Allotments

Much of the advice contained in this leaflet can be used to protect allotments from criminals too.
But also:

- Get to know your neighbours on the allotment. If they know you, they are more likely to be suspicious if someone else is on your plot.
- Do not leave expensive equipment or tools on the site unattended.
- Contact your local Neighbourhood Policing Team to see if there is an Allotment / Neighbourhood Watch Group running in your area. If not, consider starting one up.



We are committed to catching criminals and making your area a safer place to live. The information we receive from you and your neighbours plays a huge part in enabling us to do that.

No information we receive is ignored; we will use it to develop the bigger picture and when the time is right we will take action.

If you can provide any information about criminals who live in your area or wish to report a crime, please call Sussex Police on **101** or report it online at **www.sussex.police.uk**.

You can also report crime anonymously to Crimestoppers on freephone **0800 555 111** or online at **crimestoppers-uk.org**.

Report it.
Together we can stop it.

Is your outdoor property safe?

A guide to securing outbuildings, tools and garden equipment



Sussex Police
Serving Sussex
www.sussex.police.uk

OPERATION MAGPIE
Tackling burglary in Sussex

Criminals are not only interested in the property within your house.

They can also be tempted by goods and equipment stored outside in garages, sheds and even in the garden.

Property such as bicycles, lawnmowers and power tools can be just as valuable as televisions, stereos and videos.

However, a few simple steps can help keep equipment safe and deter thieves and burglars.

Garages, sheds and other outbuildings

Ensure that outside buildings are in good condition. You can improve security further by:

- Fixing steel mesh or bars on the inside of windows.
- Fitting concealed hinges to prevent criminals from undoing screws or bolts.
- Checking that fittings are bolted through the door and reinforced at the back with a steel plate or washer; hasps should have concealed screws.
- Fitting good quality locks to all doors. Padlocks should be at least 6cm / 2.5ins wide, of hardened steel, have at least 5 pins and be a closed shackle type (to reduce risk of being forced). Try to ensure that you fit British Standard approved locks.



- Fitting additional locks to garage doors.
- Installing an alarm – either a battery operated alarm or upgraded house alarm which includes the shed and / or garage.

It is important to remember to use locks at all times, even if you are at home.

Always keep keys safe and out of sight.

Property

- Secure all items that could be easily removed – they could be used to break into your house.
- Security mark or paint property such as lawn mowers, furniture and tools with your postcode and house number.
- Advertise the fact that your property is marked and keep a note of serial / make / model numbers.
- Take photographs of any valuable garden ornaments. If they are stolen, police can circulate the photographs to help with identification.
- Ensure that bicycles are security marked and secured to an anchor point inside the shed or garage using a high security lock.



Outdoors

- Consider installing security lights both to illuminate your garden and deter thieves. Motion sensor lights switch on when movement is detected or sodium tubes switch on automatically once it becomes dark.
- Keep shrubs, bushes, hedges and other plants cut back as they can provide a hiding place for thieves.
- Plant a prickly hedge as a physical and psychological barrier; a trace of blood or shred of clothing could also help the police identify an offender if something is stolen. However, please consider that prickly plants could be harmful to children and animals.
- Check that all boundary fences, walls and gates are in good repair. A solid barrier is an excellent deterrent to the opportunist thief.
- Ask your neighbour to keep an eye on your garden, and do the same for them.
- Contact the police immediately if you see or hear anything suspicious.



Image courtesy of home-cctv.com