

UPBEAT ...

Your new regular column about combating crime in the neighbourhood written by Danny Smith (pictured), one of several Police Community Support Officers patrolling our communities.

For my first column, I would like to talk about how each and every one of you has a big part to play in reducing the risk of being a victim of crime. With the evenings getting darker earlier we should all be thinking about ways to reduce the chances of being a victim of crime and it's really simple. Using common sense a lot of the time could help you to enjoy a crime free winter.

At this point I'd like to mention that burglaries are on the decline in our area so this article is not meant to scare you, it's purely to make you aware...

A large percentage of burglars and thieves are opportunist criminals which basically means they will just spot a chance - for example an opened window, an insecure shed; a chance of anything they can get their hands on and they believe they can get away with. A simple step like making sure your house is secure and your valuables are out of sight can make a difference.

Leaving the lights on when you go out is a good way to deter the modern day criminal. With climate change in mind, we have a timer switch that you could set for what time you want a light to come on go off, thus giving an opportunist criminal the impression that there is someone at home.

We have a lot of these timers that we can give away for free so if this is something you would like then contact either your local Police Community Support Officer (names and numbers are on page 61).



We have many items at Belper Police Station that we can give, for free, to the communities that we serve. That means you! We have locks for your sheds, alarms and all sorts of gadgets that can help you to avoid becoming a victim of crime.

Over the last couple of months we have had a few distraction burglaries in the area so I am going to give you a few tips on what to do when you have a stranger at your door:

Firstly always make sure you have your door chain on and ask for their ID. Remember there is no such thing as the "water board!"

There is the Nominated Neighbour Scheme [pictured]. This works by having a point of contact for the caller to go to so their identification can be checked. Remember that if the caller is who they say they are, they will not mind going to a neighbour and will be happy that you have done this. If they are not who they say they are they will quickly leave the area. If this happens contact us on either 0845 123 33 33 or in an emergency 999.

I hope you all have Merry Christmas and a crime free New Year.

DANNY



Nominated Neighbour Scheme