



## HARROGATE BUSINESS WATCH - SECURITY ALERT

The following information from North Yorkshire Police may be relevant to your business in Harrogate.

**1. TRADESMEN'S VEHICLES THEFT** - A current trend has been identified where tradesmen are having their vans and commercial vehicles stolen while they are working at nearby premises. In some of the cases the keys for the vehicle have been left in the ignition of the vehicle.

Are you a tradesman, or do you have a tradesman working at your premises? In either case please make sure they take the appropriate security precautions which will go a long way to getting the work completed as planned.

**2. OUTBUILDINGS** - There have been a couple of attempts made in the area, during the hours of darkness, to break into farm outbuildings and it is believed that quad bikes were the principal target of the offenders and one successful theft where the quad bike was only one of the items stolen. Good security of small plant items is vital and can minimise your losses should thieves target your premises, whether commercial buildings or a garden shed.

Any sightings of suspicious persons should be reported as soon as possible to the police including any vehicle details if seen. Help to catch them. Why don't you write down the registration numbers of the vehicles of unknown callers?

**3. PUBWATCH** - Many public houses have Charity Collection Boxes on the bars for donations from their customers. I would ask all customers to be aware, before they make a donation, to make sure that the container is sealed and tamper proof and that the agent's name and/or number together with his telephone number is on the side of the box.

Of particular concern are some Charity Boxes for the LADY HOARE TRUST FOR PHYSICALLY DISABLED CHILDREN, which are in some pubs in our area. The Lady Hoare Trust DO NOT now use collection boxes and any pub with these boxes should be removed immediately. If anyone tries to promote or call to empty these boxes then the police should be contacted immediately.

**4. FARMWATCH** - Over the last few months there has been an increase in the number of 4x4 vehicles that have been stolen throughout our region, with the Land Rover Defender being the most common type of vehicle stolen. With 16 Land Rovers reported stolen and only two recovered there is obviously a market for them. If you own a 4x4 or any other type of vehicle, please remember simple security measure help prevent crimes and additional security measures like immobilisers and tracking systems really do make the vehicles even more secure.

There has been a recent spate of break-ins to mobile homes in the Knaresborough Area over the past week. If you own a mobile home please make sure that it is left secure and that any items of value are removed from it when it is not in use. Security of mobile homes is normally good, however, extra devices can be fitted, including alarms, which will enhance the security even further. Remember though, if you do fit an alarm make sure there is someone on hand with a key who can reset it should it be activated in your absence.

**5. DOORSTEP TRADERS** - Once again we have had fish sellers in the Bilton Area selling produce that should be kept in refrigerated vehicles. The sellers spoke with Geordie accent and none of the produce was weighed or marked. The vehicle was believed to be a white Ford Escort van or similar. Also on Thursday 23rd Jan, reports were received from Trading Standards that a man was selling fish in the Dene Park Area of Harrogate. This man spoke with a North Eastern accent and was believed to be using a white van.

No further details are known but we are asked to remind you that all food products offered for sale in sealed packs should have the weight clearly marked on it and that the same standard of hygiene applies to van sales of food products as it does to shops.

Can you please look out for these types of product vendors as the police and Trading Standards need to know who they are. If you have them call on you, let the police know where they are so they can try and check them out.

If you have any concerns about door to door sellers please contact the police, and the message from Trading Standards is while there are many legitimate business that do travel from house to house, if you have any doubts...DON'T DEAL ON YOUR DOORSTEP.

**NOTE: This is a new service for Chamber members. Any feedback would be welcome.**

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