

PRESS RELEASE



16 September 2002

02/224

Help Stamp Out Bogus Charity Collections

Have you ever given bric-a-brac or clothing to a charity through a 'House to House' collection? Are you always sure that you are giving your donated items to a registered charity and those in need? West Lancashire District Council's Licensing Section, who are responsible for ensuring 'House to House' collections are genuine, are currently investigating complaints that some companies may be operating collections that appear to be for charitable causes, but in fact are not.

Many of the flyers and plastic bags, which are posted through letterboxes asking for clothing and bric-a-brac, etc to help charitable causes are genuine. However, sometimes leaflets will appear claiming to support a charitable cause, but the items collected will never reach the charities and those in need. The items are often sold on to generate profit for the company organising the collection.

Such bogus leaflets often quote a registered number, which may only be the company's business registered number- this number does not mean that the company is a registered charity. A genuine charity will always provide their full name, address and registered charity number, unlike the bogus companies. Also the person distributing the leaflets on behalf of a genuine charity will carry a 'House to House' Collection Permit or a Home Office Exemption Order. These permits are only issued to genuine charities.

Cllr John Baldock, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, said:

"The vast majority of 'house to house' collections are conducted by genuine charities, who rely on the contributions and good spirit of the people of West Lancashire. However, it appears that a small minority are deliberately trying to take advantage of the public's good nature. The misleading information, given on these leaflets, can give the impression that the collection is for a bona fide charity. Please remember it is important to check that the charity is genuine."

Although it is important to keep on donating to the genuine charities in West Lancashire, if you suspect a bogus charitable collection of any kind, please contact the Police in the first instance on 01772 614444 or the Council's Licensing Section on 01695 585015 as soon as possible.

**For further details contact the Public Relations Office
Tel: 01695 585011 * Fax 01695 585220 * Switchboard 01695 577177
PO Box 16, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 2DF
email: public.relations@westlancsdc.gov.uk**