

5 MAY 2010

## **HART CRIMESTOPPERS BULLETIN**

The Police are issuing crime prevention advice to homeowners and drivers in rural areas. This follows a spate of breaks-ins to sheds, outbuildings and garages, and also thefts of property from vehicles parked in beauty spot car parks during the past month especially during the slightly improved weather.

Please consider reviewing the security of your homes and outbuildings. Use an appropriate level of security for the value of what is being stored. For example something more substantial than a low cost padlock would be needed to protect a sit-on lawnmower worth more than £1000.

Motorists should think carefully when they leave their vehicle unattended. Always lock the vehicle and remove all property from inside. Don't just hide it in the boot; someone could be watching you store your valuables then break in when you are out of sight.

Further ideas are;

- Don't leave valuable property in a shed which is either unlocked or so run-down that it is no obstacle to a thief.
- Fit decent locks to your shed door. Padlocks used externally should be no less than 6cm wide and made of hardened steel. A closed shackle type is best as thieves cannot get a crowbar through the shackle.
- If you have a garage, don't be fooled into thinking it is more secure than a shed. Make sure a suitable lock is fitted and a shed alarm or similar is installed. Many up-and-over style garage doors are easily broken into but a padlock with a hasp and staple on the inside is an effective way of improving security.
- Don't leave anything in your car – if it's not there, then it can't be stolen!
- Thieves aren't picky, so don't even leave low value items – often thieves will smash and grab first and look later to see if what they've stolen is valuable. It might only be your children's damp and, by now, very smelly swimming costumes, forgotten in the car for the past month, but will still entice a thief!
- Don't even leave it for a minute – it only takes a thief a few seconds to smash a window and get what they want, so don't take the chance. Cars may be very high tech now, but glass will still break just as easily as it ever has!
- It's not safe on your driveway – nearly half of all incidents where items are stolen from cars happen when they are parked overnight, close to the owner's home.

If you've information about any crime, please call Crimestoppers on 0800 555111, or log on to [www.mostwanted-uk.org](http://www.mostwanted-uk.org) Your call is free, no one will know you called and you may earn a cash reward.