

Burglaries in the Dales has seen a small increase recently, so we have out together this newsletter to help our communities protect yourselves around this issue...

Starting from the beginning...

Most burglars are opportunist, and they are unlikely to target a specific house – they seek out the easiest option where, minimum effort is used and will get the most rewards. For example, vacant properties – those on holidays, in hospital, or have passed away. Criminals will weigh up their risk of getting caught and how long it will take them to carry out the crime without drawing any attention to themselves. They will even consider is it is risky to handle/sell on any stolen property due to the risks it may have. For example, high value tools that have been security marked (engraved) with some personal details will be tricky to sell on as those marks will have to be removed which puts a lot of suspicion around the provenance of the items. Or if you have pictures of your jewellery or special items ensure they are dated and registered at UK Property Register.

Good home security increases the criminal's risk of being caught, so looking at it at the perspective of the criminal are you making it difficult for them to choose your house as their prize? Have they got to spend time breaking into your property, and is it easy to find/steal property quickly (think about where you keep those special/high value items – make sure they are not on show when not in use)? When assessing your property look at each layer – fencing/boundaries, garages/shed, doors/windows, alarms, CCTV and internal security. This does not mean that you have to do everything we suggest, it is more a guideline to consider securing your property.

Recommended websites to use...

Derbyshire Alert (free messages from us): <https://www.derbyshirealert.co.uk>

Neighbourhood Watch – join with your neighbours to build a safer community: <https://www.derbyshireneighbourhoodwatch.co.uk>

The UK National Property Register – a free site to register your valuables and improve your chances of getting them back if lost or stolen: <https://www.immobilise.com>

A real-time search tool presenting data from mobile networks, insurers and retailers: <https://thenmpr.com/home>

Products tested to reduce crime
- <https://www.soldsecure.com>


Official Police security initiative
- <https://www.securedbydesign.com>

Find a Locksmith
- <https://www.locksmiths.co.uk>

DCC Trusted Trader
- <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/community/trusted-trader>

Alarms - <https://www.nsi.org.uk>

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Fencing and Boundaries of your property...



Rear boundaries – walls, fences and hedges at the side, front and the rear of properties should be high - at least 1.8 metres. So that access to those opportunists is kept to a minimum. Using prickly climbing shrubs along wall trellis can make it harder to climb into back gardens, examples are Berberis, and climbing roses.

Lock any gates surrounding your property – keep them locked when not in use, even during the day if this is an option – for example keep it unlocked if you are expecting family/friends or a delivery. An open gate is the perfect excuse to walk in and check security measures you may have around your garden.


Shared access – shared garden access points can be a risk in allowing unsecured access along the side and backs of multiple houses. They are best communally secured by a gate in view of the street. Or use a padlock with a pass code on that all residents know the code.

Lighting – around the house would prevent offenders from hiding in darkened areas.

Good visibility – ensure that neighbours & passers-by have some view into your front garden/yard area – leaving limited areas for opportunist burglars to hide. Sometimes if something wrong is happening, it can be reported at the time or told during house-to-house enquiries. Ideally boundaries at the front of your property should be kept no higher than one metre.

Pathways – gravel driveways/paths will crunch when walked on – so acts as a deterrent as thieves will find it harder to move around houses without being heard. Solar/electric lights can be a big help too as it creates shadows - deterring thieves or opportunists.

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Garages & Sheds...

Locks – If the door to the shed is solid core wood and at least 44mm thick, it can be secured with a mortice deadlock.

The lock should conform to the **BS 3621 kitemark**.

Secure sheds – a small number of specialists, security rated sheds are available – however can be a little expensive. These are useful though to store more expensive tools, bicycles and sometimes there is a little room for your vehicles in there.

These garages give you the opportunity to be able put further security measures in, for example putting in cycle racks to double secure them will deter any thief as it isn't easy to remove.

Wooden sheds – most of these are not as secure as a brick built one, so it is advised not to keep valuable equipment in them. If you do, ensure that you have a good padlock such as a hasp and staple bolted through or fixed with non-return security screws, and secured with a padlock.

You may also want to consider shed alarms – as these will stop thieves in their tracks due to the noise.

Securing items – as mentioned before expensive items can be chained to securing rings bolted to concrete floor or masonry walls and using an engraver to security mark them permanently, along with photos uploading them to the National Property Register.

Tool Marking...

We offer security marking for **FREE** – it's in the form of engraving this can be on tools, mobility scooters and any hard/tough surfaces and bicycle marking through BikeRegister. Please email MNT@derbyshire.police.uk if you wish us to visit and security mark your property.



Mortice deadlock




Hasp and staple



secure rings and chains

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Windows & Doors...

Doors and windows are the point of entry for those opportunist burglars – these are the most important areas for target hardening when considering where to put that extra security measure in, as well as considering the means of escape in the event of a fire.

Doors and windows come in various materials such as wooden, composite, UPVC, toughened glass, laminated glass, window films etc... We recommend that doors and windows are certified to BS PAS 24 2016, which is the complete security standards for them, and conforms to building regulations for new and extended houses (but does not hold the standard to test window glazing).

Here are a few examples...

Wooden doors are still in common use and depending on the type of wood used, afford a reasonable level of security.

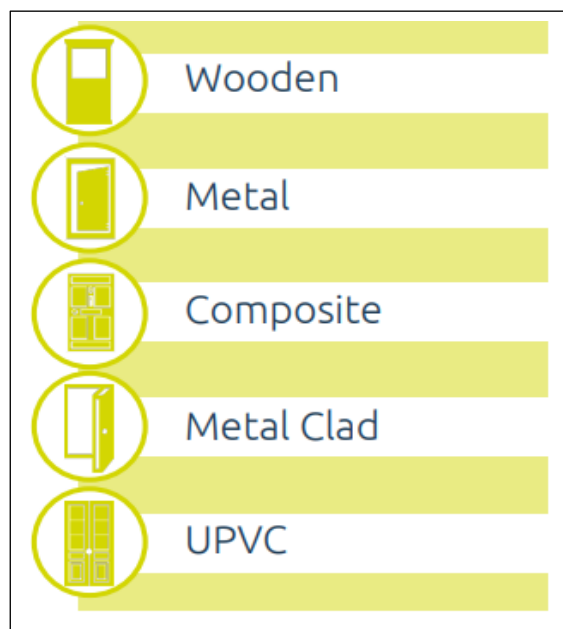
Composite doors take their name from the composite materials that make up the inside of the door.

There are slight variations, but most high-quality composite doors comprise of a timber outer skin and is hung in a UPVC steel reinforced frame. Meaning that it is harder for thieves to break in.

UPVC doors are commonly found in residential dwellings and businesses.

Toughened or tempered glass is a type of safety glass that is processed by controlled thermal or chemical treatments to increase its strength compared to normal glass. When it is broken, it crumbles into small granular chunks instead of splintering into jagged shards. This is the standard fitting for most new windows.

Security window film – this is a 2-ply film which is directly applied to existing glass. Its main purpose is to create a barrier, delaying smash and grab break-ins or break-ins in general. It also offers Police valuable time to apprehend the offender.



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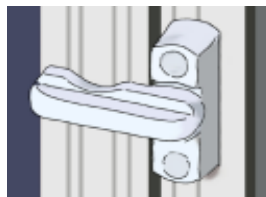
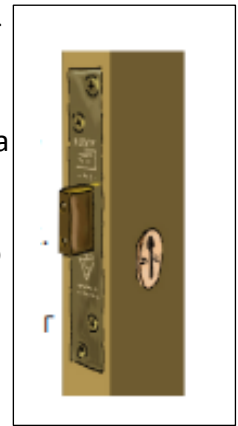
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Locks...

Using security rated PAS 24 doors are usually fitted with an in-line locking system of hooks, cams and a cylinder lock. But other options are...


- Mortice deadlocks which are cut into the door and are usually used in timber doors.
- Rim Lock are fitted to the inside of the door and released from the inside by a thumb catch and use a key externally.
- Window sash jammers or chains are a little bit retro but add extra security to windows and doors.
- Adding letter plate security cowl – this can prevent offenders reaching through the letter box to grab keys, or open latches.



Removing anything that an offender can use to assist in committing the offence...

- Open windows/unlocked doors – the most common method of entry – in almost 30% of domestic burglaries are accessed via an open window. Ensure that these are locked or on the “Night Lock” if you are going out of your home for some time or if you are going to sleep.
- Flat roofs, wheelie bins under windows, ladders left outside, etc... All provide a criminal with a means of entry which otherwise may be too difficult – put them either away or places that makes it difficult to move!
- Removing that opportunity - lock away all tools, or items that could assist them to break in – let’s not give them that opportunity.

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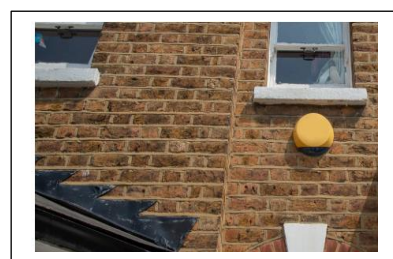
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Alarms & CCTV...

Alarms & CCTV can provide excellent security for your home and does come in many different forms, so it is best to do some research which is best for you!

Here are the three main types of alarm that you will come across...


- Audible Only Alarm Systems – this will sound externally, alerting neighbours or passers-by, also deterring the opportunist.
- Remotely Monitored – These systems, in addition to sounding an external siren, also send a telephone signal to a monitoring station, by landline, GSM signal or both.
- Auto-Dialling – in addition to sounding an external siren, these systems will also alert pre-programmed keyholders with a phone call or text.



CCTV can be a minefield, however when choosing a domestic, “plug and play” CCTV system, consider...

- The system must be designed to operate in low light levels, particularly at night.
- A robust and completely weatherproof casing design is essential.
- Choose a system with a maximum storage capacity and ease of playback/exporting to other devices.
- Choose a system that has a high-quality image – especially in low level lighting.
- Consider siting cameras so they do not have a field of view of the neighbour’s property or view areas that are not the homeowner’s private property.
- A visible CCTV sign will warn offenders that they are being watched.

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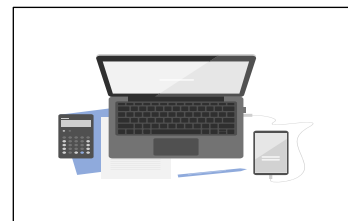
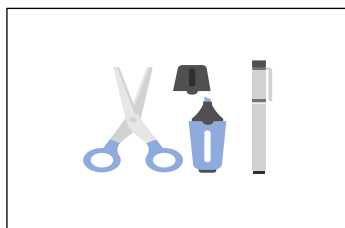
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Property Marking...

There are many different types of property marking and it can be an inexpensive crime prevention tool (especially when your Safer Neighbourhood Team can assist for free). It makes property difficult for thieves to dispose of and may provide good evidence in the event of prosecution.

- Lists and photographs should be kept up to date regularly and kept with your insurance policy. When recording valuable items, make sure you are recording their make, models and serial number (where applicable).
- Inscribing or etching the item makes a permanent visible mark – it is recognised nationally to write your postcode and house number. (Don't forget we have an etching tool available to use to do this).
- Ultra-violet markings can be used to compliment inscribing and isn't visible to the naked eye unless exposed to a UV light. But they will fade over time and can be removed – so its best to use this as a temporary measure.




Lighting and Visibility...

Good lighting, inside and out your property can help prevent offenders from hiding in dark corners or parts of your home.

- It is useful to be able to give the appearance of somehow being at home by using lights operated by timers, (especially if you are out). There are lots of new technologies that allow you to switch lights on and off remotely or you can stick to a traditional timer switch.
- Having low intensity lighting which illuminates a large area, rather than a high intensity light which may result in dark shadows – will deter thieves as they are not able to hide in the shadows.
- Keeping valuables out of sight – especially when they are not being used. In particular near windows.

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