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# Criminals leave coded signs to mark out burglary targets

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A criminal gang has been leaving chalk marks outside homes in Empingham to share information about possible burglary targets.

Police officers have received reports of markings appearing on roads and walls outside homes in several of the village streets.

Police believe they are coded messages between members of a criminal gang, sharing information about whether a home is a worthwhile burglary target.

Residents who find the markings outside their homes are urged not to worry, as some often mean the home is not worth targeting, but they should contact Rutland police immediately.

Sergeant Helen Lodge said: "We are aware that these markings are used by members of a criminal fraternity to identify vulnerable properties or any which are worth breaking into.

"The markings in Empingham are a variety of lines and symbols which have appeared along the main A606, Church Street, Nook Lane and Willoughby Drive.

"We have increased patrols in the area, the Neighbourhood Watch group is aware and we are leafleting homes offering advice to residents."

Residents have been urged to keep their windows and doors locked and to report any markings to the police on (0116) 222 2222. If anyone is seen acting suspiciously in the village, or spotted drawing chalk markings, the police should be contacted immediately on 999.

Security advice is available from Oakham police station.

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