Darker nights are here

The evenings are drawing in, we want you to remain safe and would like to share the below advice with you.

Take a few simple steps to avoid becoming a victim of burglary this autumn/winter.

· If you're going away or even going out for the evening, set a timer switch to turn your lights on when it gets dark. You can also control your lighting from your smartphone. Unlit houses are a giveaway that no one is at home. Fake/simulated TV units are another option that can give the impression that someone is in when your home is empty.

· Everyone in the home should get into the habit of locking the door, even when at home, it only takes seconds to do. Remove the keys from the lock and keep them out of view/reach – but know where they are in case of an emergency.

· If you're busy in the back garden don't forget to lock your doors and windows. This simple act will deter opportunistic criminals.

· If you have a house alarm... USE IT. Make sure you set it when you go out and when you go to bed.

· Don't leave car keys, ID cards, or valuables near windows, doors or letterboxes, where burglars can reach through to steal them.

· Lock your garden gates and side entrances. Don't leave tools lying around in the garden which could be used to break in to your home.

· Consider installing security lights around the outside of your home. These can be another effective deterrent as they help remove areas of darkness around your property where a potential intruder could take cover. If you already have outdoor lighting don't forget to check that the bulbs are still in working order.