



## **Darker nights safety advice**

When the longer winter nights arrive, take a fresh look at your home security and remind yourself of how to stay as safe as possible when out and about.

### **At home**

- Keep front and back doors locked at all times and keep keys and valuables out of sight and reach from cat flaps, letterboxes, and downstairs doors and windows
- If you're out in the evening make sure you leave a light on and draw the curtains. If it's dark before you get home, use timer switches to turn on energy-saving lights
- Light up your front door with dusk to dawn lighting – make sure it's visible from the street
- Make sure your home is visible from the street by keeping bushes and fences less than one metre high at the front of your property
- Don't forget about garages, sheds and outbuildings – make sure they're locked and secure too
- Try not to leave your house in silent darkness. Just leaving a radio on could make a potential burglar think twice
- Never leave a spare key outside your house, burglars know all the usual hiding spots
- Keep bins away from windows when they're not being used as they can be used as a climbing aid for burglars
- Consider joining or setting up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. Find out more about Neighbourhood Watch in Northamptonshire at [www.northantsnhw.co.uk](http://www.northantsnhw.co.uk) or call the Neighbourhood Watch Chair on 01933 664146 for more information

### **Out and about**

- Plan ahead before you go out. Know where you're going, how you'll get there, and how you'll get back. Let someone know where you're going, and be prepared for a change of plan
- Keep your purse or wallet and keys close and secure. Only take out essential items, and if you can leave valuables at home, do
- When you're out, always walk with confidence, and stick to well-lit, busy areas, using the route you know best
- Avoid quiet or badly-lit alleyways, subways or isolated car parks. Walk down the middle of the pavement if the street is deserted
- Remain aware of your surroundings – don't walk along texting, making a phone call or listening to music. As well as being distracting, this advertises your valuable to criminals
- Trust your instincts – if you don't feel safe then change your route, remembering to stay in well-lit and busy areas. Don't be tempted to take short cuts

- Be a good friend and stay safe by sticking together. Always avoid walking alone at night
- If you regularly walk home in the dark, get a personal attack alarm – they are widely available and inexpensive
- If you regularly jog or cycle, vary your route and times you go out, particularly if you go alone. Try to avoid wooded or remote areas and stick to well-lit roads, or main paths and open spaces. Stay fully alert of your surroundings and don't use headphones

**To speak to our crime prevention team about darker nights crime prevention email [crimeprevention@northants.pnn.police.uk](mailto:crimeprevention@northants.pnn.police.uk)**