

Don't be a victim this winter

In the year to September 2016, of 568 crimes that were reported in the Pewsey Community Area, 218 of them were burglaries or theft. Although our area is a relatively low crime area compared to many in the country, the recent increase in burglaries is a worrying trend, with power tools and quad bikes being the most targeted. And there are a lot of very simple steps that we can take to make ourselves more secure and to feel safer.

Make sure you lock your doors - and that applies to garages, outbuildings and sheds as well as your house. Many of the recent break-ins have been into unsecured (i.e. unlocked) buildings. If you are elderly then The Bobby Van Trust can help you make your home more secure - just call 01380 861155 or email bobbyvan@wiltshire.police.uk to make an appointment.

Security lighting that is movement sensitive can be a good deterrent and may alert you to intruders.

If you have valuable items of machinery or other equipment, then consider using Smartwater to protect them. Smartwater is an invisible substance that can be painted on to items. The traceable liquid comes off when touched thereby leaving a trail that the Police can use to link the theft to the individual. It also enables the Police to reunite the property to the person. Putting up notices that say you are using Smartwater also acts as a deterrent. For more information call 0333 320 7797 or go to www.smartwater.com.

Going out for a walk? Remember to leave valuables at home and NOT in the car when out at local beauty spots or walking the dogs. Valuables are NOT secure in the glove compartment or boot - thieves will often watch parked cars and so if you have been seen putting things away, your car will get broken into! This includes satnavs, tablets and phones - take them with you and don't leave them unattended.

Community intelligence is crucial to help the police identify the offenders. If you see or hear something suspicious call 101 and report it. Vans or cars driving round slowly, doorstep callers - reporting this information helps the police enormously. Get vehicle number plates if possible - even partial numbers are better than none.

Avoid answering the door to cold callers and never let strangers into your home no matter how charming they are. Equally distressing are telephone calls from IT companies or banks, usually saying your laptop is at risk or your bank card has been compromised. Never give bank or card details and especially pin numbers over the telephone during one of these calls. This kind of offence can be reported to Action Fraud. You can report and get advice about fraud or internet crime by calling 0300 123 2040 (textphone 0300 123 2050) or go to their website www.actionfraud.police.uk

Stay safe.

Dawn Wilson Chair of PCAP