

Don't tell potential burglars of future holiday plans or publish holiday pictures while you are away

With the summer holidays fast approaching, holidaymakers are being urged to avoid posting pictures of themselves on holiday on social media channels to deter potential burglars from ransacking their home.

Instead, they are urged to wait until they return home before posting their holiday pictures online.

The advice, from Safer North Hampshire* Community Safety Partnership, is part of a series of tips to keep homes, cars, outbuildings and personal possessions safe from opportunistic burglars this summer, including:

- Be vigilant about closing windows and locking doors when leaving your car, or at home, to avoid becoming a victim of crime.
- Make homes look occupied by using automatic timer switches to either switch on lights or turn the radio on. Timer switches are available FREE from Safer North Hampshire by emailing the team on communitysafetyteam@communitysafetynh.org
- Secure windows when not in the room – net curtains or blinds can help to prevent burglars from seeing inside.
- Ensure the front door is locked if everyone is in the back garden.
- Do not discuss holiday plans in front of strangers. If possible, ask a trusted neighbour or a friend to keep an eye on the house and outbuildings.
- Fit sheds with a good quality padlock, with fittings reinforced at the back with a steel plate. Consider replacing any existing door screws with ones that cannot be unscrewed once they are screwed in, and check that house insurance covers items in sheds, garages and outbuildings.
- Lock vehicles, never leave items on display and do not leave the windows open, even in hot weather.
- Never leave children or dogs alone in hot vehicles- even for a few minutes.
- Property mark valuables with a UV pen, as well as registering them free on www.immobilise.com, including the make, model and photographs of items.

Councillor Simon Bound, Chairman of the Safer North Hampshire Partnership, said: “I know many people want to update their social media while they are on holiday to share pictures of their activities, but be aware that local burglars may also be checking who is away and which homes or outbuildings may be unguarded over the summer. Some police forces and The Financial Ombudsman have also warned people about alerting would-be burglars to their empty homes, and some insurance claims have been rejected because people have not taken reasonable care to keep their property safe.”

More information and advice is available on the Safer North Hampshire website, www.safernh.co.uk or the Hampshire Constabulary website, www.hampshire.police.uk

*The Safer North Hampshire community safety team comprises the community safety teams of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Hart District Council and Rushmoor Borough Council. The three teams are the first in Hampshire to join forces to be more efficient, flexible and cost-effective.