

Hertfordshire Constabulary

Officers' Handbook

Supporting you...

- ✓ home security advice
- ✓ crime prevention advice

'Safety, Justice and Reassurance'



HERTFORDSHIRE
CONSTABULARY



“I am now going to give you crime prevention advice”

Firstly, it's important to say that this handbook is not an exhaustive guide to home security and crime prevention. It has been designed to support you in your role, by ensuring that you are able to give up-to-date, relevant and consistent home security and crime prevention advice.

You will see that the handbook is laid out in three sections:

SECTION 1 explains the method behind carrying out home security surveys, with illustrations and advice covering all aspects of home security, including security of the boundaries, outbuildings, building and property.

SECTION 2 provides crime prevention advice covering a range of different crime scenarios, including street robbery and personal safety, domestic violence, hate crime and harassment, mini-cab safety and drug rape, nuisance phone calls, distraction burglary, bogus traders, motor vehicle security, pickpockets and handbag thieves, mobile phone security and gun and knife crime.

ADDITIONAL NOTES provide more detailed explanations about the advice contained in Sections 1 and 2 of the handbook.

Most victims of burglary are concerned that they have been specifically targeted or watched for a period of time prior to their burglary, to determine their movements. However, more commonly this is not the case, most burglaries are opportunistic. Burglars choose houses that have little or no obvious security, appear unoccupied, have easy, unobserved access to the side and rear, and provide them with the chance to gain entry without being seen or heard.

So it is possible to dramatically reduce burglaries by taking simple security measures to deter burglars and remove some of the opportunities that present themselves as easy targets.

Whilst we can never guarantee a totally crime-free future, don't underestimate the effect that your advice can have on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour in your area.

Three stages to giving home security advice

When you give home security advice you may raise the occupier's fear of crime even more. That's why it's also important to highlight the good things about their existing security and pass on your observations and recommendations in a professional and empathetic manner.

There are three stages to carrying out a home security survey. They are as follows:

1. Introduce yourself and explain that you are going to give the occupier home security crime prevention advice - this is important because burglary victims are often traumatised, so it helps to focus their minds on the preventative measures necessary to reduce their chances of repeat victimisation.
2. Carry out the home security survey, preferably with the occupier, so that they understand why you are recommending specific security measures. This gives you the opportunity to point out what needs to be improved, but also to offer reassurance and highlight the good aspects of their existing security.
3. Explain that Hertfordshire Costabulary does not accept any legal responsibility for the advice given; it is given free and without the intention of creating a contract. It is based on the information supplied by the occupier and current crime trends in the area.

Please ensure that you give all the relevant crime prevention advice detailed on the yellow pages in this booklet.

Onion peeling principle

The best way to approach a home security survey is to start from the boundaries and work your way into the centre, treating each area as a layer, until you reach the targeted property. This is known as the 'onion peeling principle'.

Although the layers differ for each household, generally they can be broken down into the following:



Property can be any item contained in the building or outbuildings such as cash, jewellery, electrical equipment, tools, motor vehicles or cycles.

Insecure house

“What opportunities **do** burglars look for?”



- 1 High front boundary
- 2 Low side and rear boundaries
- 3 Recessed, insecure side gate
- 4 Wheelie bin in front of side gate
- 5 Insecure garage door
- 6 Insecure shed door and window
- 7 Paved driveway and path
- 8 No intruder alarm system
- 9 No security light
- 10 Insecure front door
- 11 Open insecure windows
- 12 Valuables not protected
- 13 Side window above garage vulnerable

"I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about..."

Front, side and rear boundaries

- ✓ Front boundaries should not exceed 1m in height, unless they are metal railings, which allow natural vision through.
- ✓ Side and rear boundaries should be a minimum of 1.8m in height. If the height of the boundary exceeds 2m in height, planning permission may be required. An additional diamond style trellis topping is difficult to climb and provides an ideal framework for spiky defensive planting, such as climbing roses.
- ✓ Side and driveway gates should be the same height as the side and rear boundaries and, where possible, be level with the front building line, to eliminate recessed areas which exceed 600mm.
- ✓ Metal side and driveway gates allow good natural surveillance, but need careful design to reduce climbing points, particularly at the locking and hinge points. An anti-climb topping, such as a decorative spearhead design, will make the gates difficult to climb over.
- ✓ Wooden side and driveway gates should be secured on the inside with two substantial hasps and staples with closed shackle padlocks, one towards the top and one towards the bottom, to reduce leverage.
- ✓ Barbed wire, carpet gripper or broken glass are not advisable, as these may cause serious injury, which the occupier could be legally responsible for. There are alternative preventative anti-climb toppings, such as safe plastic strips with rows of pointed cones on top, which make it difficult to grip the top of fences or walls, but will not cause injury. A warning sign may be required.
- ✓ Gravel driveways and paths prevent a silent approach.
- ✓ Wheelie bins should be stored behind secure side gates until collection day, to prevent them being used as climbing aids.

Front, side and rear boundary security

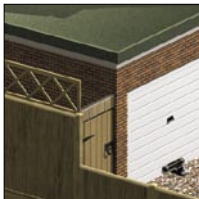
“Remove the opportunities for burglary”



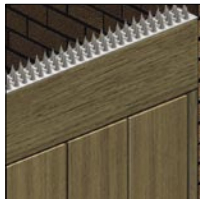
Low front hedge and gate



High side and rear boundaries with diamond style trellis



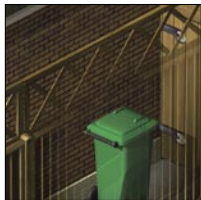
Locked side gate, not recessed



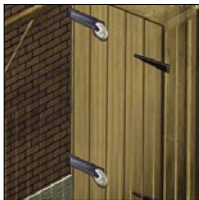
Safe plastic anti-climb topping



Spiky defensive planting



Wheelie bin behind locked side gate



Hasps and staples with closed shackle padlocks



Gravel driveways and paths

“I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about...”

Garages and sheds

- ✓ Metal up-and-over garage doors can be secured with additional purpose made locks fitted to either side, approximately 300mm up from the floor, to reduce the leverage points.
- ✓ An external floor mounted, solid steel locking ‘T’ bar with a closed shackle padlock, will offer a good visual deterrent and make it difficult to force the door open.
- ✓ Wooden garage double doors can be secured with two substantial hasps and staples and closed shackle padlocks, one towards the top and one towards the bottom.
- ✓ Garage side or rear doors can be secured with British Standard 5-lever mortice locks and two internal mortice rack bolts, one towards the top and one towards the bottom, to reduce the leverage points.
- ✓ Shed doors can be secured with two substantial hasps and staples and two closed shackle padlocks on the outside, one towards the top and one towards the bottom. External hinge screws should be replaced with one-way clutch head screws to prevent them being removed and access gained this way.
- ✓ Garage and shed windows can be secured with internal diamond mesh grilles, which provide a good visual deterrent to opportunistic burglaries.
- ✓ Garden tools and ladders should be secured by wrapping a substantial chain around them and padlocking them to an eyebolt which has been secured to the floor or wall. This will prevent them being stolen or used to break into the house.
- ✓ Tools and garden implements should be visibly property marked with the postcode and house name or number, to deter theft and assist police with identifying the rightful owner.

Garage and shed security

“Garages and sheds are often the first places a burglar will target”



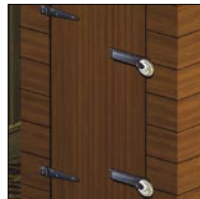
Garage door lock



Floor mounted locking 'T' bar



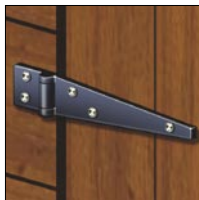
Secure garage side or rear door



Secure shed door



Hasp and staple with closed shackle padlock



Secure shed door hinge with one-way clutch head screws



Internal diamond mesh grille over shed window



Property marked and secured garden tools and ladders

"I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about..."

Intruder alarms, patio doors and windows

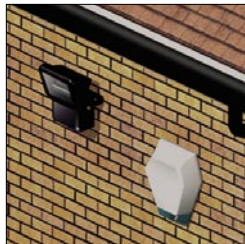
- ✓ Intruder alarm systems are the best deterrent against burglary, as burglars don't want to be seen or heard; time and noise are their enemies.
- ✓ An alarm company should be affiliated to an inspectorate body, i.e. 'NSI' or 'SSAIB'.
- ✓ There are three types of intruder alarm systems available:-
 - monitored - which provides a police response via the alarm company
 - speech dialer - which automatically calls pre-programmed keyholders
 - audible only - which relies on neighbours and passers-by to react.
- ✓ External active alarm bell boxes (which have sounders and flashing lights) are required at the front and rear of the building to maximise the visual deterrent of the system, no matter what direction a burglar approaches from and regardless of whether it's day-time or night-time.
- ✓ DIY intruder alarm systems are available, but are **not** eligible for a police response.
- ✓ Security lights increase visibility and make burglars feel vulnerable and at risk of being seen.
- ✓ Patio doors should have a minimum of three locking points, with an anti-lift device to prevent them being lifted from their runners. Extra surface mounted patio locks can be fitted to provide additional security and reduce the leverage points.
- ✓ Externally beaded windows should be secured with security clips, security tape or sealant.
- ✓ All ground floor windows and any windows that are easily accessible above ground floor should have key operated window locks, unless they are being used as a fire escape.
- ✓ Window handles should be multi-locking, with shoot bolts into the frame. If not, surface mounted, key operated window locks should be fitted (Warranty permitting) to provide additional security and reduce the leverage points.
- ✓ Louvred window panes should be secured to prevent removal or replaced with a fixed glass panel.

Intruder alarms, patio doors and window security

“Intruder alarms are the best deterrent against burglary”



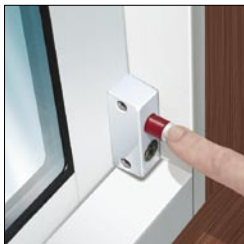
Front active alarm bell box



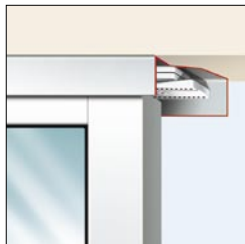
Rear active alarm bell box and security light



Intruder alarm speech dialer



Surface mounted patio door lock



Patio door anti-lift device



Surface mounted key operated window lock

"I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about..."

Doors

- ✓ PVCu and aluminium doors should have multi-locking systems. Additional mortice deadlocks and/or key operated throw bolts can be fitted to provide additional security and reduce the leverage points.
- ✓ Householders should be reminded to lift multi-locking handles and lock with a key, to prevent burglars reaching in through the letterbox to open the door. Internal letterbox shields also prevent car or house keys being fished through the letterbox.
- ✓ Wooden front doors should be solid timber, with a BS 5-lever mortice lock one third of the way up and an automatic deadlocking rim latch one third of the way down.
- ✓ Wooden back doors should be solid timber, with a BS 5-lever mortice lock and two mortice rack bolts.
- ✓ Frames can be reinforced with metal strips called 'London' and 'Birmingham' bars.
- ✓ Hinge bolts should be fitted to outward opening doors.
- ✓ Glass panels in doors should be replaced with laminated glass or reinforced internally with security film or grilles.
- ✓ Door viewers provide good vision and door chains provide a barrier against unwanted callers.



PVCu/aluminium front door



PVCu/aluminium back door



Wooden front door



Wooden back door

Door security

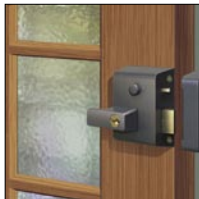
“Consider all the entry points to the building”



Key operated throw bolt



BS 5-lever mortice lock



Automatic deadlocking rim latch



Mortice rack bolt



London/Birmingham bar



Hinge bolt



Door viewer (with intercom)



Letterbox shield

"I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about..."

Securing valuables

- ✓ A safe which has been securely fixed to a solid wall and/or floor reduces the likelihood of important documents, valuables and sentimental items being stolen. Ideally the area should also be alarmed.
- ✓ Property marking and photographing valuables and sentimental items will help to deter burglars and assist police to return them to their rightful owners if they are stolen.
- ✓ Timing switches linked to the lights and a radio will give the impression that a property is occupied.
- ✓ Consider using your loft to place valuable items when on holiday.

Safes, timing switches, property marking and photographing valuables

"Protect valuables and sentimental items"



Keep valuables in a safe



Property mark valuables



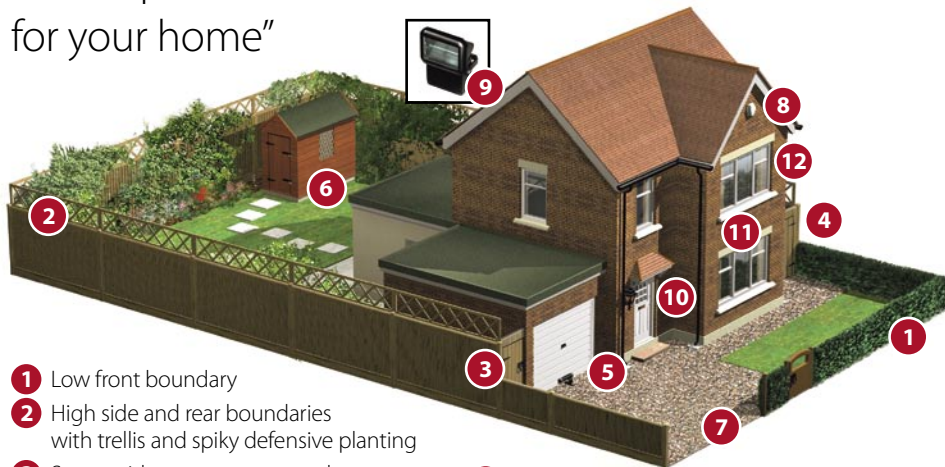
Photograph valuables



Light and radio plugged into a timing switch

Secure house

“Crime prevention recommendations for your home”



- 1** Low front boundary
- 2** High side and rear boundaries with trellis and spiky defensive planting
- 3** Secure side gate, not recessed
- 4** Wheelie bin behind locked side gate
- 5** Secure garage door
- 6** Secure shed door and window
- 7** Gravel driveway and path
- 8** Intruder alarm system
- 9** Security light
- 10** Secure front door
- 11** Closed and locked windows
- 12** Valuables protected

"I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about..."

Street robbery and personal safety

- ✓ Prepare - think about how you're going to get there and back and remember to tell someone where you're going, who you're going with and when you expect to return.
- ✓ Look confident - remember your body language - stand tall and look like you know where you're going. Carry a personal safety alarm and learn how to use it. Also carry emergency phone numbers (including the numbers to cancel your credit cards), some change, a phone card and your keys in a safe pocket.
- ✓ Avoid risks and be aware - keep looking and listening to what's happening around you. Try not to change plans at the last minute, but if you have to, tell someone.
- ✓ Never take safety for granted - don't say to yourself "it only happens to other people," "it's only a short journey" or "they look honest." Trust your instincts - if you feel that something is wrong, it makes sense to avoid it.
- ✓ Avoid short cuts through dark places. Keep away from odd and out-of-the-way places whenever you can.
- ✓ Cross the road if you see people you don't feel comfortable about and be aware of who's around you when you're out and about.
- ✓ Walk in the middle of the pavement facing the traffic, so that cars can't follow you.
- ✓ Mobile phones, MP3 players and laptops are attractive to thieves, so be careful where you use them and be aware of what's happening around you if you are using them.
- ✓ Cover up expensive looking jewellery and wear your bag across your body, so that it opens on the side facing you. In winter, wear your coat over your bag to hide it. You're an easy target if you leave your bag facing backwards over your shoulder or carry it over one shoulder.
- ✓ If you use a wheelchair or motorised scooter, keep your handbag in front of you, rather than hanging it on the back of the chair where thieves can steal it.
- ✓ If somebody does try to take your bag, let it go and don't fight to keep it, you're less likely to be hurt.

“I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about...”

Domestic violence, hate crime and harassment

- ✓ Recognise that it is happening to you - domestic violence and hate crime can happen to anyone, regardless of age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- ✓ Accept that you are not to blame. No one deserves to be assaulted, abused or humiliated. There is no excuse.
- ✓ Plan in advance how you might respond to different scenarios, including crisis situations.
- ✓ Rehearse your escape plan with your children and teach them how to call 999 in an emergency and give their full name, address and telephone number.
- ✓ Keep important telephone numbers with you.
- ✓ Are there any neighbours that you trust? If so, make them aware of what's going on and ask them to call the police if they hear sounds of a violent attack.
- ✓ Pack an emergency bag for yourself and your children and leave it with a trusted friend or relative.
- ✓ If you have a mobile phone, keep it charged and with you at all times. If you don't have a mobile phone, make sure you know where the nearest public phone is.

For more advice go to www.herts.police.uk

“I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about...”

Minicab safety

- ✓ Carry the telephone number of a known and trusted minicab company.
- ✓ Always pre-book a car through a licensed minicab office.
- ✓ When booking, ask for the car and driver details and ensure the driver knows what name it was booked under.
- ✓ Ensure that the car ordered is the one that arrives.
- ✓ Sit in the rear of the vehicle and carry a mobile phone and a personal safety alarm.
- ✓ If you feel threatened, ask the driver to stop in a busy area and get out.
- ✓ Personal safety alarms are designed to shock and disorientate an attacker, giving vital seconds to get away. They are compact and very loud, so that they can be carried discreetly in a pocket or palm of your hand.

Drugs, sex and alcohol

- ✓ ‘No consent, no sex’ - if a woman says no to sex you face serious consequences if you take advantage or force her.
- ✓ Avoid going to a pub, club or party alone, as you are far more vulnerable on your own.
- ✓ Appoint a ‘drinks watcher’ - preferably someone who isn’t drinking alcohol, to ensure that everybody’s drinks in your party are looked after.
- ✓ Be aware of who is around you.
- ✓ Never accept a drink from anyone you don’t know or completely trust.
- ✓ Don’t share or exchange drinks.
- ✓ Don’t leave your drink unattended, even when you’re going to the toilet.
- ✓ Most drugs which could be used to incapacitate you are not easily detectable in a drink.
- ✓ If your drink’s been moved, looks different, appears to have been topped up or has a different taste, then don’t drink it.
- ✓ Consider very carefully whether you should leave the pub, club or party with someone you’ve just met.
- ✓ If you begin to feel really drunk after only a drink or two, seek help from a trusted friend or a member of the club or pub management.
- ✓ Two thirds of all rapes and sexual offences involve alcohol abuse.

"I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about..."

Nuisance phone calls

- ✓ Nuisance phone calls come in many different forms. They can be threatening, abusive, obscene and may include heavy breathing or silence.
- ✓ Don't give out the phone number when answering the phone.
- ✓ Never give personal information out over the phone to an unknown caller.
- ✓ If the call is malicious, try to remain calm as some callers gain pleasure from an emotional response.
- ✓ Don't engage them in conversation, hang up immediately.
- ✓ At the end of the call dial 1471 to see if the caller's number has been recorded. If it has, make a note of it and pass it to the telephone service provider.
- ✓ Report all nuisance calls to the telephone service provider.
- ✓ If the call was abusive or threatening, contact the police.
- ✓ If the calls are persistent, the telephone service provider may suggest putting a trace on the line to gather evidence for the police. The police will require evidence of the nuisance calls before they can make an arrest.
- ✓ Keep a log of all the nuisance calls - including the time, date and details of what was said.
- ✓ Service providers can provide a call barring system.
- ✓ Alternatively, it may be worth changing the phone number.

“I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about...”

Distraction burglary

- ✓ Beware of anyone who says they are in a hurry. If in doubt, call a neighbour or friend.
- ✓ Check to see who is at the door by using your door viewer, or looking through a front window.
- ✓ Always put the chain on before you open the door, as this is a barrier against unwanted callers.
- ✓ There are two checks that you can easily put in place to help verify that a caller claiming to work for one of the utility companies is genuine. All of the utility companies operate password schemes. Contact the customer services department and set up a password with them.
- ✓ Also, make a note of your customer number, which can be found at the top of the utility bill and keep it handy. This number is unique to your household.
- ✓ As added proof of identity, genuine tradespeople should carry an identification card with their photograph on. Check this carefully and keep the chain on.
- ✓ When an unexpected caller claims they work for one of the utility companies, they **must** be able to quote your password and unique customer number and produce an identity card.
- ✓ If you're unsure about the caller's identity, telephone the company the caller claims to represent, but don't rely on them giving you the number as it may be false.
- ✓ Genuine callers won't mind waiting.
- ✓ If you're still unsure, ask the caller to come back later so that you can arrange for a friend or relative to be present.

Not sure, do not open the door

"I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about..."

Bogus traders

- ✓ Don't be forced into making a quick decision on the doorstep.
- ✓ Get at least three quotes from local reputable companies who have reputations to maintain, and if possible seek recommendations.
- ✓ Only deal with firms with genuine verifiable telephone numbers and addresses. Beware of companies that only use mobile phone numbers and accommodation addresses.
- ✓ Anyone who signs a contract on the door step following a visit that was not arranged (unsolicited) does have 7 days in which to cancel it by law. All cancellation rights must be provided in writing to the customer at the time the contract is agreed, (usually on the doorstep). It is an offence not to do so.
- ✓ If you don't want to speak to the trader don't open your door to them. It can be hard to distinguish the good traders from the cowboys; it might be easier to keep the door closed. Do not allow uninvited callers into your home.
- ✓ Refuse to be taken to the bank to withdraw money. If you ever feel intimidated by them, close the door and call the Police.

"I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about..."

Motor vehicle security

- ✓ Thatcham approved alarms and immobilisers are an excellent deterrent.
- ✓ Don't leave anything on display - it's a prime invitation to passers-by. Even an old coat or plastic bag can tempt a thief. If items have to be left in the vehicle, put them out of sight at the start of your journey.
- ✓ Portable 'sat-nav' systems are often held in a cradle attached to the windscreen or dashboard on full view, so take it out of the vehicle and place the cradle out of sight in the boot.
- ✓ Cradles alone indicate to offenders that vehicles have 'sat-nav' systems, so ensure that you remove all traces by wiping off the suction marks from the windscreen.
- ✓ Property mark the 'sat-nav' with your postcode and house name or number. Make a note of the make, model and serial number and register it free of charge on the National Property Register at www.immobilise.com.
- ✓ Do not have HOME shown as a destination in the 'sat-nav'. Consider another reference name.
- ✓ Get a music system that's removable or has a front that can be taken off.
- ✓ Driving documents and personal correspondence could help a thief to sell your vehicle or provide a cover story if stopped by the police - don't keep them in the vehicle.
- ✓ Some thieves break into houses to steal vehicle keys. Always keep the keys in a safe place. Don't leave them in the hallway or kitchen, as these are the obvious places a thief will look.
- ✓ Alloy wheels should be secured with locking wheel nuts, which have been tested to withstand attack and meet Category 4 Thatcham approval.
- ✓ Steering wheel locks, which have been tested to withstand attack and meet Category 3 Thatcham approval, should be applied every time you leave your vehicle.
- ✓ Number plates should be secured with one-way security screws, to prevent them being removed and used in crime.
- ✓ If you have a garage at home, use it. If you don't, try to park in a well lit open place.
- ✓ Look for public car parks that are part of the police approved 'Park Mark' Safer Parking Scheme.

"I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about..."

Pickpockets and handbag thieves

- ✓ Be aware of who's around you when you're shopping. Pickpockets often operate in pairs and use distraction techniques to avert your attention whilst they steal from your bag.
- ✓ Wear your bag across your body, so that it opens on the side facing you. In winter, wear your coat over your bag to hide it. You're an easy target if you leave your bag facing backwards over your shoulder or carry it over one shoulder.
- ✓ Never leave your bag unattended in a shopping trolley or basket or on the back of a pushchair, always keep it with you.
- ✓ Avoid carrying valuables in the outside pockets of rucksacks.
- ✓ If you use a wheelchair or motorised scooter, keep your valuables in front of you, rather than hanging them on the back of the chair where thieves can dip into them.
- ✓ Keep your bag or briefcase where you can see it or feel it - on your lap or touching your feet, not hung on the back of your chair when you're eating or having a drink.
- ✓ Keep your keys in a different pocket from anything that has your address on it.
- ✓ Don't keep the PIN number for your cash card with you. Keep the emergency number to cancel your credit cards with you so that you can phone immediately if you have to.

"I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about..."

Mobile phone security

- ✓ Register mobile phones free of charge at **www.immobilise.com**
- ✓ Keep phones out of sight in a pocket or handbag when not in use.
- ✓ Use the phone's security lock code, if it has one.
- ✓ Report stolen phones to the police immediately.
- ✓ Always keep a record of your mobile phone's unique IMEI/serial number and keep it in a safe place separate from the phone. The 15 digit IMEI number is normally located on a strip behind the battery or can be obtained by pressing ***#06#** to display it on the handset screen. If the phone is stolen, call your provider to ensure that it's blocked across every network immediately.
- ✓ Property mark the phone with a postcode and house name or number to help police identify stolen ones.

"I am now going to give you crime prevention advice about..."

Gun and knife crime

- ✓ Guns and knives are not cool; they do not command respect and you cannot carry a gun or a knife as an excuse to protect yourself.
- ✓ If you carry a gun or knife you could be arrested, go to court, be given a criminal conviction or even end up in custody.
- ✓ The gun or knife could be used against you.
- ✓ If you are with friends and one of them uses a gun or knife against someone and the victim dies, then you too could be charged with murder and sent to prison.
- ✓ It is an offence to have an imitation firearm in a public place. If convicted you could receive six months in prison.
- ✓ BB guns (ball bearing guns) count as imitation firearms.
- ✓ A criminal record will affect your job prospects and could prevent you travelling abroad.

PAGE 8 - BOUNDARY

When you arrive at an address to give home security advice, the first thing to remember is the 'onion peeling principle'.

Start by looking at the front, side and rear boundaries. If you were a burglar, how would you gain access?

Front boundaries define ownership and should allow natural vision from neighbours and passers-by, as the perception is that they are effectively policing the front of the property, whether or not this is actually the case! This makes people acting suspiciously feel more conspicuous.

Some side and rear boundaries back onto alleyways, service roads and driveways, some back onto other gardens. Side gates are often set back from the front building line, which provides a recessed area for burglars to get into and act, without being seen. Burglars often find it easy to make their way to the rear of properties unheard and unseen, by simply walking down open driveways or through open or insecure side gates.

As a rule, rear boundaries tend to be too low or insecure to present any real difficulty to determined burglars, who can garden-hop at will.

PAGE 10 - OUTBUILDINGS

Garages and sheds are vulnerable to burglary, as they are generally quite flimsy structures, but they should not be forgotten. They are often the first places that a burglar will target, because they provide a ready source of tools and implements for breaking into the main house.

Garages and sheds also have lawnmowers, bikes and other valuables that are easy to steal and costly to replace. By fitting additional security to garages and sheds, burglars will find it more difficult to break in and they will have to make more noise doing so. A few simple security measures can increase the visual deterrent and reduce the likelihood of garages and sheds being targeted.

PAGE 12 - BUILDING

Some people think that an intruder alarm system advertises that you have something worth stealing. This is not the case; alarms are the best deterrent against burglary. Remember, burglars do not want to be seen or heard; time and noise are their enemies.

The alarm industry is governed by inspectorate bodies similar to the 'Gas Safe Register' who oversee the gas industry. By choosing a company affiliated to one of the recognised inspectorate bodies such as 'NSI' (National Security Inspectorate) or 'SSAIB' (Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board), it guarantees that they have met the high standards and business ethics required to be members.

There are three different types of alarm system response:

1. A monitored system which provides a police response - if the alarm is activated it signals to the alarm receiving centre who will contact the keyholders and the police. The alarm company will charge an ongoing fee for this facility, on top of the initial installation.
2. Speech dialer - if the alarm is activated, the system dials out to a selection of pre-programmed keyholder telephone numbers (not 999) to alert the recipient. The alarm company will charge a one-off purchase price for the speech dialer, on top of the alarm installation.
3. Audible only system - if the alarm is activated, it will sound, but relies on neighbours and passers-by to respond.

All alarm systems must stop sounding and re-arm themselves after 20 minutes.

DIY systems are also available, but are not eligible for a police response.

An alarm company will usually fit an active alarm bell box at the front of the building (which has a sounder and a flashing light) and a dummy bell box at the rear. Owing to the fact that most burglaries occur at the rear of the premises, it is good practice to recommend that the householder has an active alarm bell box at the rear as well. This will ensure that if a burglar compromises the rear boundary security, they will clearly see that the premises is alarmed, no matter what time of day or night.

Good lighting can be an excellent deterrent against burglary, but the right lighting has to fit the right circumstances.

Security lights that operate by heat and movement sensors, are often activated by small animals, so can increase the fear of crime. Having said that, they can be a useful addition to the front of a house, so that the lights are activated when visitors approach the front door or the householder is returning home at night.

The more appropriate option for the rear of a property is a low wattage security light that activates by photoelectric cell, automatically switching on as it gets dark at night and switching off as it gets light in the morning. They are commonly referred to as 'dusk until dawn' security lights.

Most newer patio doors have multi-locking mechanisms, but extra surface mounted patio locks and an anti-lift device to prevent them being lifted from their runners can be added to older doors, to provide additional security and reduce the leverage points.

Windows are a common point of entry. Burglars tend to either force them open, remove the external beading or reach in through smaller fan light windows to open larger windows.

Ideally, windows should be internally beaded to prevent the glazed units being removed, however external beading is sufficient if the glazed units have been secured in place with either security clips, security tape or sealant. Window handles should operate shoot bolts into the frame to provide more than one locking point. If multi-locking handles aren't fitted, surface mounted, key operated window locks will provide additional security and reduce the leverage points.

All ground floor windows and any windows that are easily accessible above ground floor, should be made secure and have key operated window locks, unless they are being used as a fire escape.

Louvred windows are particularly vulnerable, as the individual panes can be removed from the frame. The panes should be secured in place with sealant or totally replaced with a fixed glass panel.

Internal fixed or collapsible security grilles can be used to protect vulnerable windows.

If windows are being replaced, the recommended standard for enhanced window security is British Standard BS7950.

PAGE 14 - BUILDING

If your front, rear and side doors are insecure, so is your home. It is also important to ensure that the frame is strong and well fixed, not weak or rotten.

If doors are being replaced, the recommended standard for enhanced door security is British Standard BS PAS 24, which incorporates the door and frame as a 'door set'.

PVCu and aluminium front doors should have multi-locking systems, if not, additional deadlocks can usually be fitted retrospectively. It is important to advise that the householder lifts the multi-locking handle and locks it with a key, to prevent burglars reaching in through the letterbox to open the door.

Wooden front doors should be solid timber, a minimum 44mm thick, supported by three 100mm hinges, a British Standard 5-lever mortice lock fitted about a third of the way up the door and an automatic deadlocking rim latch, about a third of the way down.

The frame can be strengthened on the inside by fitting metal strips ('London' and 'Birmingham' bars) to support the locks and hinges. If the front door opens outwards, fit hinge bolts to reinforce the hinges.

Glass panels in the door can be reinforced with security film, fixed diamond mesh grilles or replaced with laminated glass.

Door viewers allow householders to see who is at the door without having to open it first and door chains provide a barrier against callers.

An internal letterbox shield will prevent intruders fishing through the letterbox to open the door or for keys to the house or vehicles parked on the driveway.

PVCu and aluminium rear doors should have multi-locking systems, if not, additional internal surface mounted locking throw bolts should be fitted to the top and bottom of the door to reduce the leverage points.

Wooden rear doors should be solid timber, a minimum 44mm thick, supported by three 100mm hinges, and fitted with a British Standard 5-lever mortice lock and two mortice rack bolts towards the top and bottom. The frame can be strengthened on the inside by fitting metal strips (2 x 'Birmingham' bars) to support the locks and hinges. Hinge bolts will also reinforce the hinges on outward opening doors.

French doors may be made of wood, metal, PVCu or aluminium. PVCu and aluminium doors should have multi-locking systems, but if not, additional internal surface mounted locking throw bolts should be fitted to the top and bottom of each of the doors. Mortice rack bolts should be fitted to the top and bottom of wooden doors to support the British Standard 5-lever mortice lock. Hinge bolts will reinforce the hinges on outward opening doors.

PAGE 16 - PROPERTY

Burglars very rarely come equipped to deal with safes that are fitted to solid floors and/or solid walls with the correct fixings. A safe will reduce the likelihood of important documents, valuables and sentimental items being stolen if the household is burgled.

It's important to leave lights on if you are not returning until late afternoon or early evening, particularly during the Autumn and Winter months. Timing switches linked to the lights, normally two downstairs and one upstairs, and a radio tuned to a talk station, will give the impression that the house is occupied.

Property mark valuables with the postcode and house name or number, to assist with identification and register all property with **www.immobilise.com**.

This can be done with an ultra violet pen or with a specialist marking kit, such as a purpose made stencil with etching liquid, a unique chemical trace liquid or microdot system.

Photographs of stolen objects greatly improve the chances of recovery. Concentrate on what makes this object unique or identifiable. Indicate the object's size and dimensions by placing a ruler next to small items, or writing down the measurements. Try to use a plain dark background and avoid patterned wallpaper or carpet.

PAGE 18 - STREET ROBBERY & PERSONAL SAFETY

Violent crimes committed by strangers in public places account for a very low proportion of recorded crime, but nevertheless there are still measures that will dramatically reduce these crimes even further.

Most people already take simple precautions as part of their everyday lives, without realising it. Staying safe is all about anticipating potential problems by listening and being aware of what and who's around you, and knowing what action to take to stay out of danger. Don't be frightened to trust your instincts. If something doesn't feel right, take action to avoid it.

PAGE 19 - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, HATE CRIME & HARASSMENT

Domestic violence is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been in a relationship together, or between family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Whatever form it takes, domestic violence is rarely a one-off incident. More usually it's a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour through which the abuser seeks power over their victim.

Hate crime is any incident where someone commits a crime against you or your property because of your age, colour, sex, race, national origin, religion, sexual identity or disability. Being a victim of this kind of crime can be a particularly frightening experience as you have been victimised because of who you are, or who or what your attacker thinks you are. It can take place anywhere - at home, in the streets, and at work, schools and colleges. Incidents can include threats, verbal abuse, arson, robbery, violence towards you and damage to your property. There are a range of organisations that can offer support and guidance.

PAGE 20 - MINICAB SAFETY & DRUG RAPE

Minicab operators are now licensed and cannot stop in public places to offer their services. They can only legally carry passengers who have booked them in advance. Illegal and unlicensed minicabs can be death traps. Passengers don't know who they are getting in with or what the driver's motives are.

Drug assisted sexual assault or rape occurs when someone gives a drug against a person's knowledge or wishes in order to disorientate or incapacitate them, so that they can carry out a sexual assault.

PAGE 21 - NUISANCE PHONE CALLS

Nuisance phone calls come in many different forms. They are an invasion of privacy and can be threatening, abusive or obscene and may include heavy breathing or silence.

They may be random calls by pranksters or targeted calls by people known or not known to the victim, who intend to cause upset or intimidation, for revenge, anger or humour.

PAGE 22 - DISTRACTION BURGLARY

Most callers are genuine, but some aren't. Burglars won't go to the trouble of breaking in if they can just knock and be invited in. So always be on guard when unexpected visitors - men, women or even children - turn up at the door.

Occasionally some callers will pretend to be on official business from utility companies such as Gas, Electricity and Water - or the Council. They may pretend to be tradespeople or workpeople who are calling to carry out urgent repairs or may claim that they have lost something in your back garden.

PAGE 23 - BOGUS TRADERS

Bogus traders operating door to door will often take advantage of poor weather conditions, including flooding and high winds, which may have caused damage to your property, to offer their services. Otherwise they may try and point out 'problems' that don't actually exist. Such traders can be extremely persuasive and elderly and vulnerable people are often targeted. Low prices are quoted, but as the work starts the price tends to rise.

The work will normally be done immediately, before the householder changes their mind, and very often any information provided by the workmen, names, addresses, and telephone numbers are false, making them very hard to trace.

In most cases the work is done to a very poor standard, leaving the owner facing a second bill to have the work done properly. They use a variety of 'sales pitches' to get you to agree to having work done. These include:

- suggesting that the property, if not repaired, will be dangerous and may cause additional problems to the structure of your home.
- putting a time restriction on the offer to hurry you into making a decision.

PAGE 24 - MOTOR VEHICLE SECURITY

Most vehicle crime is preventable. Police are making a concerted effort to tackle vehicle crime and target offenders, but motorists need to help themselves avoid becoming victims by removing the opportunity for crime in the first place.

Many people are aware of the frustration and inconvenience caused when a vehicle is broken into and to make matters worse, having to find alternative transport and losing no claims discounts, make it a very costly affair.

Thatcham are an independent motor vehicle security testing centre. Good security acts as a deterrent by slowing a thief down and increasing his/her chances of being seen or heard.

PAGE 25 - PICKPOCKETS & HANDBAG THIEVES

Pickpockets and handbag thieves often operate in pairs in busy places. It is therefore important to always be aware of your surroundings and the people nearby.

Cafes, restaurants, pubs, clothes and shoe shops are places where people tend to be careless with their bags.

PAGE 26 - MOBILE PHONE SECURITY

As many as 10,000 mobile phones are stolen every month. Two thirds of the victims are aged between 13 and 16 and have their phones taken from them by force. Many phones are also stolen from unattended cars.

The 15-digit IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identity) number is unique to each phone and is considered a vital crime prevention tool, as it enables service providers to bar mobile phones across all networks.

PAGE 27 - GUN & KNIFE CRIME

Some young people carry guns or knives to get respect, to look cool or to protect themselves. But young people are carrying guns and knives without thinking about the consequences, which includes being scarred for life, maimed or even killed.

If a person carrying a gun or a knife gets into an argument, they are more likely to use it. The gun or knife they brought to look after themselves could get them into a lot more trouble. Before they know it, they could have shot or stabbed someone or the gun or knife could have been taken and used against them.

Hertfordshire Home Safety and Security Service

Securing your home and peace of mind

The Home Safety and Security Service (HHSS) provides expert advice on how to stay safe and secure in your home. The service includes the fitting of security measures like locks, door chains, spy-holes and smoke alarms.

The service, including labour and materials, is **free of charge** if the person is an actual or potential home burglary victim in one or more of the following categories:

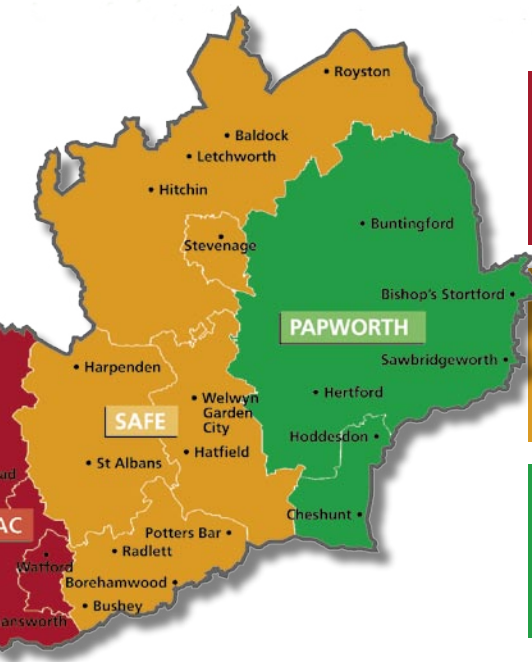
- ✓ **Those aged 60 or over**
- ✓ **Single parents**
- ✓ **Vulnerable or housebound**

Labour is provided **free** to all other users, but a donation is requested or charge made to cover the cost of materials.

How to contact us:

All HHSS services are run across the county, by three different service providers depending on where the work is done. Please contact the relevant operator for yourself, your family or your friends. It may be the call that brings security and peace of mind to yourself or somebody you care for.





Dacorum, Three Rivers, Watford

WHAC (West Herts Against Crime)
Lemarie Centre, 524 St Albans Road,
Watford, Herts, WD24 7WF

Tel: 01923 801138

Hertsmere, St Albans, Welwyn, Hatfield,
Stevenage and North Herts

SAFE

126 Great North Rd, Hatfield, Herts, AL9 5JZ

Tel: 01707 255711

Broxbourne, East Herts

Papworth Trust Home Solutions,
Office Number One, Unit 2, Woodside,
Bishop's Stortford, Herts, CM23 5RG

Tel: 01279 755905

Useful web addresses for officers

Hertfordshire Constabulary www.herts.police.uk

Home Office Crime Reduction
www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk

**National Policing Improvement Agency
(Good Practice Guidance)** www.genesis.pnn.police.uk

Consumer Direct www.consumerdirect.gov.uk

National Mobile Property Register www.nmpr.com

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CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111

'Safety, Justice and Reassurance'