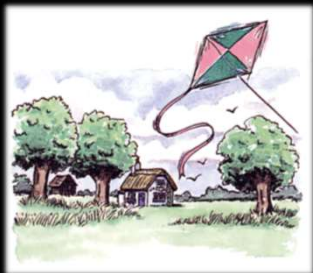


Personal Safety for Councillors



Miranda Smythe
The Baikie-Wood Consultancy Ltd



#DebateNotHate

Programme overview

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

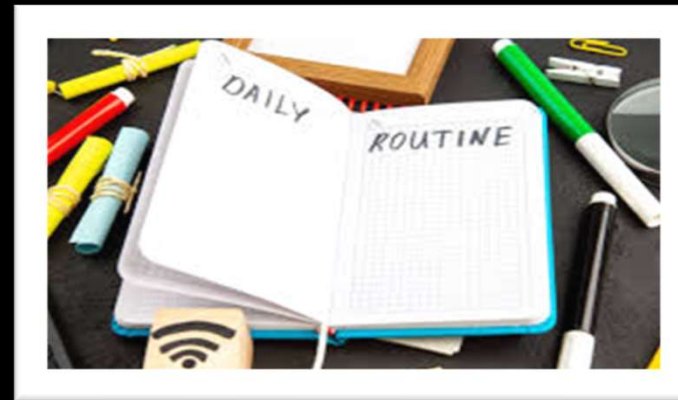
Introduction to Personal Safety



Introduction to Personal Safety

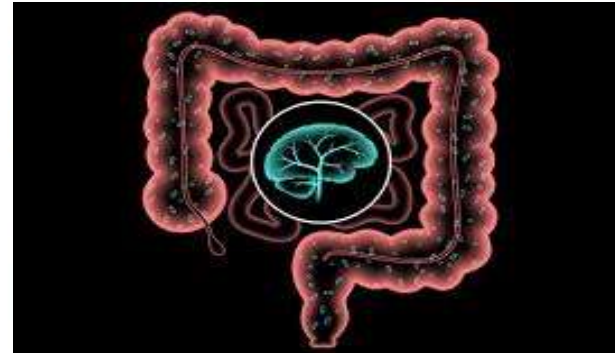


Introduction to Personal Safety



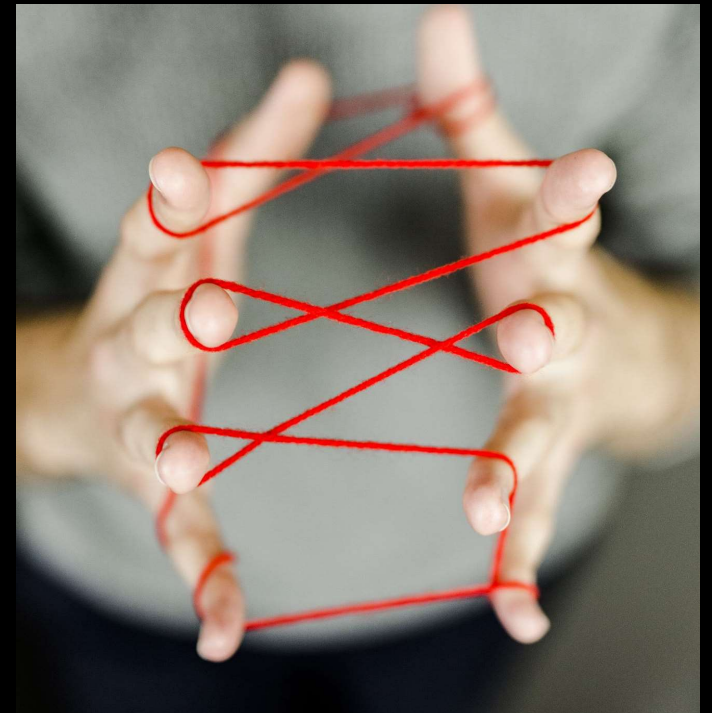
The image shows a hand holding a black marker, writing on a 'Health & Safety Risk Assessment' form. The form is titled 'Health & Safety Risk Assessment' and includes several sections for recording information. The sections are: 'Description of task:', 'Location:', 'Assessed by:', 'Date:', 'Risk rating' (with sub-sections S, L, R), and 'Proposed control measures (if any)'. The hand is currently writing in the 'Description of task:' section. The form is placed on a wooden surface.

Introduction to Personal Safety



Bio feedback

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



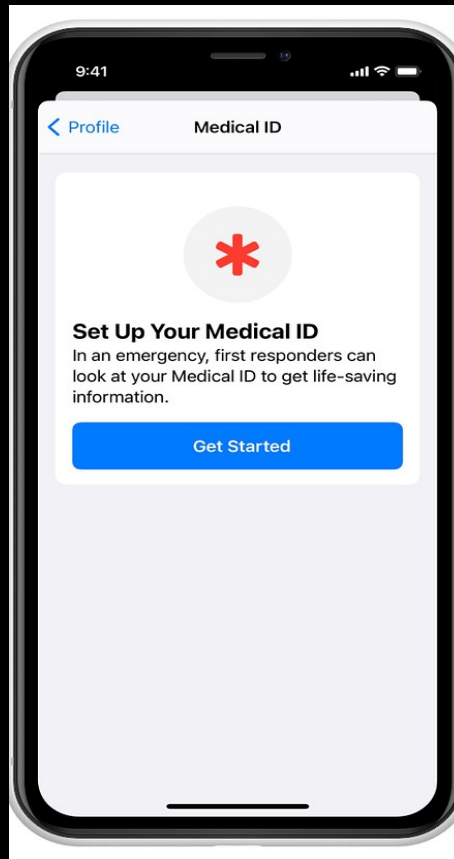


Mobile 'phones and personal safety

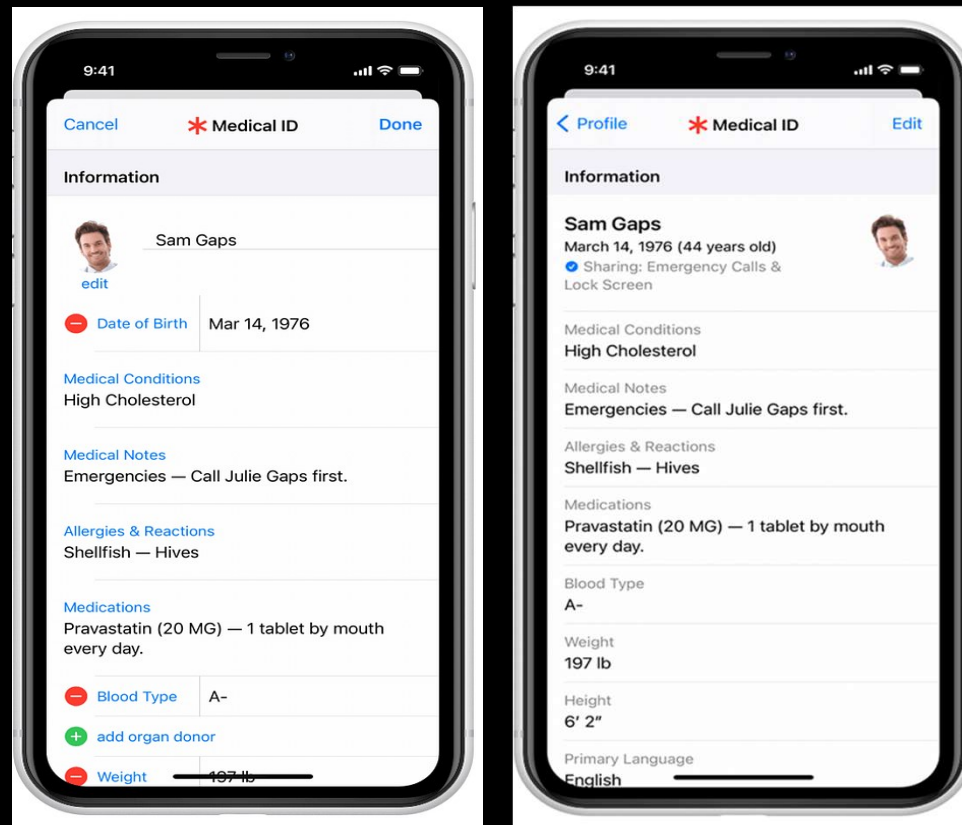
Setting up your mobile for emergencies



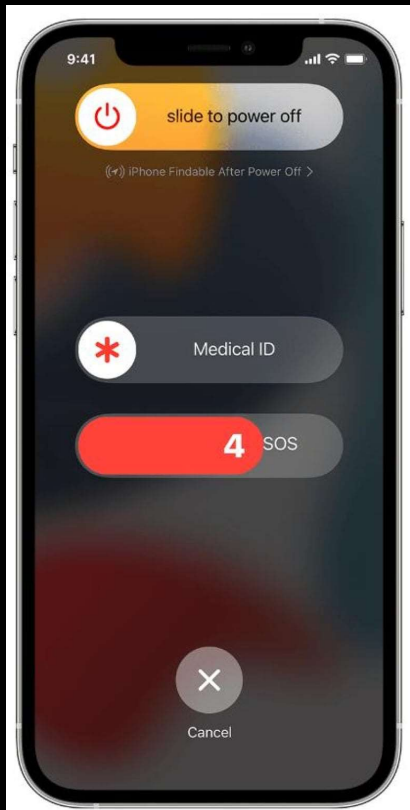
Setting up your mobile for emergencies



Setting up your mobile for emergencies

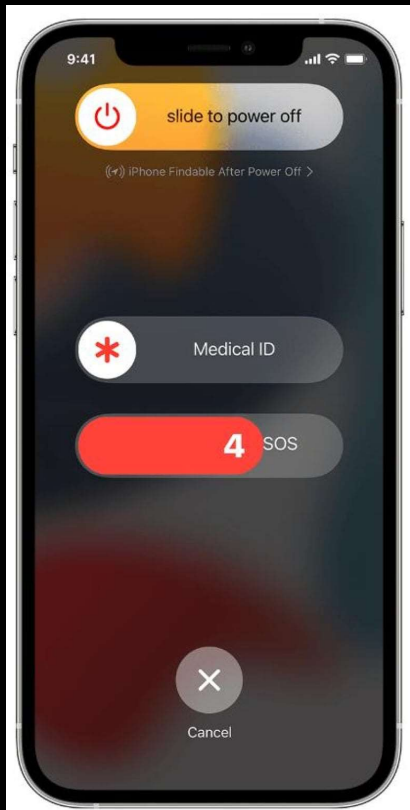


Setting up your mobile for emergencies



Press **Power** and
Volume up
buttons
simultaneously

Setting up your mobile for emergencies

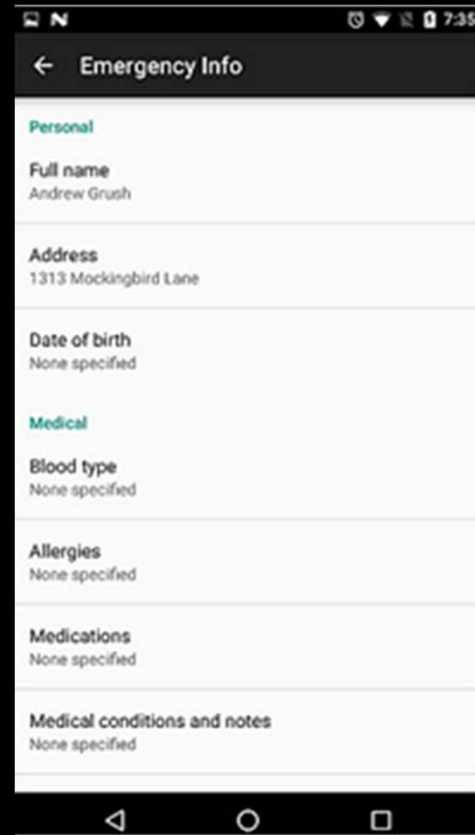
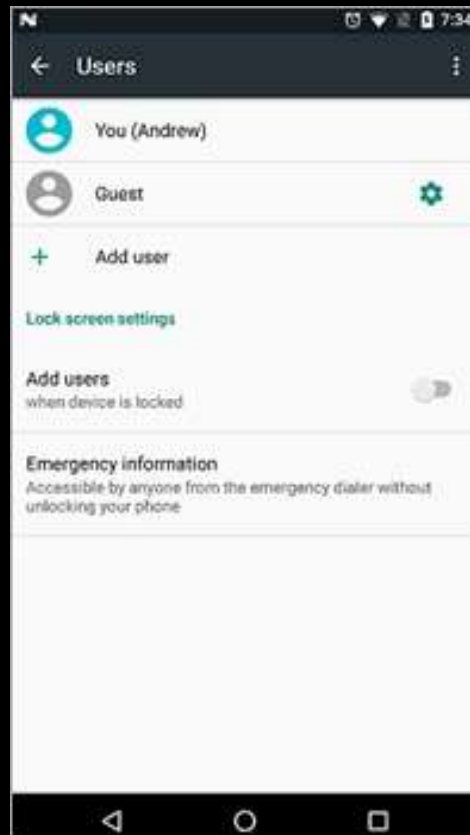


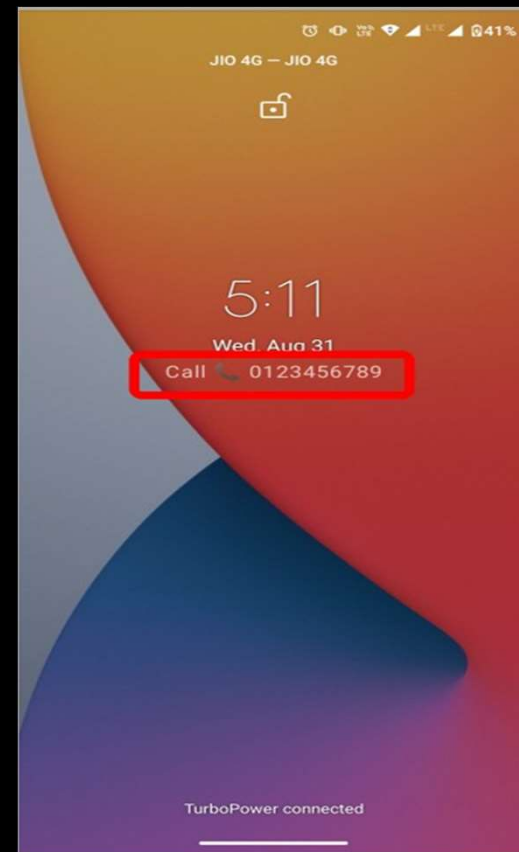
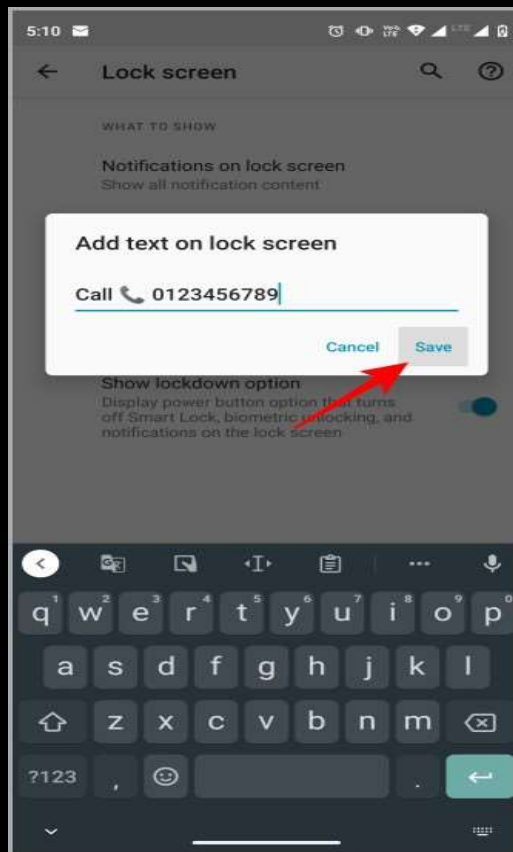
Press **Power** and
Volume up buttons
simultaneously





Android






In Case of Emergency (ICE)

In Case of Emergency (ICE)

[Cancel](#)

New Contact

[Done](#)



Edit

ICE 1

Sami Urman

Partner

—

[mobile](#) >

07971 234567

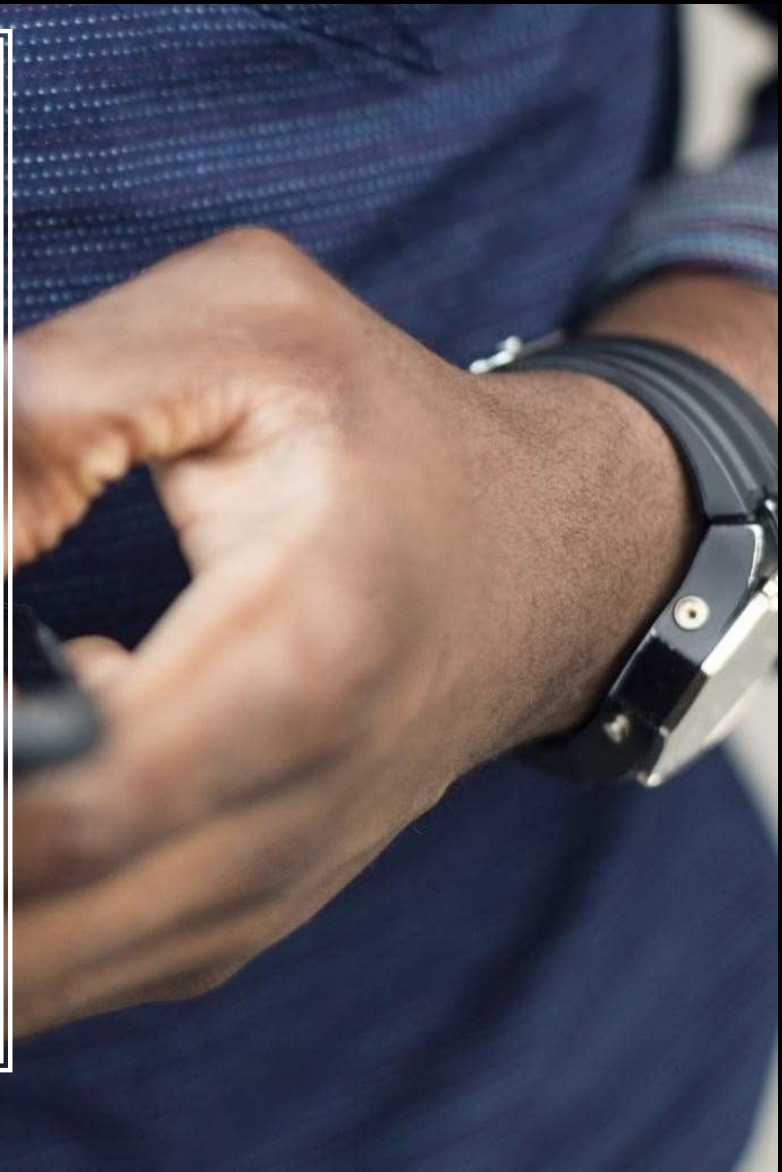
—

[home](#) >

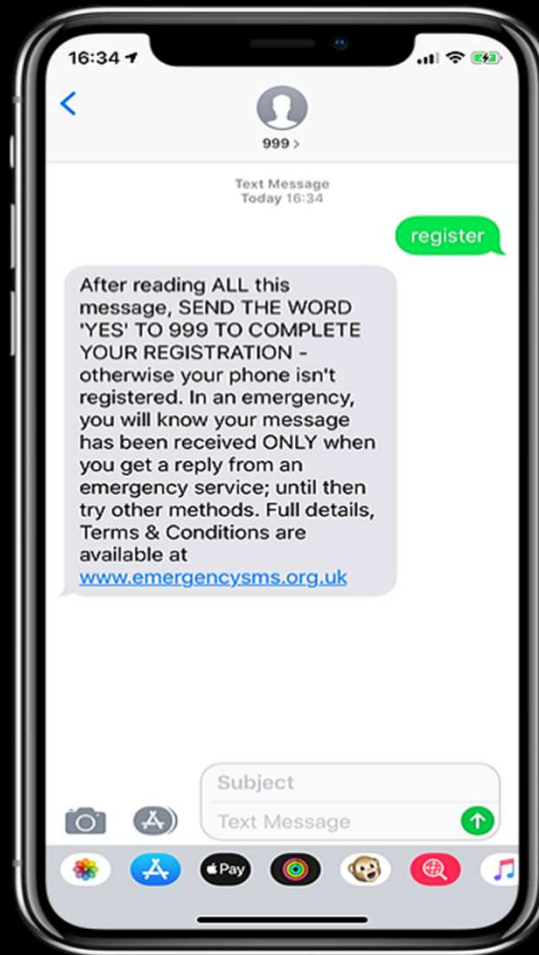
01234 567890

Contacting emergency services

- 101 Non-emergency police
- 999 Police, fire, ambulance, coastguard
- 112 Police, fire, ambulance, coastguard
- 999 55 or
- 112 55 Silent solution



Texting 999 or 112

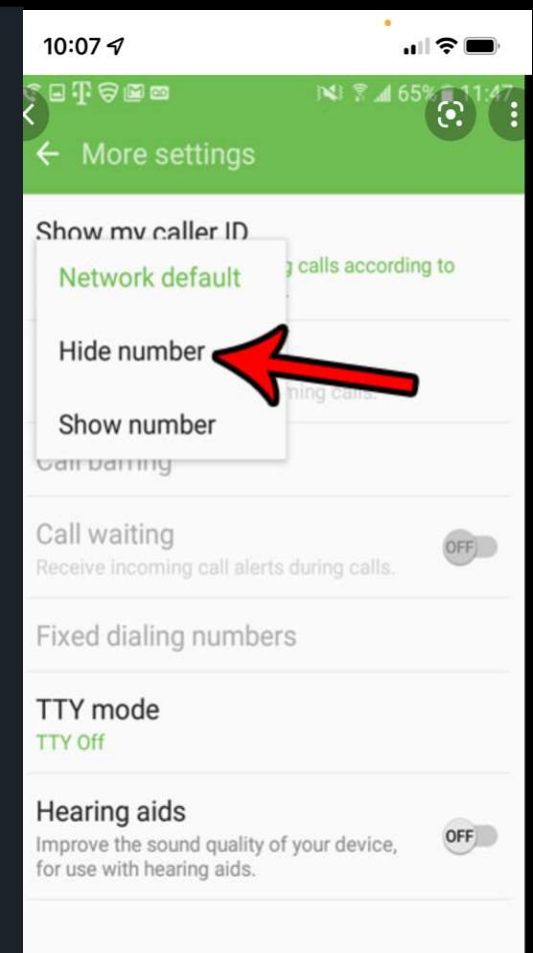
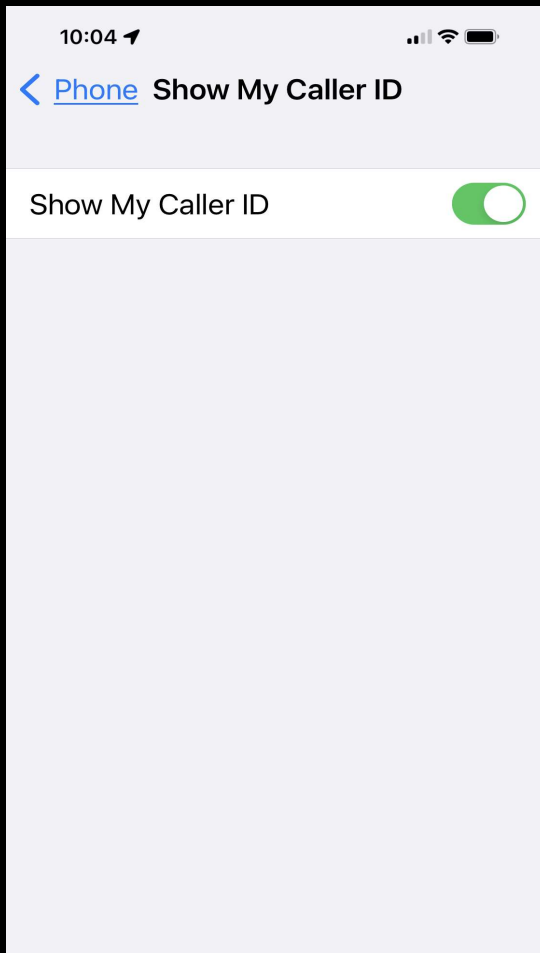


To withhold a number from landline OR
mobile, dial...

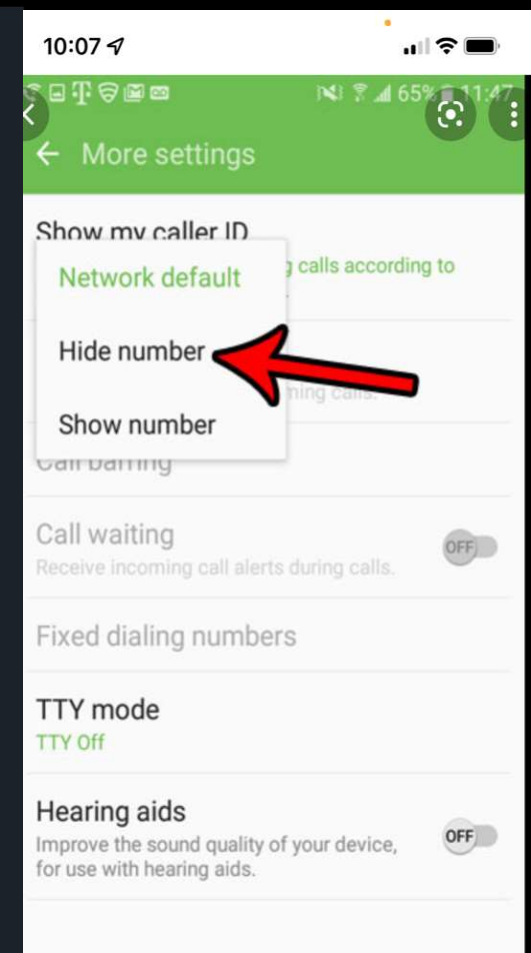
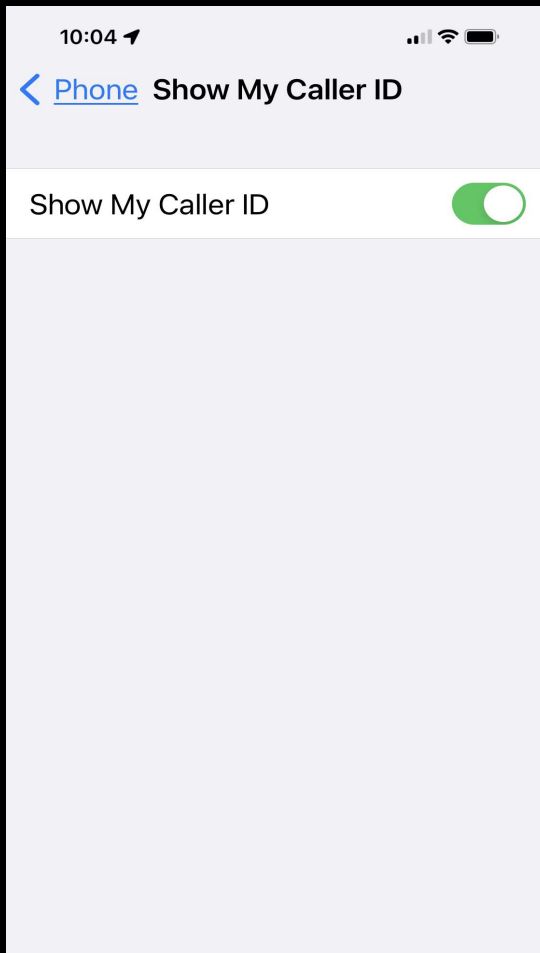


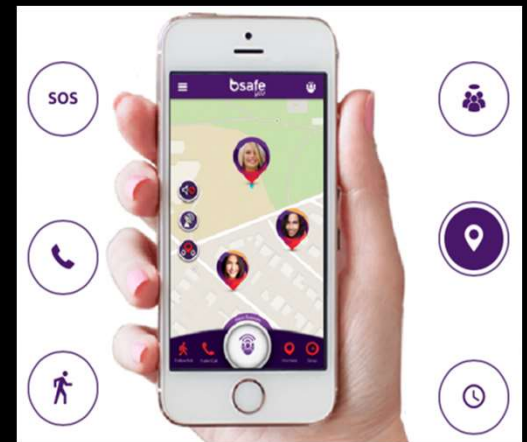
Followed by the full telephone number you want to dial

Turning user ID off on your telephone



Turning user ID off on your telephone





Safety Apps



Professional devices



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





**Unsolicited visitors to
your home**

Personal Information



- 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
- Using "incognito" mode, carry out a vanity search
- 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

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

Unsolicited visitors

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



Unsolicited visitors

- Could try a deterrent notice: “no uninvited visitors”
- Install a digital doorbell
- Or a simple chain, so that you can open the door securely
- If you choose to answer the door, 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
- Invite them to your next surgery
- If it's an adrenalised group, secure your door and contact the Police
- Never invite someone you don't know - or trust - into your home
- For persistent offenders, seek advice: Council or Police 101.



Stalking

- Fixated
- Obsessive
- Unwanted
- Repeated



If you think you have a potential issue...

- 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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-



Threats and Intimidation

- Define as the intent to cause harassment, alarm or distress to another person
- This can be using words, through behaviour or in writing
- Immediate threats must be reported to the Police on 999 or 112
- To report a non-immediate incident dial 101
- Or use the Police's local online form: [Police.uk \(www.police.uk\)](https://www.police.uk)
- Cyber threats can be reported online: [The Cyber Helpline - Victim Advice Line](#)
- Report the incident internally and to your political group.



A photograph of a conference room with a long table covered in a white cloth and several white chairs. The background is blurred, showing a bright window and some lights. The text "Surgeries and Public Meetings" is overlaid on the image.

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?

Choosing your surgery venue

- Busy footfall
- Decent-sized room
- Good exits
- A vision panel in the door or a window
- Without internal door lock
- Strong mobile signal, wifi or a landline
- Monitored CCTV/Alarm
- Check whether your venue must be risk assessed by the Council
- Carry out your own: [Risk assessment: Steps needed to manage risk - HSE.](#)



Safe surgeries

- 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
- And your table clear
- Ask your companion to stay until your last meeting has finished
- Manage conversations sensitively.



Planning a home visit

- 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

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....

- 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

How not to greet a dog



DON'T
Lean over the dog & stick
your hand in his face



DON'T
Lean over the dog & stick
your hand on top of his head



DON'T
Grab or Hug him



DON'T
Stare him in the eye
(This is an adversarial gesture)



DON'T
Squeal or shout in his face



DON'T
Grab his head and kiss it
(This is an invasion of space)

Instead...



- * No Eye contact
- * Let the dog approach you in his own time
- * Keep either your SIDE or BACK towards the dog (non-threatening posture)

Instead...



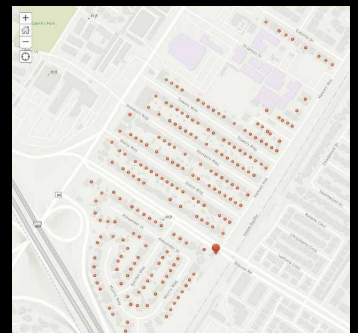
- * No Eye contact
- * Let the dog approach you in his own time
- * Keep either your SIDE or BACK towards the dog (non-threatening posture)



- * Pet or stroke him on the SIDE of his face or body. Or on his back.

Canvassing

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 (party list)
7. Agree coded signals.



Other canvassing tips



- 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
- Report any aggression/threats to your Monitoring Officer
- Read the LGA's:

[Seven principles for safer canvassing: A guide for councillors and candidates | Local Government Association](#)

Incident reporting

- Language: direct or indirect
- Threats – to you or to others
- Stalking or harassment
- Hate crimes
- Damage to property
- Theft or attempted theft
- Physical violence.



Programme review

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

