

# **Advice on Garden and Shed Security**

## **The basics of protecting your home and garden**

Spring is now upon us and summer is coming and many people across West Mercia will be turning their attention to the garden, others will be taking out their bikes to enjoy the warmer weather and some may be preparing the BBQ.

Many people store their gardening equipment, tools, bikes and BBQ's in their shed and unfortunately this means that these outbuildings are often seen as an easy target by thieves.

But there are many ways to keep your garden, shed and home safe and below are some of our tips to help you protect your property.

Thieves will generally take the easiest option when considering breaking into a shed, outbuilding or home and security measures such as a side gate and motion-activated lighting, can deter the would-be thief.



However, there are other ways to protect your home and garden. Gravel paths and drives are a fantastic way of cheaply and unobtrusively discouraging a thief from entering your garden. Gravel makes a loud noise when stepped on which carries well at night and may wake the home owners, neighbours or a dog. This is instantly off-putting to a thief.

Another way to protect your home is to plant prickly hedging around the perimeter of your garden.

## **Protecting your shed**

The first aspect of protecting your shed is to fit a good quality lock. There is a range of sturdy padlocks, padbolts, hasps and staples available on the market but make sure you get one that is appropriate to the strength of your shed door and frame.

Remember that any opening windows on your shed will also require a good quality lock.

In addition to a lock, you may wish to consider fitting an alarm on your shed. There are three types of alarm system that could be used:

An infra-red detector in the shed that picks up on movement and body heat.

A door contact system.

An alarm within the padlock itself, which sounds if the lock is forced open or tampered with.



These systems can be purchased from most DIY stores and locksmiths.

Another aspect of protecting your garden shed is that the items inside it - as well as being expensive to replace - can also be used to break into your home.

For example, a garden spade applied with the right leverage could be used to force open a window or door. Take these items into consideration when planning the security of your shed and think about chaining and padlocking tools that could assist a thief.

### **General garden precautions**

Don't leave items in your garden that could make the life of a thief any easier. For example, a ladder left out in your garden could be used to get into the upper floor of your home or onto the top of your shed. Likewise, other tools and gardening equipment left outside could be used to break into your home. Just taking a few minutes to lock these items away will greatly increase your security.



Also consider using a property marking system to protect the items in your garden and home. Property marking makes your belongings much less attractive to thieves

as they realise that the goods can easily be identified as stolen and traced back to the original owner.

There are many ways to mark property; including engraving, UV marking and forensically coded systems such as SmartWater.