

Grow Your Own Security

West Mercia Police is urging green-fingered residents to help it weed out garden crime by reviewing and improving their garden and shed security. Although we are in a low-crime area, around 1,500 shed burglaries occur across the force area every year, with the spring time having a seasonal spike.

Many people leave expensive equipment in poorly secured sheds and garages, which are easy pickings for the opportunist thief. Later this month, thousands of seed packets will be distributed, packed not only with seeds but also loads of good advice on how to protect your garden equipment.

Most of the measures that you can take are quite simple. For example, if you have expensive lawnmowers and power tools, don't leave them in a shed when you could put them in a brick-built garage with better locks and security.

If you do want to increase the security around your shed, you can ensure you have a good padlock, hasp and staple on the door and that hinges don't have the screws showing - otherwise they'll remove the screws and hinges to open the door. You can also consider purchasing a small shed alarm which will activate, either on the opening of the door or on detecting movement in the shed. These are reasonably cheap and found in DIY stores.

You can also use plants to protect your belongings. Consider using thorny hedging and prickly plants to deter burglars from entering the property and getting close to windows or drainpipes. Good external lighting can also put thieves off, who prefer not to be seen.

Don't give thieves a helping hand either. Make sure tools and other valuable items are locked away and not left lying around the garden. Ensure ladders are locked up and not handy for criminal to make use of. You can also property-mark your items, either by putting your postcode on them by etching or using paint or consider using a UV pen or UV chemical solution such as Smartwater or SelectaDNA.

Leaflets entitled "Tips To Nip Garden Crime In The Bud" will shortly be available from your local policing teams or at selected garden centres around the county. The brochure will be very useful advice on how to reduce garden and shed crime and keep your property even safer.



Are You A Special Case?

Do you have a few hours a week to spare? Would you like to give something back to the community and help ensure that Herefordshire remains a safe place to live and work?

Then consider joining the Special Constabulary. You are required to work just four hours a week and we'll give you all the training you require and a uniform. In return, you'll get to feel a real sense of purpose, meet some really interesting people and see life in Herefordshire as not many other people have the opportunity of doing. If you'd like to know more, please ring 01905 747174 for a chat or click on the force website at www.westmercia.police.uk/specials/. (Don't forget the last forward-slash!)



HAVE YOUR SAY!

PACT stands for Partners and Communities Together. It gives you the chance to tell your local policing team and partners about the issues that are causing concern within your neighbourhood and which ones you want us to deal with as a priority.

The current priorities for your area are:

- Goods vehicles over 7.5 tons driving through Holme Lacy Village.
- Persons driving whilst using mobile phones.

Your next PACT events are:

- 7-30pm 12/04/10 Saxon Hall, Lower Bullingham.
- 7-30pm 14/04/10 Kingstone Village Hall.
- 7-00pm 13/05/10 Much Birch Village Hall.

Results

- A 19yr old male and a 26yr old male were arrested at Grafton for going equipped to steal. They have been charged for offences in Powys and are on police bail for offences in Hereford.
- A 19yr old male from Kingstone was arrested for Affray, but was released without charge when the allegation was not substantiated.
- A 50yr old female from Kingstone was arrested for breach of the peace. She was released without charge the following day.
- A 68yr old male from Peterstow was given a fixed penalty notice (£60 3 points), for exceeding the speed limit on the A49 Much Birch.

Crime Trends

- Catalytic converters have been stolen from vehicles at garage premises at Callow. The offenders have been using pipe cutters to remove the items. When taken from the vehicles they usually target 4x4's as they are easier to get under.
- Catalytic converters have also been stolen from garage premises at Orcop. The value of scrap metal is starting to creep back up which makes it more attractive to steal.
- A heifer was stolen sometime between January and the end of March from a farm yard at Wormbridge.

Local Police Officer

PC 799

Andrew Bundy

Mobile **07855 385 844**

Community Support Officers

CSO 6173

Fiona Witcher

Mobile **07779 141 232**

CSO 6993

Kevin Powell

Mobile **07779 141 232**

E-mail

herefordruralsouth.lpt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Answer phone

01432 346756

Animal and Wildlife crime

Within the last month there have been reports of both sheep worrying and wildlife crime in the area. At Dinedor a number of sheep were killed and others injured by dogs which had been left to roam on their own. This is quite distressing for the farmer and also has financial consequences. Remember that if you allow your dog to roam and it is seen attacking sheep, the farmer has the right to shoot the dog.

In the Golden Valley area there have been reports of Buzzards being shot, this is an offence under the Wildlife Act. If you see any incidents of this nature please report them to the police.

