

# **Shirley No Cold Calling Zone: 6 months Evaluation Report**

## **Background**

Croydon's first No Cold Calling Zone was launched in May 2007 for a trial period of six months. The aim of the zone was to reduce, if not eradicate instances of doorstep crime in the area and to educate and inform local residents on doorstep crime and how to avoid it.

The zone was established in part of the Shirley ward, encompassing 80 roads and almost 3500 homes. The area was originally chosen for a number of reasons. These included:

- Notable number of reported doorstep crime issues had taken place previously
- High owner occupier ratio in a seemingly affluent area
- High proportion of elderly residents
- Established and fully staffed Safer Neighbourhood Team
- Strong Neighbourhood Watch presence (over 60% residents members.)

## **Method**

Initial consultation over a number of weeks with local residents showed that the proposals for the scheme were welcomed widely. Residents were informed of the proposals by a hand delivered letter, articles were carried in Neighbourhood Watch newsletters and officers attended a surgery every week for four weeks at a local library which gave residents an opportunity to discuss the proposals and their views. Local meetings were attended by officers who spoke on the proposed scheme.

Prior to the zone becoming 'live', each road around its periphery had an aluminium; A3 sized warning notice affixed to it which states:

'You are entering a NO COLD CALLING ZONE'

See appendix A – copy of sign

Each household received a 'Residents' Pack' containing consumer advice literature, and Home Office Crime Prevention leaflets. The pack also contained reporting forms, which residents were asked to complete if a cold caller visited, and door stickers which stated that cold callers were not welcome.

Both Trading Standards and the local SNT pledged that, wherever possible, they would attend a call out concerning a cold caller. Additionally, Trading Standards staff carried out a weekly patrol of the zone and the area formed part of the targeted area for National Rogue Trader day in June.

## **Cold callers and subsequent action**

In all, during the entire six month period, the reported number of cold callers in the area totalled less than ten. Two representatives from a national company were discovered in the zone cold calling on two separate instances and left voluntarily when challenged. Others were no longer present when Trading Standards or police arrived. Follow up letters ('cease and desist' letters) were sent routinely to the Head Office of all companies concerned.

See Appendix B – copy of cease and desist letter

## **Costs**

The cost of setting up a NCCZ is dependant on the size of the zone to be considered. Appendix C sets out the example costs for zones with set numbers of houses. These costings based on January 2008 figures, include all costs associated with the production of residents' packs, notices and erection of no cold calling zone signs.

Where residents, with the aid of the NCCZ DIY toolkit, wish to set up their own NCCZ, example documentation will be made available for download and print from the [www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk) website. The supply of NCCZ notices and erection could be supplied to residents on a cost recovery basis.

### **Residents' views**

At the end of the trial period, 100 questionnaires were distributed to residents. Each road received two questionnaires, the actual household were chosen at random. 47 questionnaires were returned (47%).

See Appendix D – copy of questionnaire

77% of respondents stated that they felt more confident about sending away cold callers now that they were based in a No Cold Calling Zone. 77% also stated that they felt that both they and their homes were safer in a No Cold Calling Zone.

81% of people felt that the trial was a success and that it should continue.

Comments on the scheme include:

- *'The scheme is a good thing for the older, more vulnerable residents of the borough.'*
- *'I think that the No Cold Calling Scheme is a great idea and I hope it will be continued.'*
- *'Thank you for the pilot – we hope it continues, as it adds to a safer neighbourhood.'*

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

The scheme has been an undoubted and resounding success. Not only have there been a marked reduction in the number of cold callers to properties in the area, residents feel safer and more confident in their own homes through the implementation of the zone.

The zone has served to forge strong links between the community, the council and the police with regular contact between the three main partners ensuring a common commitment that will be carried forward to the future.

Shirley has a very strong and dedicated Neighbourhood Watch Association. Without the backing of this organisation, who often formed the voice of the community when reporting incidents or raising queries, the zone would have been much less of an achievement.

It is recommended that the zone continues.

### **Future proposals**

The success of the zone thus far has caused much interest in the wider community of Croydon as a whole. A number of residents associations and Neighbourhood Watch Associations have asked that consideration is given to implementing no cold calling zones in their own particular areas.

It is suggested that a two limbed approach to further developing this project is adopted, by establishing a second No Cold Calling Zone in an appropriate area within the borough co-ordinated and put into action by Trading Standards as the main partner with the full support of local Neighbourhood Watch and the SNT.

The second limb is to create a 'self help' kit for Residents' Associations or Neighbourhood Watch to set up their own zone within a limited area. The kit would be a step by step guide to creating a NCCZ, including letters, questionnaires, examples of packs etc. but with a commitment from Trading Standards to share their expertise on the subject, attend meetings if requested and attend to any cold caller incidents.

Attached: Appendix A: Copy of NCCZ signage  
Appendix B: Copy of 'cease and desist' letter  
Appendix C: Table of costs  
Appendix D: Copy of questionnaire (post evaluation survey)

Author

Trish Burls  
Trading Standards Service  
Taberner House  
Park Lane Croydon  
CR9 3BT

[Trish.burls@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Trish.burls@croydon.gov.uk)  
020 8407 1309

February 2008

**You are entering a  
NO  
COLD  
CALLING  
ZONE**

***i* 020 8407 1311**

**CROYDON  
COUNCIL**  
[www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk)

 **METROPOLITAN  
POLICE**  
Working together for a safer London

**Appendix B: Cease and Desist Letter**

Environmental Cultural & Sports Services  
Trading Standards  
Taberner House  
Park Lane  
Croydon, CR9 3BT

Tel: 020 8407 1309  
Fax: 020 8760 5786  
Minicom: 020 8760 5797  
Email: trish.burls@croydon.gov.uk

Please ask for/reply to Trish Burls

Your Ref:  
Our Ref:  
Date:

Dear Sir

**No Cold Calling Zone – Shirley Ward, Croydon**

I am writing to you regarding your company policy of cold calling for new customers in Croydon. On ..... a representative of your company was seen to be cold calling in....., Shirley, Croydon. This is an area which has been specifically designated by the residents as a No Cold Calling Zone.

In Croydon we have a multi-agency group working towards reducing both the incidents of distraction burglary, bogus callers and rogue trading. We are seeking to reduce the fear of crime experienced by residents. As part of this approach, we have instigated a No Cold Calling Zone in part of the borough. The attached map shows the specific area.

Residents in this area have agreed that they want to live in a No Cold Calling Zone and cold callers are actively discouraged from calling at houses within the area.

Whilst we understand that some of your business is to be gained by approaching householders in their homes, Croydon Trading Standards would ask that your representatives do not cold call on properties within the Zone and that the wishes of the residents are respected. The zone is advertised by means of a sign affixed to a lamppost on every road on the periphery of the designated area. Furthermore, most houses within the zone will be displaying a doorsticker stating that door to door sales people are not welcome.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me on 020 8407 1309.

Yours faithfully

Trish Burls  
Senior Fair Trading Officer

## **Appendix C: Table of Costs**

**Cost to set up a No Cold Calling Zone by Croydon Trading Standards Service based on prices at January 2008**

	<b>Number of Houses</b>		
	<b>500</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>2500</b>
<b>Total Cost for NCCZ</b>	<b>£1510.80</b>	<b>£2671.8</b>	<b>£4310.8</b>

These costs include all costs associated with the production of residents' packs, notices and erection of no cold calling zone signs

### **DIY Zone costs**

Costs associated with the setting up of a zone by a residents' group would be borne by that group. The council's trading standards service will provide appropriate guidance free of charge but is unable to provide any financial support. All appropriate documents will be available to download and adapt via the Council's website [www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk).

The supply of NCCZ notices and erection can be supplied to residents wishing to set up their own zones on a cost recovery basis.

**Appendix D: Questionnaire (Post Evaluation Survey)**

**Croydon Trading Standards 'No Cold Calling Zone' Evaluation Form**

It would be greatly appreciated if you completed this form and returned it in the attached pre-paid envelope as soon as possible.

Answers to the questions below will enable us to monitor the success of the No Cold Calling Zone.

Q1. Are you male or female?

- Male
- Female
- No Reply

Q2. What is your age group?

- Under 50
- 51 – 60
- 61 – 65
- 66 – 70
- over 70
- no reply

Q3. Have you been cold called in the last six months?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/  
can't remember
- No Reply

If yes, approximately how many times?

- Once
- Twice
- 3 times
- 3 or 4 times
- 4 or 5 times
- 6 times

Q4. Did you buy anything or have any work carried out?

- Yes
- No
- No reply

Q5. Have certain Traders cold called repeatedly?

- Yes
- No
- No reply

If yes, please list which trader/s:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Q6. Did you use the chain when answering the door?

- Yes
- No
- Can't remember
- Not applicable
- No reply

Q7. Did you ask for and look closely at callers ID?

- Yes
- No
- Can't remember
- No reply

Q8. Are you displaying a 'No Cold Calling' Sticker on your door?

- Yes
- No
- No reply

Q9. Do you feel the sticker has helped reduce the number of cold calls you receive?

- Yes
- No
- No reply

Q13. Do you feel that you and your home will be safer in the 'No Cold Calling' Zone?

- Yes
- No
- No reply

Q10. Do you feel more confident about sending doorstep sellers away now you are in a 'No Cold Calling' Zone?

- Yes
- No
- No reply

Q14. Do you feel that the scheme has been a success and should be continued?

- Yes
- No
- No reply

Q11. Do you feel the 'No Cold Calling' street signs will deter uninvited salespeople?

- Yes
- No
- No reply

Q15. Do you feel the 'No Cold Calling' scheme should be expanded to other areas in the borough?

- Yes
- No
- No reply

Q12. Do you know whom to contact for advice or assistance?

- Yes
- No
- No reply

Please use the space below to make comments: