

NEW TERM

To most parents of school age children, this could be a month of mixed feelings – back to school month. For those children who are just starting school there is the excitement and the challenge of a new adventure. To the more mature children, it could well be a less enthusiastic challenge.

Whatever the circumstances, you should remind your children of the changes they face and what to do about them.

LOCK UP OR LOSE IT

One of the easiest things to do is leave the garage door open for a short time. May be to get the mower out, the kids' toys etc. When you return you could find that you have been robbed.

The average contents of a garage without the car are worth about £2,000, quite a tidy sum for a thief to get his hands on.

A recent survey showed that one out of a ten garage doors had a lock but 14% of those surveyed said they frequently left them unlocked and unattended.

Many garages have a door leading into the house giving thieves easy unseen access to all your possessions.

Unfortunately, those who faithfully lock their garage can also be vulnerable as the survey found that many garage locks were not up to the standard of house front or back door locks.

Now is a good time to check and improve your garage security. If you are in the habit of leaving your garage door unlocked, please try to break the habit – it could be to your advantage.

VEHICLE SECURITY

The best and most effective way to reduce the chance of vehicle theft is by fitting an electronic immobiliser, a good alarm or even a tracker system.

To help reduce the risk here are a few tips that will help protect your car:

- At home, make sure your car keys are out of sight and hidden
- Do not leave your car in vulnerable situations such as in a pub car park overnight
- Secure the doors, windows boot and sunroof every time you leave your car
- Take your keys with you when you pay for petrol at filling stations and never leave the engine running
- Use properly installed “Thatcham” compliant approved security devices

- Etching vehicle registration numbers on the glazing and in-car entertainment will deter a thief because it creates more work for them when attempting to disguise the identity of the car
- Never leave credit cards or other plastic cards in your car
- Lock everything in the boot out of sight before you start your journey
- Use locking wheel nuts to prevent the theft of wheels.