

// CRIME IS LOW IN LANCASHIRE

We want to work with you to keep it that way. This section contains tips on how you can help to prevent crime and avoid becoming a victim of crime. Click on the contents below to take you to the relevant page.

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**Lancashire
Constabulary**

police and communities together

// KEEPING YOUR IDENTITY SAFE

Identity theft happens when someone gets hold of your personal information or identity without your permission and then uses it to buy things or apply for documents such as passports and driving licenses in your name.

REDUCE YOUR CHANCES OF IDENTITY THEFT BY:

- Keeping your personal information safe.
- Shredding any documents that have your personal details on them.
- Checking your bank statements carefully. If you find anything that looks unusual, contact the retailer and your card issuer to report it as soon as possible.
- Closing down any accounts you no longer use. They could be reactivated without you knowing.
- Checking the legitimacy of anyone asking for personal information via email, fax or mail.
- Only carrying personal documents if essential.
- Reporting important documentation missing if it does not arrive in the post.
- Not using a cash machine if it looks like it has been modified or tampered with.
- Never letting anybody see your PIN number and shield the keypad when entering it.

THINK IT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?

- Report it to the police straight away.
- If your cards are stolen or missing, cancel them immediately.
- Regularly check you have all of your important documents such as your driving license or passport.
- A credit check will tell you if any unauthorised applications have been made in your name.
- The UK's fraud prevention service, CIFAS, (www.cifas.org.uk) can send a warning that will alert most lenders to the fraud so that they can take extra care when dealing with credit applications in your name.

“it's better to be safe than sorry”

// KEEPING YOU SAFE

There are lots of simple things you can do to keep yourself safe and avoid becoming a victim of crime:

- Plan your route, especially at night.
- Avoid isolated bus stops/train stations and sit near the driver or close to other passengers when you are using public transport at night.
- Try to keep to busy well-lit areas and don't take short cuts. Keep away from bushes and buildings.
- Stay with friends whenever possible and don't walk alone after dark.
- Keep valuables such as your mobile phone, money and jewellery out of sight.
- Always walk facing oncoming traffic.
- To avoid delay, have your keys ready when you are getting close to your car or home.
- Never accept lifts from strangers.
- Keep a taxi phone number programmed into your phone.
- When ringing for a taxi, ask for the driver's name and check this when he/she arrives.
- If you think you are being followed, cross the road, and head towards a busier place where you can ask for help.
- Look after friends if they have had too much to drink and make sure they get home safely.

safety in numbers

// YOUR HOME, SHED AND OUTBUILDINGS

The following advice can help keep your home secure:

- Fit burglar alarms that people can see and good outside lighting. Test them frequently to make sure they work.
- Fit key-operated locks to all windows.
- When you go out, always lock the door and close the windows.
Fit dead locks to the doors and don't leave the keys where they can be seen or reached through the letter box.
- Leave a light on in a room and remember to draw the curtains when you go out at night.
- Marking important and expensive items with your postcode and house number using security markers. Keep a record of the make, model and serial numbers of all electrical equipment and take photographs of valuable property. For more information on keeping your things safe [click here](#).
- Cancel newspapers; milk etc when you are on holiday.
- Make sure callers to your home are genuine. Always ask for ID. For more information on bogus callers [click here](#).
- Buy home insurance.

a man's home is his castle.

// **BOGUS CALLERS**

Bogus callers may pose as water, electricity or gas-board workers, council workers or police officers; so they can steal money or property from your home. You can prevent this type of crime if you take precautions and by following these three steps:

Stop before you open the door

Chain put it on

Check ask the caller for their identification and check it by phoning the company they say they are from before letting them in. Use the phone number in the phone book, not on an identity card.

If you are in any doubt do not let them in, keep everything locked, dial **999** and ask for the police.

Neighbourhood Watch Schemes are proven to reduce burglary and deter bogus callers.

Visit **www.neighbourhoodwatch.net** or call **020 7772 3348** for more details.

REPORTING BOGUS CALLERS

If you think you have been a victim, report it to the police straight away. Give them a description of the caller and tell your neighbourhood watch co-ordinator or representative so they can warn others in the area.

“knock
knock...
...who’s
there?”

// KEEPING YOUR THINGS SAFE

The following advice can help keep your home secure:

GADGETS

Increase your chances of getting your mobile phone, iPod or digital camera if you have lost it or has been stolen by:

- Registering them on the Immobilise database **www.immobilise.com**. Every item recovered or handed to the police is checked against the database.
- Making a note of the make, model and serial number.
- Marking your items with your postcode.
- Keeping them out of sight and in a safe place when not in use.

BICYCLES

- Don't leave your bike in an isolated place.
- Park your bike safely.
- Always lock your bike when you leave it even if it is only for a short time.
- Use proper cycle parking or strong street furniture such as trees, parking meters and railings for securing your bike whenever possible.
- Lock wheels and other detachable parts.
- Mark your bicycle with your postcode and house number to help with its identification if it is stolen. Property marking kits can be purchased from stationers and DIY stores, many bike shops also provide this service.
- If using a bike registration scheme make sure that it follows the National Cycling Forum's Code of Practice.
- Keep a record of the make, model, frame number and colour of your bicycle. A photograph can also help.

YOUR CAR

Most vehicle crime can be prevented, don't be complacent and think 'it won't happen to me':

- Never leave the keys in the ignition, even if you are just stopping quickly.
- Always lock and secure your car, check the sunroof and windows.
- Make sure you don't leave your belongings on show. Store them in the boot or take them with you.
- Fit a stereo with a removable front panel and take it with you when you leave the car. Mark it with your vehicle registration number and make a note of the serial number.
- Have a car alarm fitted and use it or fit a Thatcham-approved electronic immobiliser.
- Use a steering lock.
- Never leave car documents or spare keys inside the car.
- In winter, don't leave your car unattended as you wait for it to defrost.

“prevention
is better
than cure.”

better to be on the
safe side.

// INTERNET SAFETY

SOCIAL NETWORKING AND FORUMS

Social networking sites are some of the most popular sites on the internet, particularly among children and young people. Ensure that you can enjoy using the sites safely by:

- Not giving out any personal information e.g. your full name, address or school name.
- Remembering that people you meet over the internet might not be who they say they are. Some adults may pretend to be children and try and persuade young people to meet with them.
- Do not respond to hostile or provocative situations, log off and surf elsewhere. For more information visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk.

SHOPPING

Take the following steps to ensure your security when shopping online:

- Always use secure sites. Look for the padlock symbol.
- Always keep back ups and printouts of all online documentation.
- Never disclose your card or bank details as proof of identity or age.

- Only transmit your financial details by secure email i.e. through a secure website.
- Always check bank statements carefully for discrepancies. If you find transactions you haven't made, contact the retailer and your card issuer as a matter of urgency.

PASSWORDS

Simple, safe practices can be used to prevent someone from accessing and illegally using your personal information:

- Don't ever write your password down.
- Never share your password with anybody.
- Make sure no two passwords you use are the same.
- Use a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers and punctuation.
- Avoid entering your password into a computer that isn't your own.
- Change your password at least every four months.