

## **Lights, locks and leave as clocks go back**

As the clocks go back this weekend and the nights get darker, Suffolk police is urging the public to increase their vigilance around home and vehicle security.

To prevent the seasonal increase in burglaries and theft from motor vehicles, the force is encouraging householders and motorists to follow some simple crime prevention advice to keep their property safe. They are being encouraged to follow the 'lights, locks and leave' process.

Residents should avoid leaving their homes unlit in the evenings for example, as a house in darkness is more likely to attract the attentions of burglars. Vehicles should also ideally be parked in a well-lit and secure place.

Making sure your doors and windows are locked can be a deterrent for an intruder. Many burglaries are opportunistic crimes, where the offender has identified an open window or insecure door and easily let themselves into your home.

The force over the past six weeks seen nearly 60 offences in rural locations across the county and are in the main non-dwelling and business burglaries whereby power tools, machinery and quadbikes have been taken.

Residents are advised to perform the following four simple checks: check vehicles, shut windows, lock doors and check outbuildings.

Inspector Mark Jackson said: "Many people only think about home security after they have been burgled. We want to encourage people to review this before they fall victim to crime.

"There are a lot of simple things you can do, which don't have to be expensive, such as using a timer so that a light automatically comes on at a time of your choosing when you're not there."

Further to this, Suffolk police is reminding the public to take care in what they share on social media. Virtual indicators can be just as dangerous as physical

ones. Refrain from advertising you are away on holiday, or 'checking in' to places. Absent occupants should limit knowledge of their house being empty.

Insp Jackson added: "Even if you think only your friends can see your posts, you don't know who they are friends with and who might know them. Always keep your accounts private and consider posting holiday photos once you return home."

Those that live in an area previously targeted by thieves or those who are planning to increase their home security could also consider installing smart technology such as a doorbell camera.

People are also asked to consider, where possible, the fitting of good quality locks/alarms – the [Secured By Design](#) website is police accredited and contains lots of useful advice.

We encourage people to photograph valuable items and to register via [Immobilise](#) - this is a national property register and this then enables police to identify recovered property if stolen and return to rightful owners, and it is free to use.

Suffolk's Police and Crime Commissioner, Tim Passmore, said: "As the days get shorter and the evenings draw in, we should all be a little more aware of our home security and take a few extra steps to keep our homes and property safe.

"The constabulary's advice is easy to follow and could make a real a difference. Many burglars are opportunistic, looking for easy pickings; we need to make sure those opportunities are not available in Suffolk."

If you notice any suspicious activity or believe a crime to be in progress you are urged to call the police immediately on 999. If you feel that you have information about crimes being committed, you can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

A large amount of advice and guidance on home and rural security can be found on our [website](#).

The clocks go back one hour this weekend at 2am on Sunday 31 October.

**[First Principle security advice can be found here](#)**