



SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY
Taking pride in keeping Suffolk safe


‘Don’t make burglary child’s play for criminals’ is the message of a new film that aims to get residents to think about the security of their homes. The film, that is being launched by police in Suffolk and Norfolk gives a unique take on an age old problem to warn residents in both counties of how easy it is for opportunist offenders to take advantage. The video focuses on a generic house in a regular street with its windows open, doors unlocked, keys available, property easily accessible and not security marked. It then shows a ‘burglar’ taking the opportunity to steal items of value. However the fact that the burglar is a child underlines how easy it can be for offenders and how simple it is to put some steps in place to avoid being a burglary victim.

Detective Chief Inspector Bernie Morgan, of Suffolk Police, said; “Each week a good percentage of the burglaries reported to us are incidents where entry has been gained via an unlocked door or window, but equally there are also break-ins and there are a number of simple steps you can take to protect your home.

“The first and most obvious is to close and lock doors and windows, even if you are inside the property, and the second is to make your home appear occupied.. By leaving a light on, or using a timer to switch one on at dusk, it immediately reduces the likelihood of your home being targeted. “While the number of home burglaries continues to fall across Suffolk - and police are actively targeting offenders. Home security is the best way to reduce your chance of being burgled.” Police advise reviewing your home security by looking at it through a burglar’s eyes.

Are there places you could gain entry without being seen? How easy would it be to get in? How quickly would you find items of value?

There are some very basic – and inexpensive – steps you can take to make it much harder for criminals.

- Keep doors locked and windows secured at all times if possible - even if you are inside the property. Some offenders just walk into homes - breaking in can be noisy, attract attention and provide a greater likelihood of forensic evidence being found - so locking up can be the first line of defence. A walk-in burglar may try several homes before finding one that is unlocked - you don't want it to be yours.
- If you're out during the hours of darkness - whether it's for the evening or for a fortnight while you're away on holiday - take steps to make your home appear occupied. Nothing says a home is unoccupied quicker than having no lights on inside. If you're out for the evening leave a light or two on. If it's for longer get a timer to switch a light on automatically at dusk - for about £5 you'll take another step towards making your home less likely to be targeted.
- If you are going away ask a trusted relative, friend or neighbour to make regular checks - collecting mail, turning lights on and opening curtains all make your home appear occupied.
- Don't leave keys in locks. This can make a burglars job easier - for example if a burglar can break a window or a pane of glass in the door and then use the key to unlock the whole door or window. Keys in locks can also grant access to other areas of your property and provide a quick exit route. Keep your keys in a safe place that is not on view/ easily accessible near the door or in the lock.
- Don't store pieces of valuable jewellery or sentimental items in easy-to-find places such as a jewellery box on a dressing table or lying inside a drawer as these are the first places a burglar searching will look. Don't keep large sums of cash in your property.
- Get valuable items of property security marked and keep detailed records of them - take photographs of jewellery and list make, model and serial number for electrical items for example. Register them for free at www.immoblise.com 

Babergh East Safer Neighbourhood Team

e-mail: babergheast.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

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- Use exterior lighting. Good outdoor lighting can put off a burglar as they are more likely to be spotted in the act. The most appropriate is high-efficiency low energy lighting on a dusk to dawn switch. If you have motion sensor activated lights make sure they are directed downward - and fit them out of easy reach.
- Maintain door and window frames to ensure they are strong and secure - and prevent intruders at the back and sides of your home by using strong, high, fencing with trellis or Prikkastrap on top. Secure gates with a mortice lock or padlock bolts to prevent them from being slid open. A thorny hedge or bushes can be good but make sure passersby can still see the front of your home so that a burglar can't work without being seen.
- Garages and sheds often contain tools or ladders which can be used for breaking-in. Make sure these are secure too - and consider installing a shed alarm (available for around £10 from many Suffolk Police stations or from retailers) which will make it uncomfortable for a burglar and will alert you and your neighbours if triggered.
- If you're really serious about making your home more secure there are Home Office recommended door and window locks as well as a whole host of measures including burglar alarms, etc that can be used. More information is also available on this site or you can contact your local Safer Neighbourhood Team or crime reduction officer by dialing **101**.
- If you see or hear anything suspicious please do not hesitate to call 999
- If you hear breaking glass, loud bangs or see someone hanging around or climbing over fences please call police. Officers would rather attend and find it is a false alarm than have homes burgled.

To see the video go to the Suffolk Constabulary website: -

www.suffolk.police.uk

Mandy, PCSO 3108 Coleman

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e-mail: babergheast.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

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