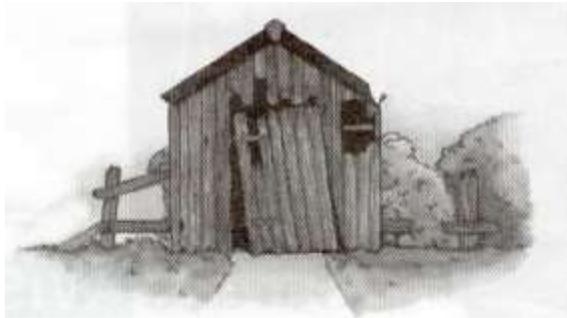


IT'S NOT ONLY GREEN FINGERED PEOPLE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN YOUR GARDEN

What can you do?

SHEDS AND OTHER SMALL BUILDINGS

Many people take a great deal of trouble securing their house and the property within it. At the same time leaving valuable property in a shed which is either unlocked or so old and run down as to prove no obstacle whatsoever to the thief.



Ensure that your shed is in a good condition to stand up to a security test. If not then take steps to improve it or don't leave valuable items, such as a lawn mower inside.

Once the fabric of the building is sound you can then improve physical security.

'Sold Secure' products provide a list of approved and tested security products administered by the Master Locksmiths Association.

www.soldsecure.com

- Fit a good lock on the shed door. A little expense can be money well spent and may help with insurance claims later if the worst does happen. The fittings should be bolted through the door of the shed and reinforced at the back with a steel plate. The hasp should have concealed screws.

- The padlock itself should be not less than 2.5ins in width and made of hardened steel. The lock should have no less than five pins. A closed shackle type will reduce the risk of the lock being forced. Any locksmith or good DIY shop will advise you on the strongest available. If you already have a small padlock, change it now – it could save you time and money in the future.
- Fit any windows with a grille fixed to steel plates inside the shed. Remember, it is no good securing the door if the windows are an easy target. At the very least consider fitting reinforced glass or impact value acrylic, and a good lock if the window opens.

Fitting a simple, low cost, battery operated shed alarm, or personal alarm, to the door of your shed or garage will warn of any attempted intrusion to your property and will stop the thief in his tracks. Much of this advice should also be applied to a garage if you have one.

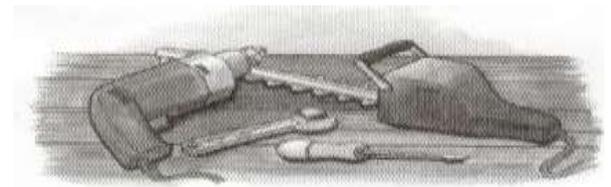
BICYCLES

Many people are careful about securing their bikes when left unattended on the street. However more cycles are stolen from sheds and garages than from the street. If you leave one or more bicycles in your shed, padlock them to the fabric of the building or together to make them much harder to steal. If the cycles are of a high value, then a ground anchor should be considered.

Register your bicycles at www.bikeregister.com

PROPERTY

Gardening tools and furniture are not cheap, what's more they are very saleable items for the thief. Don't make it easy to steal them and remember that tools stolen from your shed could be used to burgle your house.



- Property mark or postcode all property such as bikes, lawnmowers, hedge trimmers and garden Furniture
- Postcoding can be done with ultra-violet marker pens, engraving, stamping or even paint. Also there are now liquid forensic coding systems which can be purchased easily. Property marking may not stop the items being taken, but it could dissuade a thief if you advertise the fact that your property is coded and it will certainly improve the chances of tracing the items and perhaps catching the thief.
- Take photographs of any valuable garden ornaments. If they are stolen, Police can circulate the photo to dealers who can then look out for your property.
- Never leave items unattended, especially valuable ones, even if you are just popping into the house – remember you may be gone for a minute but they may be gone forever.

A little bit of effort can save a lot of grief

OUTDOORS

Not only should your property be secure but you can also make it difficult for the thief to get to it.

A low cost security measure are lights fitted with sodium tubes which come on when it gets dark and turn themselves off when it gets light – they cost less than 1p a night to run! This is especially important in dark areas of your garden. Don't under-estimate the effect of good lighting as a crime prevention measure.

Keep shrub, hedges and large plants cut back they can provide a screen for thieves to work behind.

Check your boundary fences, walls and gates. Keep them in good repair as they do provide a useful barrier to the would-be-thief. The harder it is for him to get in, the more suspicious his actions look to others.

Get your neighbours to always keep an eye on your garden at all times of the day and night. You can do the same for them. Report anything suspicious to the Police as soon as possible. Remember – it's not being nosy, it's being sensible.

Laying a thick gravel path makes it impossible for the thief to approach without making a noise and is a good crime reduction alternative to slabs and monoblock.

ALLOTMENTS

Allotments are harder to protect but much of the above advice can be applied to them. Get to know your neighbours on the allotment – if they know you they are more likely to be suspicious if someone else is in your plot. Remember – don't leave expensive equipment on site if you can avoid it.



**PLEASE BE 'SHEDUCATED'
AND PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY**



GET SHEDUCATED

To find out about bike security marking and cycle crime prevention advice in Hammersmith & Fulham Borough please contact your local Safer Neighbourhood Team

www.met.police.uk

If you require police assistance (non-urgent) call **101**.

Always dial **999** in an emergency.

GET SHEDUCATED



How to reduce the chances of theft