



Press Release

“Lock Up to Keep Christmas Merry”

Police Officers are warning people across East Cheshire, “Make sure your Christmas presents are not a twelve-day wonder”. They say many recent burglaries have been linked to a lack of basic home security and people need to be more careful.

Detective Inspector Nigel Groom, in charge of Cheshire Police Eastern Area Pro-Active CID said, “The New Year period and January traditionally bring an increase in the number of burglaries.

Ask yourself how you will feel if the gifts which bring so much pleasure to you on Christmas morning are soon in the hands of a stranger who will probably turn them into cash to buy drugs?

“That new Wii console or laptop, or that glamorous jewellery the wife had for Christmas are all attractive to a criminal. So are some of the electronic games and other toys you bought for your children.

“At this time of year burglars have long hours of darkness to help them in their work. We are also finding increasingly that people are failing to take the most elementary precautions against burglary, such as locking doors.

“One in three of the area’s burglaries at the moment is a sneak-in. The criminal simply walks through an unlocked door or climbs through an open ground-floor window. Some of these burglaries are in the daytime when the family are in the next room. Others are at night when the family are asleep. Some people go to bed without locking up!

“In the past few weeks we have arrested some of the most prolific burglars but everyone has a duty to take reasonable steps to protect their home and their property.

“The basics are very simple. Firstly, make sure you keep outside doors locked whether you are in or out of the building and always check the locks before you go to bed. If you have a security alarm, make sure you it is set at night and whenever you go out.

“Bear in mind that a house that might be occupied is generally less attractive to a burglar. Leave a radio on when you are out and put a light on if it’s dark. Invest in a couple of timer switches to operate the lights if you are out for a long time.

“Keep an eye open for unexpected activity in your neighbourhood. Burglars will usually spend some time looking around to identify the most vulnerable property. If you see anything suspicious call the Cheshire Police Information Line 0845 458 0000.

“In some cases your Christmas present may not have been for the home. If you received a satnav or another car-based device, like a CD player, leaving them in the vehicle when you park is another way to hand them to a criminal.

“If you want to keep them, take them out of the car when you park, and make sure you don’t leave behind the satnav cradle or other signs that a satnav was fitted. A thief can do a lot of damage breaking into your vehicle if he believes that a satnav **may** be inside. If possible park in well-lit areas which are covered by CCTV and be aware of what is going on around you. Make sure you are not being watched. These precautions are all very basic and only take a few minutes of your time. If you don’t take reasonable measures to safeguard your property you will find your insurance company will refuse to pay up. Make a New Year resolution to make security a habit and start it now. It will mean you can enjoy the presents you received at Christmas 2009 throughout 2010.”