

# Your RURAL BUSINESS has become a target for thieves, NOW is the time to act...

Rural businesses will be targeted as long as thieves see them as soft targets.

This short guide provides a series of key points to reduce the likelihood of **YOU** becoming the next victim.

The advice and information provided is designed to make it harder for the thief and safer for you and your employees, who you have a legal obligation to protect under health and safety legislation.

For more detailed guidance, please refer to the references provided within this leaflet, or contact your local Police to obtain advice on suitable security products and general crime prevention advice (see box).

# don't be a victim... ACT NOW!

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West Midlands  
Business Council



## POLICE COMMUNITY SAFETY CONTACTS

**Warwickshire Police**  
**01926 415000**  
[www.warwickshire.police.uk](http://www.warwickshire.police.uk)

**West Midlands Police**  
**0845 113 5000**  
[www.west-midlands.police.uk](http://www.west-midlands.police.uk)

**West Mercia Constabulary**  
**08457 444 888**  
[www.westmercia.police.uk](http://www.westmercia.police.uk)

**Staffordshire Police**  
**08453 30 20 10**  
[www.staffordshire.police.uk](http://www.staffordshire.police.uk)



# put a stop to RURAL CRIME

## YOUR BUSINESS IS YOUR CASTLE

Our ancestors had full control over entry and exit to their castles. They achieved this by having a combined entry and exit point using gates, watch towers, moats, walls and guards.

- ✓ Look closely at the perimeter of your property, remove all gates and entrances that you no longer use.
- ✓ Plant thorn hedges with deep ditches and bunds.
- ✓ Change the layout of your business to establish a single entrance and exit.
- ✓ Place a gate at the public end of your entrance to make it less inviting.
- ✓ Place a second inner gate at the private end of the entrance to your property.
- ✓ Invert and cap gate hinges so that gates cannot be lifted off, or use good padlocks with covers so they cannot be cut off. Also, ensure all fixing bolts cannot be removed.
- ✓ If a gate is not being used for a lengthy period, place a temporary obstruction in front of it so it cannot be opened or used for parking or a rubbish tip.
- ✓ Use locking posts or temporary obstructions to control large openings to yards.
- ✓ Cattle grids should be removable and locked out of position when not in use.
- ✓ Place CCTV at the inner gate to record registered numbers of vehicles and the faces of drivers. Place CCTV signs.
- ✓ Install sensor controlled 'dusk to dawn' security lights to alert you to visitors.
- ✓ Install an infra red device at the inner gate which will sound an alarm to alert you to visitors.
- ✓ Join a 'Watch' scheme, obtain signs from the Police and place them on gates.
- ✓ Place signs saying "We do not buy from calling sales persons".

## PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY

Historically, many farm buildings were built for storage, not for security. Now they need to be secure as well as to provide cover.

- ✓ Put yourself in the place of a thief; inspect your buildings and upgrade your storage to reflect the value of the property stored in it. Fit high quality locks. Ensure the fabric of the building is secure. Seek advice from a Police Crime Prevention Officer.

- ✓ Add to indoor security by installing sensors with audible alarms. Display signs to show you have alarms installed.
- ✓ Consider CCTV.
- ✓ Store all your property indoors when not in use.
- ✓ Keep all doors locked, except when the building or office is in use and there is someone present.
- ✓ If your building shell is poor, use secondary secure storage such as a container.

## TRACTORS, AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY, AND TRAILERS

- ✓ Nothing should be stored or kept in a visible location, except when in use. When vehicles or plant of any sort are kept outside they should be kept locked and the keys kept in your possession or in a locked key cupboard.

## PREPARE FOR A LOSS

- ✓ All property must be uniquely marked, photographed and recorded in an asset register that includes serial, chassis and model numbers.
- ✓ Use property marking solutions to uniquely mark all types of property, or Post Code your property in a non visible place and photograph it. Marking solutions: SmartWater - [www.smartwater.com](http://www.smartwater.com); Selectamark - [www.selectamark.co.uk](http://www.selectamark.co.uk); Identidot - [www.identidot.com](http://www.identidot.com)
- ✓ If your property is high value fit a tracking device or a data tracking chip. Your insurance company, or a Police Crime Prevention Officer, will advise on its preferred product.
- ✓ Register valuable plant; the National Plant and Equipment Register ([www.ter-europe.org](http://www.ter-europe.org)) runs an international database of owned and stolen equipment. It employs specialist staff who work with law enforcement agencies to identify and recover stolen equipment. You can register five items for free. Tractors and other agricultural machinery, trailers, caravans, quarry equipment and generators are amongst the most stolen items.

## COMPUTER AND IDENTITY SECURITY

- ✓ Your computer is vulnerable to electronic theft as well as thieves. Ensure you have an up-to-date virus checker and firewall if you use email or the internet.
- ✓ Identity theft is an emerging crime. Buy a home shredder for all unwanted personal documents.

## DIESEL TANKS

- ✓ Avoid siting storage tanks in isolated areas such as outlying buildings. A mobile bowser could be used instead and removed to a secure place when not in use.

- ✓ For tanks located close to an electricity supply there are additional options - better lighting, motion sensors and alarms - to act as further deterrents.

## CARAVAN STORAGE

Caravans are very desirable and thieves will go to extraordinary measures to steal them. There are existing industry standards which you should aspire to.

- ✓ The Caravan Storage Site Owners Association ([www.cassoa.co.uk](http://www.cassoa.co.uk)) has a scheme for accrediting storage facilities. Secured by Design ([www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)) have secure caravan parks accreditation scheme.

## RURAL ARSON

Rural businesses have many sensitive potential arson locations.

- ✓ Hay and straw should be removed from fields as soon as possible after harvesting.
- ✓ Hay and straw should be stored:
  - separately from other buildings, particularly those housing fuels, agrochemicals and machinery
  - in stacks of reasonable size, spaced at least 10 metres apart, separately from livestock housing
- ✓ Petrol, diesel and other fuels should be stored in secure areas and storage tank outlets should be padlocked.
- ✓ Fertilisers and pesticides should be kept under lock and key. The Health & Safety Executive can provide further advice on the storage and transportation of fertilisers, particularly ammonium nitrate.
- ✓ Refuse should be disposed of safely and on a regular basis.

## LOCAL COMMUNITY

A strong sense of community still exists in rural locations.

- ✓ Join a 'Rural' or 'Neighbourhood Watch Scheme' to share information.
- ✓ Find out who the local Police contact is for your area.
- ✓ If you have a suspicious caller at your business, record the vehicle registration number, descriptions of the persons and report this to the Police.

## ✓ ALL INCIDENTS AND CRIMES MUST BE REPORTED TO THE POLICE!

**Q. "WHY, the Police do not do anything!"**

**A. Policing is determined by the National Intelligence Model, which is driven by recorded incidents and recorded crime. If you don't file reports then rural crime 'is off the radar'.**