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CRAWLEY NHW INFORMATION BULLETIN – 26th August 2008

Over the last two weeks there have been a number of reports of garage damage and garage breaks in the West Green area of Crawley. This is mainly happening within garage blocks.

If you own a garage in West Green please ensure that you lock your garage and outbuildings at all times, and never leave valuable equipment within sight. Fit decent locks to your shed door. The fittings should be bolted through the shed door and reinforced at the back with a steel plate. Any hasp should have concealed screws. Padlocks used externally should be no less than 6cm wide and made of hardened steel. A "closed shackle" type is best, as thieves cannot get the likes of a crowbar through the shackle to break it. The locks should have no less than five pins. Consider fitting any shed windows with an internal grille fixed to steel plates. For sheds that have exterior door hinges - replace existing screws with security screws. They are designed so that they cannot be unscrewed once they are screwed in.

Another option to secure an up-and-over garage door is a garage defender lock. This is a heavy-duty metal arm, padlocked to a base plate that is bolted into the concrete outside the garage door and prevents the door from being opened. Alternatively you can fix bolts to the runners of an up-and-over garage door that can be locked from the inside. This is a particularly good idea if you tend to enter your garage from inside your home, and not from the outside.

Consider fitting security cages inside sheds or garages and keep valuable equipment inside them. It's well worth locking down ladders and tools that could be used to break into your house. Best not to encourage an opportunistic thief. Mark all your garden equipment and tools with your postcode.

Finally, check with your household insurance company that your policy includes cover for items stored in garages, sheds and outbuildings and remember, if you fail to put your equipment away or lock-up, your insurance company probably won't pay up anyway.

Please report any damage to your garages to Sussex Police. For further security advice on your garage you can contact Neville Wren (Crime Prevention Officer) on 0845 60 70 999 ext 30301. Thank you for your co operation.