



Keeping our communities  
safe and reassured



## **STOP AND THINK STAY SAFE THIS FESTIVE PERIOD**

Staffordshire Police have launched a crime prevention drive to keep you and your property safe this festive period.

The campaign will start with a focus on vehicle crime, personal safety and robbery.

Chief Superintendent Jeff Moore said: "At a busy time it's all too easy for shoppers to leave cars unlocked, or items on display in the run up to Christmas when they're focused on their shopping. We do see a rise in theft from insecure cars as criminals target vehicles around this time of year.

"Likewise when the number of shoppers increase it's a lot easier for pick-pockets and shoplifters to conceal themselves amongst the crowds.

"We urge people to 'Stop and Think'. Take extra precautions to reduce the risk of becoming a victim by following our simple tips."

As part of the drive, Staffordshire Police will be providing more safety and security tips such as;

- Vehicles with shopping on view are easy pickings for opportunist thieves. If you are taking shopping back to your vehicle before doing more shopping, be aware of who is around you – make sure no one is watching what you are doing. Put shopping out-of-sight in the boot and check your vehicle is locked.
- Always keep purses and wallets safe by keeping them secure in a closed handbag worn across the body or an inside pocket of your clothing.
- No-one thinks twice about using a mobile phone on the go, but it does make us vulnerable to a thief who can quickly snatch it and run. With increased numbers of people in town centres, it's easy for a thief to snatch your phone and disappear into a crowd.

- People are encouraged not to leave Christmas presents on view at home as opportunist thieves will see this as an invitation to steal them. Thieves are also wise to people storing bigger presents such as bikes in sheds and garages. Keep thieves out by making sure you have strong locks and keep storage areas locked. Alternatively, find somewhere in your home or a relative's home to store them safely.
- Online shoppers are urged to protect themselves from cyber crime/fraud by ensuring they only make purchases from reputable websites, are careful when entering credit/debit card numbers and are encouraged to open a Pay Pal account – a more secure way of making purchases on the web. It's wise to update virus protection software on devices before you shop.
- Second hand goods can seem a bargain but ensure you exercise caution on who you are buying them from.
- If you do get a new phone for Christmas or buying it for a family member then make a note of the IMEI number and register it on 'immobilise.com'.

Staffordshire Police is increasing uniformed and plain-clothed officers in certain areas to help keep town centres safe and shoppers reassured, working closely with store staff and CCTV operators to take early action against anyone seen acting suspiciously.

Chief Superintendent Moore concluded: "We want everyone to enjoy the festive period and be able to look back on great memories, do not let that memory be one of being a victim of crime."