

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH NEWS – APRIL 2021

PROTECT YOUR CAR

Due to Covid-19 and repeated lockdowns, people haven't been using their cars as much as they used to. However, car crime remains a pressing problem in the UK – alarmingly, one car is stolen every ten minutes. The latest figures from the Police National Computer indicate car crime decreased during Covid-19 restrictions but with the expectation of social restrictions soon easing we could see a surge in car crime. We have launched a new campaign to encourage everyone to keep their car's safety top of mind. Shockingly 44% of cars are broken into through an unlocked door. 80% of car crime occurs during the evening or at night. We know that leaving valuables on display attracts car thieves. We are asking car owners to remember to LEAVE YOUR CAR: LOCKED, LIT AND EMPTY.

John Hayward-Cripps, CEO of Neighbourhood Watch Network, says *“Most car crimes happen because cars are left unlocked. There is a misconception that some cars are auto-locking and lock themselves if left unattended after a period of time. This isn't always correct. Another misconception is that your car is too old and no one will bother stealing it. This is also incorrect – both new and old cars are at risk. Having a car stolen or broken into is more than simply a hassle, it can impact on people's livelihoods.*

The good news is that there are simple steps everyone can take to help reduce the risk to their car. With only a 46% recovery rate, we're reminding everyone to leave your car locked, lit and empty.”

Leave your car:

1. Locked: A simple mistake that can prove calamitous: 44% of cars are broken into via an unlocked door.
2. Lit: 80% of car crime occurs during the evening or at night. Parking near streetlamps or in a busy area can deter thieves.
3. Empty (or with no items on show): Owners often forget that personal belongings are at as much risk of being stolen as the car itself. See our [Leave Your Car Empty](#) video. Hayward-Cripps continues *“Car thieves are opportunists. Leaving items on a car seat or forgetting to lock your car can act as an invitation for crime. We want to instil the habit of doublechecking where and how you've parked with our three simple steps: leave it locked, lit and empty.*

As a local charity with a trusted voice in the community, we're asking everyone to proactively support their neighbours and friends by sharing our three steps with three others. By spreading the word, we're confident we can crack down on car crime which can be deeply distressing and debilitating for its victims.”