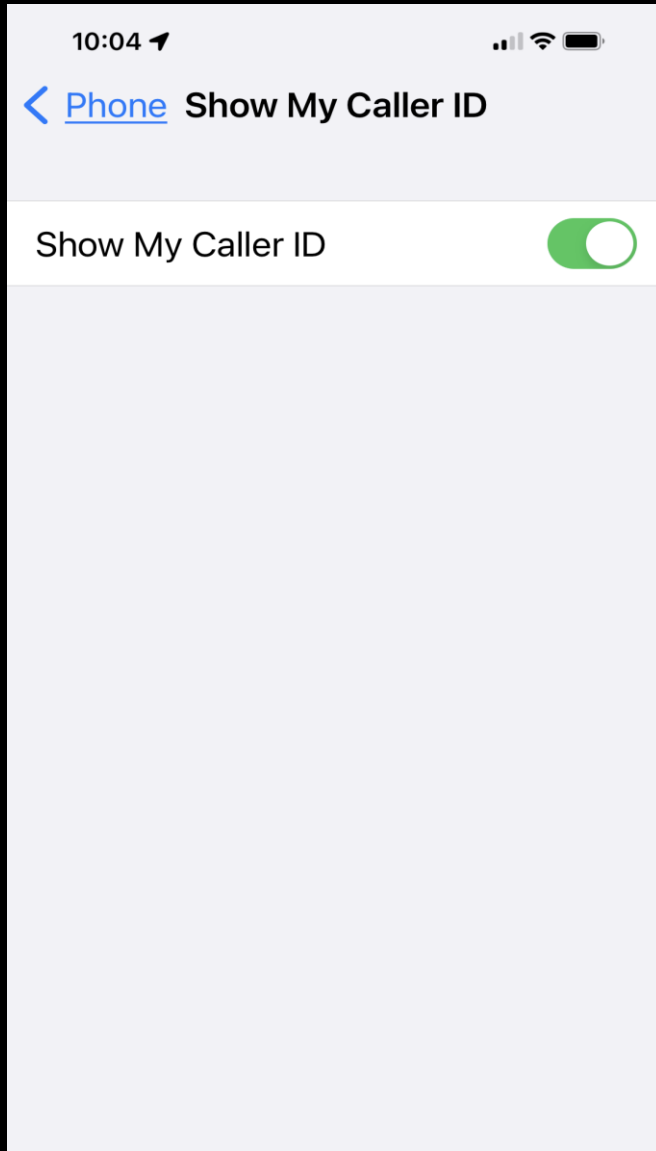
Followed by the number you want to dial

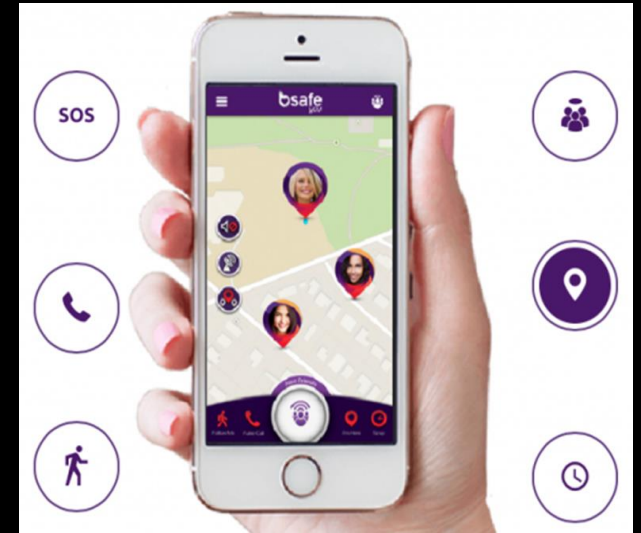
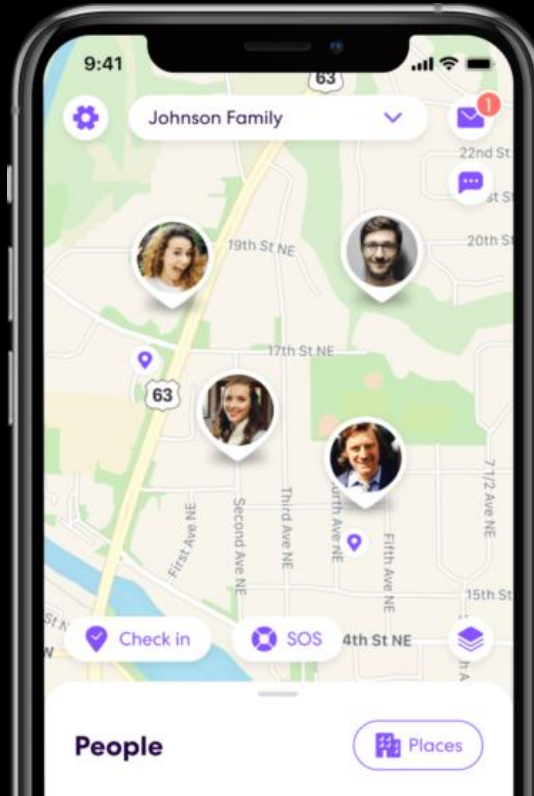
# Turning user ID off on your telephone





# Turning user ID off on your telephone





# Safety Apps

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# Safety Hotspots

# Safety Hotspots



Being out and  
about

# Safety Hotspots



Being out and about



Unsolicited callers to your home

# Safety Hotspots



Being out and about



Unsolicited callers to your home



Surgeries and public meetings



# Safety Hotspots



Being out and about



Unsolicited callers to your home



Surgeries and public meetings



Visits to resident's homes

# Safety Hotspots



Being out and about



Unsolicited callers to your home



Surgeries and public meetings



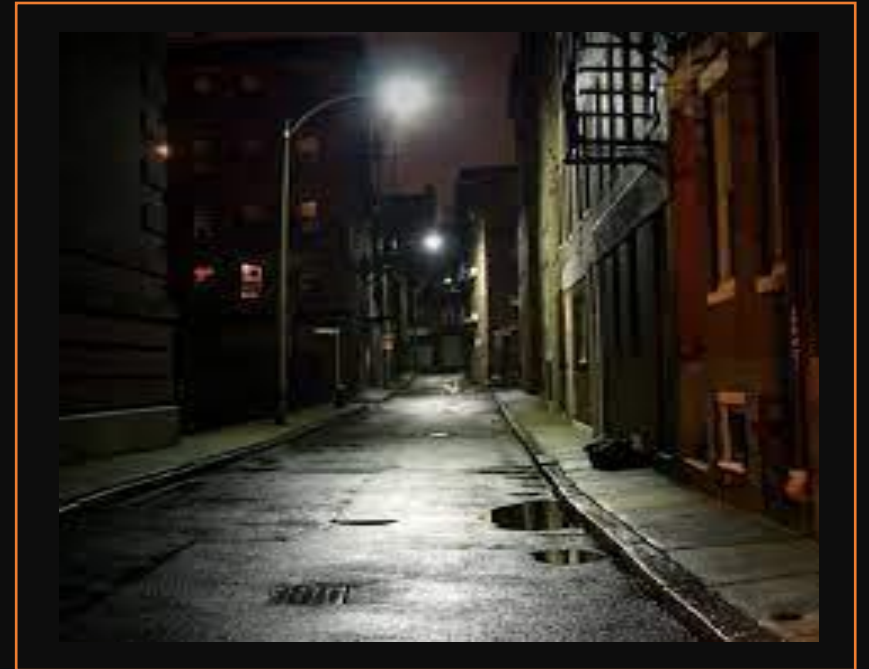
Visits to resident's homes



Canvassing

# Pedestrianship

- Route
- Clothing and name badge
- Confidence
- Bags and valuable items
- Use of telephone/earphones
- “Please may I speak to Angela?”
- Personal alarm.





# Professional devices





# Personal Information

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- Use the Council's address on your ballot paper/website
- Talk to the Monitoring Officer about removing your address from the Register of Members' Interests
- Take care about sharing information that could make your location identifiable
- Carry out a vanity search making sure that you are using "incognito" mode
- Submit a Google Remove request:  
<https://support.google.com/websearch/troubleshooter/3111061?hl=en>
- Ask a website or their hosting company to remove personal information:  
<https://lookup.icann.org/en/lookup>
- Check Companies House – Directorships and Trusteeships.

# Unsolicited visitors

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- Could try a deterrent notice: “no uninvited visitors”



# Unsolicited visitors

---

- Could try a deterrent notice: “no uninvited visitors”



# Unsolicited visitors

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- Put up a notice: “no uninvited visitors”
- Install a digital doorbell
- Choose not to answer the door!
- If you do... talk on the doorstep
- Or look as though you are just leaving for an appointment
- Politely refuse to engage in immediate conversation – take their number
- Or feed them into your next surgery
- Never invite someone you don't know - or trust - into your home
- For persistent offenders, seek advice: Council or Police 101.



# Stalking

---

- **F**ixated
- **O**bsessive
- **U**nwanted
- **R**epeated



# If you think you have a potential issue...

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- Use the National Stalking Helpline toolkit:  
<https://www.suzylamplugh.org/am-i-being-stalked-tool>
  - Collect evidence without making yourself vulnerable
  - Identify witnesses
  - Let other people know that you have an issue
  - Doing nothing is not an option
  - Seek advice – internally and with other agencies.
-

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---

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  - Seek advice – internally and with other agencies.
- 



# Threats and Intimidation

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- The intent to cause harassment, alarm or distress to another person
- Through words, behaviours or in writing
- Threats must be reported
- Police: 101 – non-emergency or using the Police’s local online form
- Call 999 or 112 if in danger
- Cyber threats can be reported online:
- In addition, report the incident internally and to your political group.



A row of empty white chairs with horizontal stitching on the backrests, arranged along a long table covered with a white cloth. The background is softly blurred, showing a bright window and some bokeh light effects. The overall atmosphere is clean and professional.

# Surgeries and Public Meetings



# Case study

You hold your monthly surgery in a community centre and are usually allocated a room directly off the main hall. It's a good environment, with clear exits and a busy footfall around it.

When you arrive, you are told that this room has been allocated to another meeting. All the other rooms are already occupied.

You are shown down to the lower level of the building, to an isolated room at the end of a long corridor, which has zero mobile signal.

It's going to be a busy surgery... what would you do?

**When selecting a venue, avoid...**

# When selecting a venue, avoid...



# When selecting a venue, avoid...



# When selecting a venue, avoid...



# When selecting a venue, avoid...



# When selecting a venue, avoid...





# Features...

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- Busy footfall
- Decent-sized room
- Good exits
- Without internal door lock
- Strong mobile signal, wifi or a landline
- CCTV/Alarm
- A vision panel
- Check whether your venue must be risk assessed by the Council.



# Safe surgeries

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- Encourage people to pre-register
- Work in pairs or teams
- Use a table to create space
- Sit across the table from your visitor(s)
- And nearest the exit
- Choose a chair with arms for you
- Keep your hot drink next to you on the floor
- Ask your companion to stay until your last meeting has finished
- Manage conversations sensitively.



# Planning a home visit

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- Consult with the relevant council team
- Ask about any issues with previous behaviour
- Check their identity matches details held on the Electoral Register
- Ask out who will be in the property – people and dogs
- Organise a companion to go with you
- Agree coded language so that you can communicate discreetly
- Travel light.



# Case study

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You have agreed to visit an elderly resident to discuss a housing issue.

When you set up the meeting, you asked if anyone else would be there, and you were told that the resident would be on their own.

When you arrive, the door is opened by a younger person. You hear other voices in the background plus several dogs barking inside the house.

What would you do?

# When you arrive....

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- Knock at the door, then step back to create space
- Tilt your body sideways
- If you can, talk on the doorstep
- If you intend to go in, carry out a doorstep assessment
- Use your senses: vision, hearing, smell, gut feel...
- If you are uncomfortable going in, make an excuse and leave.





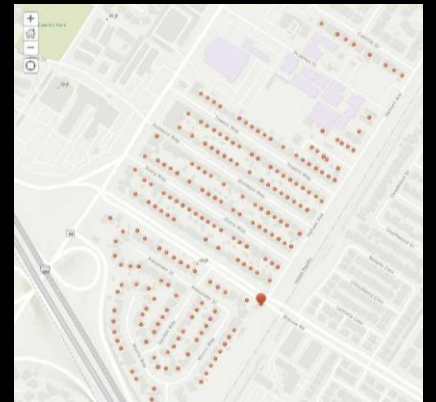
**Going into someone's home**

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# Canvassing

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1. Form pairs or teams
2. Plan the areas you will visit
3. Including whether you will include no cold calling zones
4. Establish your ground rules
5. Exchange numbers/create WhatsApp group
6. Discuss prior knowledge of properties to avoid
7. Agree coded signals.





# Other canvassing tips

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- Canvas during daylight hours
- Check for signage before you knock
- Judge whether to have a conversation
- Do not enter a property
- Notice where your colleagues are
- Use a spatula to post leaflets.



# Incident reporting

- Threats – to you or to others
- Behaviour which causes concern
- Stalking or harassment
- Hate crimes
- Damage to property
- Theft or attempted theft
- Physical violence.

# Programme review

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- Principles of personal safety
- Use of mobiles and technology
- Personal safety tips.

