



Media Release

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GARDENING THEFTS GROW IN HOT WEATHER

The hot weather and long daylight hours are providing good pickings for thieves and the Harrogate and District Community Safety Partnership is urging householders to be aware of the increased incidence of thefts from gardens. Nine thefts were reported over the last weekend, all of which are believed to have taken place during the early hours when there is enough daylight for the thieves to easily see what they want to take.

These thefts did not include the usual theft from garden sheds and outbuildings, but thefts of plants in pots, birdbaths, barbecue equipment, decorative coloured glazed planters and small garden ornaments.

Robin Davies, Harrogate Borough Council's Crime Reduction Officer said: "With the growth in popularity of gardening and gardening make over shows on TV most of us are spending a lot of time, money and effort on our gardens. A lot of what we plant and display in our gardens can be easy items for thieves to sell on.

"We appreciate that this type of offence is not an easy one to guard against, as it is often difficult to secure pots and planters and decorative stone items. But we should certainly be putting away anything that can be stored. The barbecue, garden furniture and children's toys should all be put away overnight. Better to spend a minute or two storing them than having to do without them."

Robin also advises looking at ways of securing garden statues to their plinth or to the ground, or even to a building. "Thinking that an item is too heavy and cannot be removed should not be taken for granted, he said. "I recall an instance in a previous year where a statue that needed three adult men to lift it was stolen and has not been seen again."

Postcode marking is a way of identifying property and in some cases may dissuade a thief from taking something that is conspicuously marked. Paint or engrave the postcode onto the underside or inside of pots, planters and similar items. If there are garden gates or other ways of securing the garden then they should be used to make it as difficult as possible for items to be removed. Take photographs or make a video of items on display. They are often difficult to describe but easy to identify from a picture.

Anyone with any information concerning this type of offence or who sees similar items being offered for sale anywhere should remember the Police Ratcatcher operation and telephone Crime Stoppers. To pass on information telephone Crime Stoppers on 0800 555111. ENDS

FURTHER INFORMATION: is available from Mr Robin Davies, Crime Reduction Officer on 01423 556986.