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occurs where a falsehood, trick or distraction is used on an occupant of a dwelling to gain, or try to gain, access to the premises to commit burglary. It includes cases where the offender first enters the premises and subsequently uses distraction methods in order to remain on the premises or gain access to other parts of the premises in order to

1. Although currently only 1% of burglaries are classified as distraction, the victims are disproportionately elderly. Careful analysis of police reported data should reveal the extent of this and whether or not there is any concentration, for example in more isolated locations or villages. This analysis would support specific targeting of crime prevention advice.
2. If hot spots are identified then work with local parish councils to provide specific advice on installing door chains, rather than general awareness raising.
3. Alert local newspapers, village magazines and other outlets that might be read by elderly residents, again offering specific advice.
4. Suggest a neighbourhood or cocoon watch paying particular attention to the elderly living alone.
5. Ask families and neighbours to check on the elderly and single occupancy households cautioning against uninvited/unexpected visitors seeking to gain entry.
6. Establish local signage to make clear that doorstep sales or unplanned calls are not acceptable in the area.

Lister, S., D. Wall and J Bryan (2004) Evaluation of the Leeds Distraction Burglary Initiative Home Office Online report 44/04 available here  
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.524.7720&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Office of National Statistics  
available here

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/overviewofburglaryandotherhouseholdtheft/englandandwales#what-are-the-long-term-trends>

Office of National Statistics  
Available here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingseptember2019>

Office of National Statistics year ending March 2018 available here:  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/natureofcrimeburglary>

Thornton, A., C Hatton, C Malone, T. Fryer, D Walker, J. Cunningham and N. Durrani (2003)  
Home Office  
Research Study 269 available here: <http://library.college.police.uk/docs/hors/hors269.pdf>

*This is one of a series of short, speculative papers developed by the UCL Jill Dando Institute during the current pandemic. It is edited by Nick Tilley and Gloria Laycock and published by University College London. The raison d'être of the series is fully described at: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/jill-dando-institute/research/covid-19-special-papers>*