



HERTFORDSHIRE

CONSTABULARY

## ***Royston Rural Watch, January 2024***

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***Our Non -  
Emergency  
Number 101***

## **On the Beat**

### **Secure your home and garden for the new year**

Hertfordshire Constabulary is sharing advice with residents to make sure any new valuables they received at Christmas, or purchased in the sales, stay safe and secure.



The number of burglaries in Hertfordshire are currently around the same level as this time last year, however the Watford, Three Rivers and Hertsmere areas all experienced increases in December.

During the first few weeks of the new year burglars are looking out

for signs that homes have new valuables and expensive equipment they can

steal. Leaving items on view or packaging outside of your home, can alert thieves to the valuables you have.

Detective Chief Inspector Luke Whinnett, from Hertfordshire Constabulary's Local Policing Command, said: "This time of year burglars are on the lookout for valuables, like new tools, bicycles and other expensive items left in sheds and garages that have little or no security. We are recommending that everyone takes some basic security measures to ensure their outbuildings are secure. Don't leave anything valuable in them unless they are well secured with good quality locks or even an alarmed padlock. Dusk till dawn security lights will also make your home even safer."

These tips will help to make your garden and outbuildings more secure:

Always lock your shed, preferably with two 'hasp and staple' locks (one near the top and one near the bottom of the door) or use or an alarmed padlock.

Secure your rear garden by locking entry gates with a padlock.

Burglars can use garden tools to break in, so make sure you securely lock away any tools after use.

Make access to the rear of your property difficult, keep rear/side gates closed and locked and ensure boundary walls/fences are in good repair.

Tools and gardening equipment should be visibly marked with your postcode and house number - this can deter thieves and help police identify the rightful owner.

Remember to lock your garage door securely. Metal 'up and over' doors can be secured with extra locks fitted either side and/or a floor-mounted locking 'T' bar with a closed shackle padlock. Wooden garage doors can be secured with two substantial 'hasps and staple' locks and closed shackle padlocks (your local DIY store can advise on the most secure options).

Keep wheelie bins secured so they cannot be moved or used as climbing aids.

Plant defensive spiky plants under windows such as berberis, roses and pyracantha. Watch our video on defensive plants (opens in new window).

Most bicycles are stolen from home so ensure they are kept in secure sheds, outbuildings and garages. Consider installing ground anchors if you have a concrete floor. If not, look for security rated products specifically for wooden and metal sheds.

## Lantern Thefts

A local man has been arrested in connection with the suspected theft of street lamps including bespoke lanterns from Cambridge City Centre.

The Cambridge lanterns, known as Richardson candle lamps, were installed in a number of streets in Cambridge in the 1950s.

The listed lamps were removed at various times between about 13 September and 1 October from St John's Street and Trumpington Street.

A 19-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of stealing street lamps from the city as well as others in Hertfordshire.

At the time of the suspected thefts, Heritage England referred to the incidents as a "heritage crime".

The county council earlier said the missing lanterns would be replaced, but was unable to say how long that might take.

The lamps in Cambridge were designed by architect Sir Albert Edward Richardson, who was commissioned to design bespoke new street lighting for the city in 1957, according to Historic England.

The vertical tubular lanterns became known as Richardson candles.



Nearly half of those installed in the 50s survive and all have Grade II listed building status.

They were based on a design that had been on show at the Festival of Britain in 1951.

Speaking after the theft of the city's lamps last year, a Historic England spokesperson described them as a "distinctive feature of Cambridge city centre" and confirmed the

organisation would "offer support and advice to Cambridgeshire Police in their investigation of this apparent heritage crime".

Your local Police team is investigating a series of lantern thefts. The team has a large amount of possible stolen lamps / Lanterns seized following this arrest. If you have suffered a theft of this nature, please report this on 101.

### **Drivers are being advised to make sure vehicles are secure following an increase in thefts during 2024.**

Last year vehicle thefts increased by more than 11 per cent, compared to the previous year, however in some areas the increases were significantly higher. In Welwyn Hatfield and North Herts they increased 30 per cent and in Broxbourne thefts rose by 22 per cent. Many of those stolen were high value keyless vehicles.

Detective Chief Inspector Luke Whinnett, from Hertfordshire Constabulary's Local Policing Command, said: "Keyless entry vehicles have increasingly been targeted this year, particularly in some parts of the county. Many of the vehicles stolen have been targeted by organised crime gangs who steal higher value vehicles to ship them overseas.

“We are advising owners of keyless to used additional security measures, such as good quality steering wheel locks, which are a great deterrent. If you have a keyless entry vehicle, use a signal blocking fob pouch (Faraday bag) and keep fobs and store any spare keys in a metal box when not in use, so that criminals can't use signal relay devices to unlock and start your vehicle remotely.”

Over the last two years Hertfordshire Constabulary has been targeting organised crime groups, who have been committing dozens of vehicle theft offences. More than 30 offenders believed to be responsible for over 200 offences have been caught and prosecuted since 2022.

To minimise the chance of becoming a victim we offer the following advice:

Lock your car whenever it is left unattended and keep it in a garage when parked at night if possible.

When at home, keep your keyless car fob (and the spare) well away from the car.

Put the keys in a screened or signal-blocking pouch, such as a Faraday Bag.

An approved strong full cover steering wheel lock prevents theft, even if the vehicle security system is bypassed.

Reprogramme your key fobs if you buy a second-hand car.

Turn off wireless signals on your fob when it's not being used.

Never leave your vehicle unattended with the engine running, even if you are only absent for a moment.

Consider fitting CCTV covering your home and driveway, to help deter thieves.

Use PIR or LED security lighting to make your vehicle more visible as this can also act as a deterrent.

Always consider parking in a car park that has been accredited with the police approved “Park Mark” scheme.

Noisy gravel on your drive can help deter a would-be thief, as they don't want to alert you to their approach.

Never leave valuable items or tools on display in your vehicle as this may encourage a thief to break in.

For security products for your vehicles search the ‘accredited products’ page on the Secured by Design website a police-approved website.

For more advice, please visit our crime prevention pages.

You can report information about crime online, speak to an operator in our Force Communications Room via our online web chat tool or call the non-emergency number 101. Always dial 999 in an emergency.

You can report vehicle crime anonymously by contacting the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or via their untraceable online form.

## **Local Crime**

### **G4E - Ashwell, Hinxworth, Bygrave, Newnham and Caldecote**

**Theft from Motor Vehicle, Station Road, Ashwell** - On 5th December at 14.20 a van was parked on a building site, the offender has approached the vehicle and removed power tools from inside. 41/103399/24

**Theft from Motor Vehicle, High Street, Hinxworth** – On 5th December at 14.15 a van was parked on a drive. The offender approached the vehicle and removed power tools from inside. 41/103437/24

**Theft from Motor Vehicle, Lucas Lane, Ashwell** – Overnight on 9th December a vehicle parked on Lucas Lane had both numberplates removed and stolen. 41/105000/24

**Burglary, Partridge Hill, Ashwell** – Between 29th November and 5th December the suspect has entered the property. A messy search was completed and the computer and printer was damaged. 41/103445/24

**Theft, New Inn Road, Hinxworth** – On 11<sup>th</sup> December between 21.30 and 21.45. The victim disturbed three male at the side of his property, the male were targeting some building power tools. The victims called out for the males to stop, the males made threats and made off in Black Range Rover Evoke 41/68921/24

**Attempted Burglary, New Inn Road** – On 11<sup>th</sup> December at 10pm the offender was found at the side of an outbuilding removing roof tiles. The offender was disturbed, ran back to a vehicle and made off. 41/105574/24

**Outbuilding Burglary, New Inn Road, Hinxworth** – Over night on 11<sup>th</sup> December a outbuilding was targeted, damaged caused to the door and nothing was taken. 41/105864/24

**Outbuilding Burglary, Partridge Hill, Ashwell** – On 27<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30am suspect has entered the victims barn and stolen 20litres of diesel from inside. 41/111050/24

## **G4D – Barley, Barkway, Reed, Therfield, Kelshall and**

### **Nuthampstead**

**Theft, High Street, Barkway** – On 6<sup>th</sup> December at approx. 1.30am a lamp was stolen from the front of a property in the High Street. 41/103561/24

**Theft, High Street, Barkway** – On 14<sup>th</sup> December between 9am – 12pm the offender targeted a lamp situated at the front of the property and stolen. 41/107101/24

**Theft, High Street, Barkway** - On 21<sup>st</sup> December between 6pm and 11pm a multi coloured lantern was stolen from the victims front garden. 41/109072/24

**Theft, High Street, Barkway** – On 21<sup>st</sup> December between 9pm to 10pm a PIR sensor for an external lighting system was stolen. 41/109074/24

**Theft, High Street, Barkway** – Between 2<sup>nd</sup> December and 22<sup>nd</sup> December a porch light bulb and fitting was stolen from the front of a property in the High Street. 41/110218/24 Refers

**Theft, Church Lane, Barkway** – On 30<sup>th</sup> December at 17.53 the offender removed the front flood lights from her property. 41/111181/24

## **G3C - Sandon, Wallington, Rushden, Clothall and Weston**

No Crimes of Note

## **Your local Neighbourhood Police Teams website**

<http://snt.herts.police.uk/Teams.aspx?TeamID=G01>

Useful Links

<http://www.herts.police.uk/>

<http://www.doglost.co.uk/>

<http://www.stolenhorseregister.com/>

**Royston Rural Neighbourhood Team Tel – 01438 757935**