

The 'Predatory' Strangers Problem

From comments made by carers in 1997/8, it was clear that by standing at the front door alone in the cold, sometimes in her nightdress, and by leaving the front door open unattended, my mother was always at some 'risk' from passers-by. Fortunately she lived in a fairly quiet residential road but she did like visitors and company and there are some instances that did give some concern.

We know that Jehovah's witnesses visited her and left their calling card. They were from the Kingdom Church Centre in Ipswich. In June 1997 a woman was seen leaving the house by a carer and also another Jehovah's witness, named Charlotte, came calling one day at tea time but the carer got rid of her. Charlotte was a bit of a mystery, she was an adult but left my mother this rather juvenile card to 'a kind lady' for letting her into my mother's house. No idea what the 'kindness' was about, my mother never mentioned these visits.



Another problem we had was of the salesman variety. In May 1997, East Coast Cable were going to install an underground cable telephone line to the house, previously overhead, and their salesman (Chris Treloar) who visited to advise my mother of this, signed her up for a new phone installation and number which she definitely did not need. I was surprised that he persuaded her to sign any documentation since he had been warned by neighbours about her condition and that I was responsible for her affairs.

I think he acted extremely naively and although he didn't realise it, a simple thing like a new telephone number had caused her great anxiety, upset and confusion. The carers noted a couple of times during the days before the planned installation that mother was quite agitated and she phoned us several times so I knew something was going on. I naturally complained strongly to East Coast Cable because it was then up to others to sort out the chaos caused. The company did apologise for their sales rep., unfortunately however, having dug up the pavement to lay these cables, the pavement was left in a temporary state afterwards and a major tripping hazard as far as my mother was concerned. I complained to the Council and was informed that a permanent reinstatement would be done once the work in the road was completed. The Borough Engineer sent me an acknowledgement of this as follows....."Once East Coast Cable have completed their work the entire length of the road will receive the annual footpath inspection to ensure a satisfactory standard of footway within the current financial constraints".....so hopefully the money didn't run out.

The next panic was Eastern Electricity in February 1998. As with the phone lines, the electricity supply cables were being routed underground and cleared up the side of the house and into the loft space. Potentially a major problem with workmen in the house she didn't know, I arranged for a carer to sit with her all day if necessary whilst this work was carried out. Eastern Electricity were very professional and understanding about the situation and co-operated fully.