

## **GREAT CHART WITH SINGLETON - MAY 2019**

This month, Police Community Support Officers and Police Officers were involved with the Local and European elections. We were tasked to visit all the polling stations in the Ashford area to make sure all was running smoothly and to provide reassurance where necessary.

Locally, I have been continuing to show a presence in all areas, both on foot and in a police vehicle, engaging with members of the community.

### **LOCAL INCIDENTS**

**Thefts from Motor Vehicles** - Once again this month, we have had a number of reports of vehicles being broken into and attempted break-ins of vehicles. I cannot reiterate enough how important it is to ensure your vehicles are secure and that there is nothing on display that could make a thief want to break into your vehicle. Here, again, are a few tips to help you:

- Garage your car whenever possible.
- Park in a well-lit area.
- Steering locks and gear locks are inexpensive and easy to fit.
- Consider installing an immobiliser or an alarm – and use it!
- Fit locking wheel nuts – they are inexpensive and easy to fit.
- Keep your keys in a safe place at all times.
- Remove keys from the ignition when you leave your vehicle – even for a few seconds.
- Have your registration number or part of Vehicle ID number etched onto the glass surfaces.
- Consider marking all your property – especially the items you frequently take in the car.
- Lock all doors, windows and sunroof every time you leave your car, however briefly.
- Lockable fuel caps are advisable.
- **Don't leave valuables in your vehicle.**

**REMEMBER - Thieves will take an opportunity if they see one, no matter where it is.**

The individuals that are attempting to break in to vehicles have also been seen trying the doors to properties. Even though house burglaries are few and far between, it is always worthwhile reviewing your security.

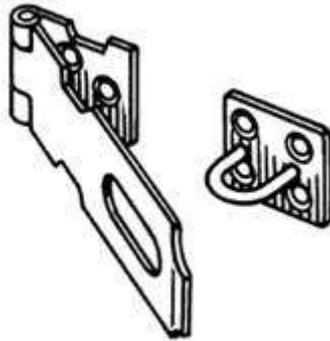
Burglars are more likely to be active between 9am and 5pm, rather than late at night, as this is when most people will be at work. It is therefore imperative that you ensure all doors and windows are securely locked before you leave your property, and that all entry and exit points are secured with one or more high quality lock. Do not leave your house or car keys on show or within reach of the front door. A burglar can often reach them through a letterbox or cat-flap using objects or tools found in the garden. Keep valuables out of sight when you are out of the home. Ensure laptops / tablets, jewellery and expensive items cannot be seen through the window. Hiding these objects means a burglar is less certain what he / she stands to gain.

A visible home alarm system can discourage intruders from approaching your property as can a well-maintained CCTV system. Make it hard for strangers to know when your home will be empty. Do not post on social media your plans as this can be very useful information for an intruder. If a burglar knows they have a clear period during which the home is unoccupied, they can enter knowing there is little chance of detection. If possible, use timer switches to turn lights on and off while you're away.

**Thefts from Gardens** – According to a recent survey, a fifth of home owners in the UK say they have had items stolen from their garden - with barbecue equipment, outdoor furniture and plant pots being

the most likely items to disappear. In Singleton, Kent Police have had a couple of reports over the last month with regards to garden plants and hanging baskets being stolen. Ideally, baskets should be fixed out of reach, or secured by chaining the rim of the basket to the bracket. Tubs can be cemented in place, or bolted down through the drainage hole. New garden plants are also at risk as they are easily pulled up, so do not draw attention to them. Remove the labels and cultivate or water the whole area so that the new planting does not stand out. Valuable plants and ornaments can be secured with ground anchors in conjunction with wire or a chain.

Sheds are also being targeted by thieves so secure these with a padlock attached to a strong hasp and staple.



**Hasp and Staple**

Shed hinges should be secured with coach bolts as ordinary screws are easy to undo or prise off (coach bolts are available from hardware stores.) Make sure gates, garages and outbuildings remain bolted with a secure lock. Finally, make sure you are clear on what is covered on your insurance. Insurers may specify that items should be locked in a shed, garage or brought into the house. If you have left your items unlocked and outside, insurers may refuse to pay out.

**Bike Thefts** – This month we received a report of a bike being taken from a park. Even though the owner of the bike was very near to it, an individual still saw the opportunity and took it. So this is a quick reminder to make sure you secure your bicycle, even if you only leave it for a few moments; and always lock your bike next to something secure such as a bike rack or lamppost.

Should you like any further advice then please visit the Kent Police website at <https://www.kent.police.uk/advice/>

**Residents are reminded to report all incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour.**

## **CONTACT US**

**Call 999 if a crime is in progress or life is in danger.**

**Call 101 to report a non-urgent crime or if you wish to speak to me – my force number is 59869.**

**If you're deaf or hard of hearing you can text 'Police' followed by your message to 60066.**

**Please also visit the Kent Police website which provides other details of other ways of contacting us.**