Seasonal crime prevention advice - Summer

Don’t let burglars have easy access to your home

- During the warm weather people are more likely to leave their doors and windows open to ventilate their properties. Walk in burglaries do increase during the Summer months, so don’t be complacent, if you cannot see the door or window then it should be shut and locked. If you are out enjoying your garden, remember to shut and lock all windows on the front of your property.

Enjoy your summer holiday but make sure your home looks lived in whilst you’re away

- Use timer switches on lights to make you’re home look occupied in the evenings
- If possible leave a car in your driveway or ask a neighbour to park there car on your driveway whilst you’re away.
- Ask a neighbour to check on your home while you’re away and move any post out of sight.
- Cancel any regular delivers such as milk and newspapers.
- If you have a lawn cut it before you go away and trim back any bushes or shrubs that burglars could hide behind.
- Lock away any valuable items such as pedal cycles – they may be safer in your home than in an outhouse or shed.

Get on your bike and make the most of the warmer weather – but make sure you protect your bike

- Mark the frame of you bike with your postcode and house number using a UV pen or tamperproof label. Keep details of the frame number, make, model and type of bike and also take a photograph.
- Register your bike on www.immobilise.com, a free online property database which the police use to check stolen property.
- Never leave your bike unlocked – even if you’re just popping into the newsagents for a couple of minutes.
- The best kind of lock is a quality solid steel D-shaped shackle lock.
- Always lock your bike to something solid like a lamp-post or railings, preferably in a public area.
- If you have a quick release wheel, take off your front wheel and local it to the frame and back wheel.
- If you have a pump or detachable lights, take them with you when you leave your bike.
- Make sure you have adequate insurance cover for your bike.

Enjoy day trips out in the warmer weather – but make sure you secure your car

- Don’t leave valuables in your car – even if you know that the bag on the front seat is empty, a thief may still try their luck.
- Remove your sat nav and its holder from your car, don’t leave it in the glove box as this is the first place a thief will look and make sure you wipe away any suction markers from the holder.
- Remember to shut your windows and sunroof when you leave your car.
- Use an approved steering lock and gear clamp.
- Set your immobiliser and alarm if you have one fitted.
Burglars like to work undercover, so keep hedges and bushes cut back this summer

- Keep hedges and shrubs in your front garden below windowsill height to prevent a burglar having a 'screen' to work behind.
- Use gravel on paths and driveways to help deter burglars from approaching your property.
- Clever planting can also help – use prickly plants and shrubs close to vulnerable areas such as windows, fences, boundary walls and drain pipes.

Don’t let burglars make easy work of your property ... keep garden equipment and tools locked away

- Keep your shed securely locked by using strong hasp and close shackle padlock. Use coach bolts or non-return screws to secure door hinges, hasp and staples.
- Always put away gardening equipment, tools and furniture away when you’ve finished using them.
- Keep your garden fences in good repair and consider having trellis on the top to discourage anyone climbing over.

Make your valuables less attractive to steal

- Mark garden furniture and DIY equipment with your postcode and house number (or name) by engraving or painting. For heavier metal items such as lawn mowers, use a hammer and set of punches.
- Photograph valuable garden plants and ornaments to help identify them in the event of a theft.
- Check your household insurance covers theft from your garden or outbuildings.