

# News Release

## For Immediate Release

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### BE VIGILANT AGAINST ROGUE TREE SURGEONS

Several incidents of residents being targeted by rogue tree surgeons have been reported to Bexley Trading Standards over recent weeks.

The con artists offer tree cutting services at bargain prices. They then charge large amounts of money to remove the chippings - or charge exorbitant price but do very little of the work for which they've quoted.

An 82-year-old Bexley resident was recently driven to the bank to draw out £4,500 after being told that if she paid cash she wouldn't be charged VAT. This was for one hour's work carried out by one male trimming a hedge. Luckily this was spotted by the bank and no money was exchanged.

Councillor Peter Craske, Bexley's Cabinet Member for Places said: " As we move into Spring when residents start thinking about doing work to their homes and gardens. We need to be vigilant.

"These scammers have been knocking on doors and leafleting residents across the borough to get business. Trading Standards have been passed some of the leaflets containing false business names and addresses which were left by rogue traders.

"We advise residents not to respond to any leaflet drops, or to deal with traders on the doorstep for any goods or services. A good way of finding reputable traders is to use Bexley's What Tradesman? scheme by visiting [www.bexley.gov.uk/whattradesman](http://www.bexley.gov.uk/whattradesman)"

Cutting down trees is a specialist occupation, with companies required to be trained, health and safety qualified and hold permits for the disposal of waste.

Always get a written quote, never pay up front and never be pressured into paying more than originally agreed.

Visit Bexley's 'What Tradesman?' Scheme at [www.bexley.gov.uk/whattradesman](http://www.bexley.gov.uk/whattradesman) for a list of local recommended tradesman or if you are a local tradesman who would like to join the scheme.

To report rogue traders please either contact Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 03454 040506 or call the police.

**Please contact: Lynne McVicar on 020 3045 3606**

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