

# Home security Information booklet

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**safer**

Safe Durham Partnership



[www.durham.gov.uk/homesecurity](http://www.durham.gov.uk/homesecurity)

## Home security

County Durham is a safe place to live. Burglary levels across County Durham are low.

You can help to keep it that way. Here are some things you can do to keep your home safe:

- Always lock your doors when you go out, even if you are only 'popping out' for a short time. Burglary is quick - most thieves take less than 5 minutes to break in
- Fit good quality locks to your doors and windows
- Install a burglar alarm
- Most importantly - after you have fitted all your security devices use them, the most expensive lock doesn't stop a burglar if it isn't locked!
- When you are out make your home look like there's someone in, use timer switches on the lights and leave a radio on
- Keep an eye on your neighbour's property and ask them to do the same for you
- Always keep keys in a safe place, away from windows and doors
- Join a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. If there isn't one in your area think about starting one

- Mark valuable items with a UV pen or a permanent marker. Add your postcode and house number or the first two letters of your house name so the police can return your property to you if it's stolen and found



## Bogus callers

Burglaries are sometimes committed by doorstep callers who call and offer services or skills. These criminals are most commonly known as bogus callers or distraction burglars. Some bogus callers may pretend to be from water, gas or electric companies or work contractors.

If anyone calls at your door when you don't expect them ask to see their identification and keep the chain on the door while you look at it. If in doubt do not let them in. Use the doorstep code on the back of this leaflet.

## Shed security

Many people go to a great deal of trouble securing their house but leave expensive property in a shed. There is an increase in the number of thefts from garden sheds in summer months but you can help to prevent this by:

- Making sure that your shed is in good condition
- Fit a good lock on your shed door. The fitting should be bolted through the door of the shed and reinforced at the back with a steel plate
- Fit any windows with a grille
- Security mark property such as lawnmowers and garden furniture
- Never leave items unattended in the garden, even if you are just popping into the house
- If you leave items such as pedal cycles in your shed make sure they are security marked and secure them to the inside wall of the building
- Install a 'Dusk till Dawn' security light to light up your garden



## Going on holiday

Make sure your home looks like someone is in. If you can, ask a relative, a trusted friend or neighbour to look after your house while you are away. Ask them to open and close your curtains and collect your mail. You should also:

- Use an automatic timer-switch to turn your lights on when it goes dark
- Cancel deliveries such as newspapers or milk
- Cut the lawn before you go so it doesn't look overgrown while you are away
- Leave important documents and valuable items with other family members or a bank or lock them in a safe
- Close all internal doors and unplug all electrical items not in use
- If you have a burglar alarm, make sure it is set
- Make sure all valuables are out of sight
- Lock all external doors and windows
- Lock all side or back gates

## Doorstep code

Don't open your door to unexpected callers. Use the doorstep code:

- Always put the security chain on the door before opening it
- Ask the caller who they are and where they are from
- Ask to see some form of identification
- Check with the company who they claim to be from, using a telephone number from the telephone directory
- If you have any doubts tell the caller to make an appointment and call back at a more convenient time. Genuine callers understand and will be happy to comply with these arrangements

**Remember** - You do not have to let a stranger into your home - even if they claim it is an emergency



## Useful contacts

### Durham County Council

[www.durham.gov.uk/crimeprevention](http://www.durham.gov.uk/crimeprevention)

[www.durham.gov.uk/homesecurity](http://www.durham.gov.uk/homesecurity)

☎03000 26 00 00

### Durham Constabulary

[www.durham.police.uk](http://www.durham.police.uk)

☎101 (non-emergency)

### Crimestoppers

[www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

☎0800 555 111

### County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service

[www.ddfire.co.uk](http://www.ddfire.co.uk)

☎0845 305 8383

### Victim Care and Advice Service

[www.victimcareandadvice.service.uk](http://www.victimcareandadvice.service.uk)

☎0303 0401 099

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