



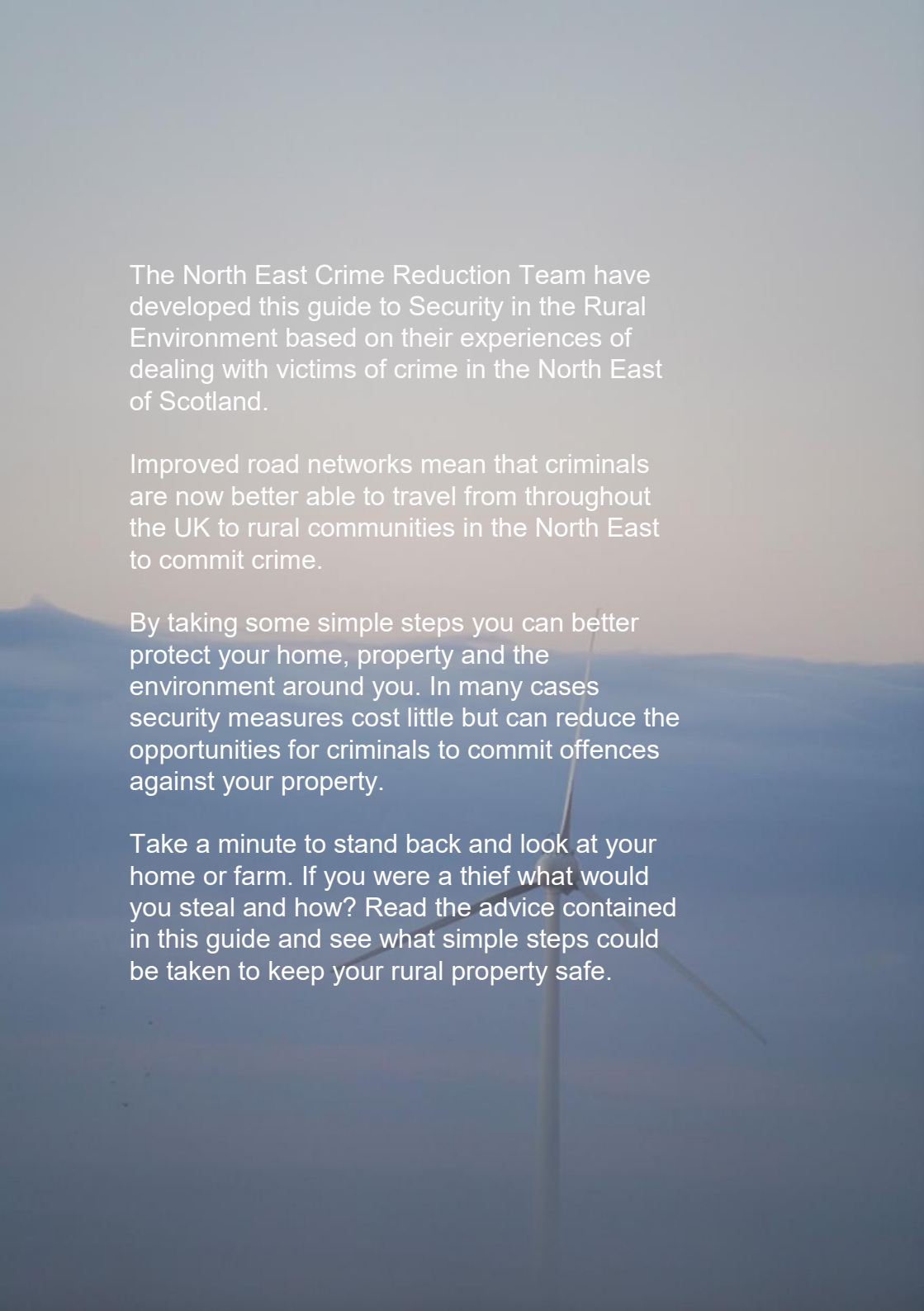
**POLICE
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA

Security in the Rural Environment





The North East Crime Reduction Team have developed this guide to Security in the Rural Environment based on their experiences of dealing with victims of crime in the North East of Scotland.

Improved road networks mean that criminals are now better able to travel from throughout the UK to rural communities in the North East to commit crime.

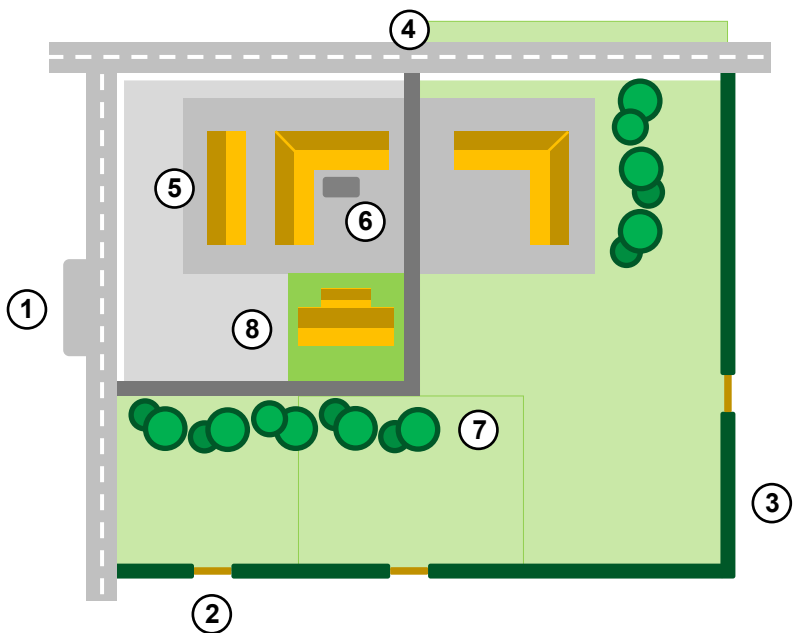
By taking some simple steps you can better protect your home, property and the environment around you. In many cases security measures cost little but can reduce the opportunities for criminals to commit offences against your property.

Take a minute to stand back and look at your home or farm. If you were a thief what would you steal and how? Read the advice contained in this guide and see what simple steps could be taken to keep your rural property safe.



The **onion-peeling principle** involves thinking about your business and its premises as a series of layers.

When using the onion-peeling principle you should take security measures at each layer to delay and deter criminals and to protect or remove any potential targets for crime.



How to Look at Your Farm

- 1 Your Perimeter**
Look for laybys and field entrances where thieves could park-up and observe your property or use these areas to leave vehicles to enter your farm.
- 2 Gates, boundary fences and hedges**
Consider one point of entry for fields. This gives hare courses and thieves less options. Make sure gates and fences are in good order. Thorny hedges can make a formidable defence.
- 3 Entry points**
Consider one point of entry and exit for your farm. Secure this point using a good quality steel gate or barrier. Lock it every night and make sure thieves can't drive round it.
- 4 Buildings**
Ensure all doors have three points of locking. Use bright LED PIR security lighting.
- 5 Fuel tanks**
Site fuel tanks out of sight of roads and make sure they are directly visible from the house or farm office.
- 6 Garden Bushes and Hedges**
Don't give thieves a place to hide. Make sure hedges and bushes are trimmed back.
- 7 Your Home**
Ensure all doors and windows have quality locks. Look for those endorsed as 'Secured by Design.' Consider a 'smart' CCTV system combined with bright LED lighting that provides alerts to your mobile device .



YOUR PERIMETER



Your Perimeter

Physical and visible deterrents often give criminals the first indication that the owner of a property has an awareness of security. Any security measures you put in place will have to be overcome to reach the 'target' and criminals will often move on elsewhere to look for easier pickings.

Take a close look at the outer perimeter of your property and reduce access by removing all gates and entrances that are no longer in use and replace them with a permanent fence or other barrier.

Look for laybys and field entrances where thieves could park-up and observe your property or use these areas to leave vehicles to enter your farm. Thieves will often walk considerable distances across fields to avoid being observed rather than drive in through the main entrance. If possible block them up. This reduces the opportunity for criminals to park-up unobserved.

Ensure the correct CCTV signage is placed around your perimeter. Signs can be a great deterrent in themselves.

Planting thorny bushes or hedges provides a natural barrier. This type of planting can also be used to reinforce fencing already in place.

Walls and fences should be properly maintained and any signs of damage repaired.

Encourage employees and neighbours to be vigilant and to report and share any suspicious activity or vehicles.

YOUR ACCESS ROADS
AND GATES



SPARC

SCOTTISH PARTNERSHIP AGAINST RURAL CRIME



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**
keeping people safe

**THIEVES
BEWARE**



SelectaDNA®
Advanced Forensic Marking

**IS USED IN
THIS AREA**



Your Access Roads and Gates

Establish a single entrance to your property. This makes it much easier to secure your property and observe who is coming and going. Place a gate or barrier at the public end of your farm. Thieves will be unable to get their vehicle close to your property which makes it much harder to load up your property and make good their escape quickly. If they can't get close to the 'target' they will more than likely move on to somewhere easier.

If a gate or entrance is not in use for a lengthy period place a temporary obstruction in front of it so it cannot be opened or ensure it is locked securely.

Secure all gates with good quality padlocks and chains. Ensure that fixing bolts cannot be removed easily. There is no point having a good locking system if the gate can be removed from its hinges.

Invert or cap gate hinges to prevent gates being lifted off to provide access or from being stolen.

Ditches round the perimeter of your property should also be considered to obstruct criminals.



YOUR BUILDINGS



Your Buildings

It is important to inspect your buildings and upgrade your storage to reflect the value of the property stored within. Keep all doors locked except when property is in use and there is someone present.

Ensure all external doors are of solid construction, well maintained and fitted with suitable locks.

Use non-return screws or coach bolts on hinges. When a good quality lock is fitted the hinges can become the weakest part of the door.

All doors should have three points of locking – top, middle and bottom – similar to a modern house door with a multi-point locking system.

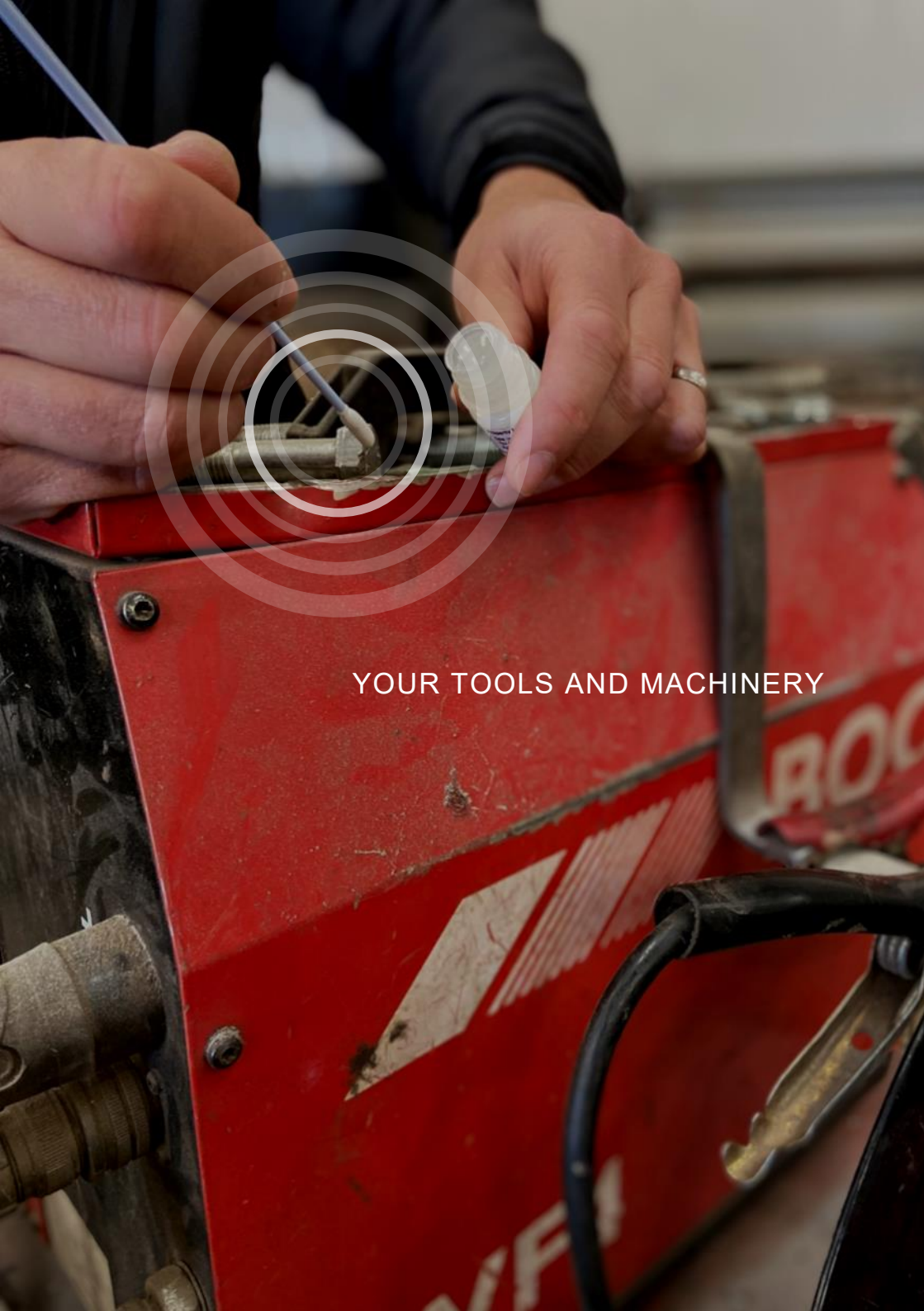
Locks should be fitted to all windows. Windows should be covered to prevent property inside from being seen. If windows aren't in use then board them up – both inside and out – using coach bolts.

Use quality hasps that fold over the bolt heads when locked. Locks are only as good as the hasps to which they are attached. Use coach bolts in preference to screws and use large back washers. Implement a system for checking facilities at the end of the day to ensure they are secured.

Keep all doors and windows shut and locked when not in use.

Make sure window and door frames are in good repair.

Consider security bars and grilles for vulnerable windows and openings.



YOUR TOOLS AND MACHINERY



Your Tools and Machinery

During 2022 the most stolen tools and machinery from rural properties in the North East were quad bikes, quality hand tools and 12 volt power tools.

Don't leave barn or shed doors open especially if they can be seen from a road. All vehicles, especially quads, should be parked in a secure building overnight.

Consider securing your quad using a ground anchor, heavy duty chain and quality closed shackle padlock.

A relatively new option for securing your quad is the SUIP Protector. Simply drive your quad / ATV / UTV onto the SUIP Protector and turn a key to lock it in place. Accredited as 'Sold Secure Diamond,' the highest available certification, it provides an excellent deterrent to potential thieves.

www.suipco.ie



Remember-thieves don't want to hang around. Any security measure that require time and a noisy angle grinder will put most thieves off.

Never leave the keys for any vehicle in the ignition.

Fit tracking devices to all high value vehicles and machinery such as those made by Cantrack. Thieves will often steal machinery overnight and move it to a nearby location where it is concealed ready to be uplifted at a later time. Thieves do this to check to see if the machinery is fitted with a tracker. If the stolen property is still there 24 hours later they will return and take it away rather than risk getting caught. Tracking devices allow owners to track machinery quickly and get it back.

www.cantrack.com

Keep a record of all machinery, tools, vehicles and equipment with photographs and serial numbers. Property that is clearly and obviously marked is less attractive to thieves as it is more difficult to sell. If your property is stolen and later recovered it will be much easier for the property to be returned to you. Consider using a DNA marking product such as Selecta DNA. One kit can be used to mark multiple items on your property with a code that is unique to you.

www.selectadna.co.uk



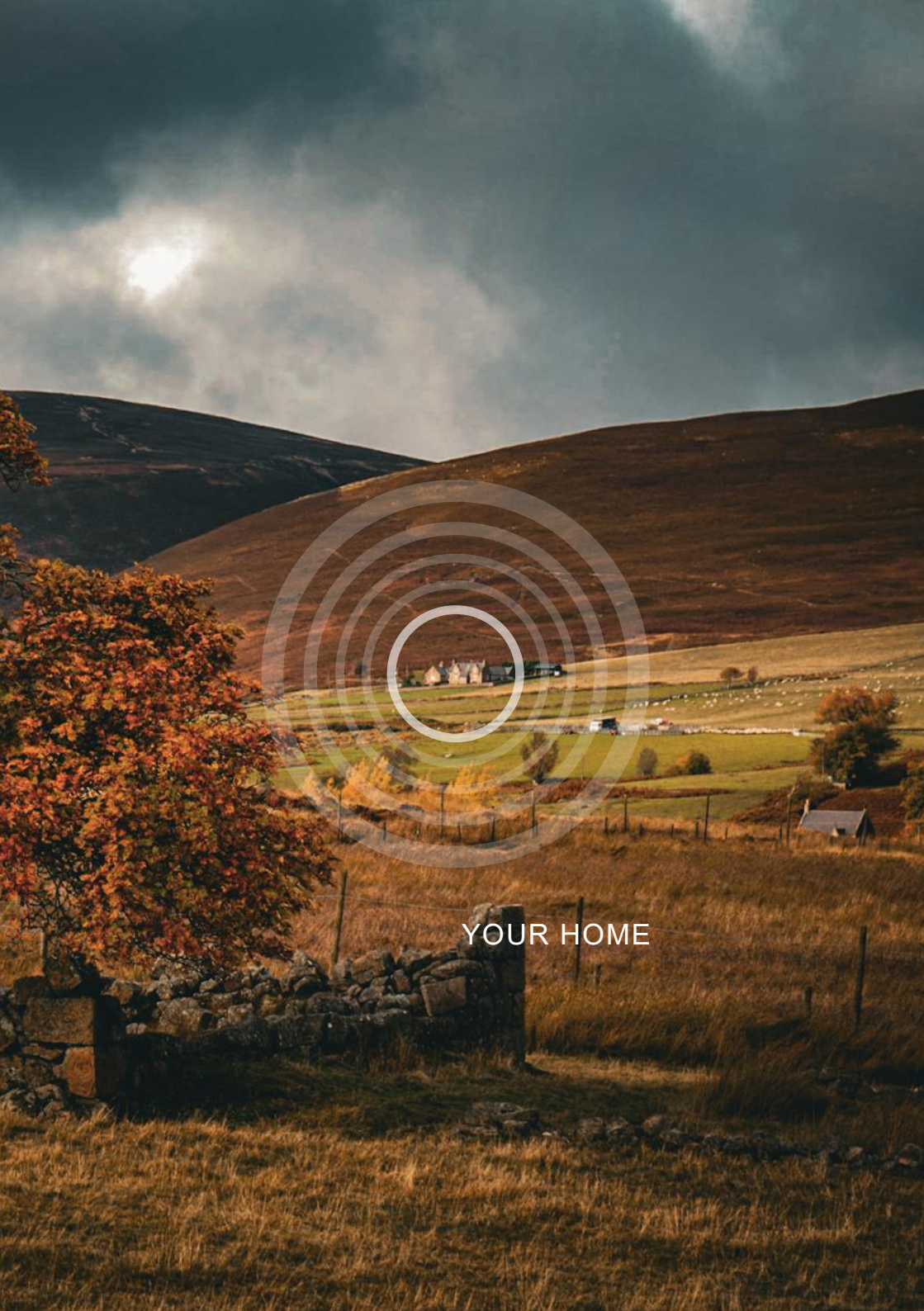
Vehicle fuel tanks should be fitted with locking fuel caps. Park vehicles with the fuel tank next to a wall to make access to the fuel tank as awkward as possible. Fuel is an expensive commodity and a common target for thieves. Avoid leaving vehicles exposed in fields with full tanks of fuel or filling the tanks last thing at night.

Restrict access to where vehicles are parked by closing and locking gates giving access to your property. Fuel is heavy and thieves will not carry large quantities over any distance to their vehicle.

Consider fitting CESAR marking to your vehicles. CESAR is the nationally recognised marking scheme and is fitted at source to many new quads and tractors. CESAR gives each machine its own unique 'fingerprint' that is impossible for thieves to remove. Only approved suppliers can fit CESAR.

A well-maintained farm yard where any theft of equipment would be immediately obvious will help to discourage criminals. Be tidy. Put tools away and keep storage areas locked so that items are not left on display. This not only reduces the chances of tools themselves being stolen, it also reduces the chances of an opportunist using your tools to break into your house, barn or sheds.





YOUR HOME



Your Home

There are a lot of misconceptions when it comes to rural home security; one of which is that rural properties are less prone to crime. While it is true that crime rates tend to be higher in more densely populated, urban areas, that doesn't mean that living in a rural area means you are less likely to be broken into. Criminals will take advantage of rural locations where there are less people and there is less chance of being seen.

Doors and windows

Lock the door. Sounds obvious doesn't it? Get into the habit of locking the door behind you even when in the house.

Consider replacing older doors that have single mortice locks with doors that have multi-point locking mechanisms and are accredited as being 'Secured by design.'

Fit locks to all ground floor and accessible windows. Remove the keys when locked. Consider storing the key in the same location within each room so in the case of an emergency you know exactly where to look.

Lighting

Fit lighting to illuminate outbuildings, courtyards, and houses. Thieves do not like to be seen.

Sensor controlled security lights which activate automatically when movement is detected will alert you to anyone approaching your property.

Away from home?

Timer switches for your home give the impression that someone is in. Place timers in different rooms and have them activate at different times. Smart plugs allow you to change timings via a smartphone even whilst away.

Alarms and CCTV

Modern technology means it is simple and easy to monitor your farm regardless of where you are - particularly important in rural locations where properties are isolated. Look for alarms, CCTV and lighting systems that are linked to your Wi-Fi and provide you with almost instant notification of any intruders to your mobile device. Cover all building access points and approach roads.

Inside

Don't leave your keys on the inside of locks or just inside the door. If you have a spare house key don't leave it under a mat, plant-pot or other easy to spot place. Never keep house keys and vehicle keys on the same keyring. Make it as hard as possible to break into your home or to steal your vehicle.

Consider investing in a secure key safe and avoid locating it where it can be seen from outside your property.

Property Marking

There are many products which can be used to mark your property. These are often inexpensive and can help to deter thieves and aid in the recovery of property which is stolen. DNA Marking products contain a unique code. This code is registered to your address.

These products are normally clear liquids which can be painted onto your possessions and are invisible to the naked eye but can be viewed under ultra-violet light.

Marking products can be applied to both household items and machinery alike.

Photograph valuable items and note the serial numbers of large appliances and electrical goods.



Fuel Theft

Fuel theft costs the rural economy in Scotland a disproportionate amount every year. There are two main areas for this this type of theft; domestic, particularly in rural locations, and commercial, often from forestry sites and HGV's. Crime groups will target oil companies and follow them for both domestic oil and red diesel to farms and rural properties as well as targeting forestry and windfarms.

Many thieves use Google Maps to find satellite images of fuel tanks. Locate your tank away from roads so it cannot be seen by passing traffic. Position the tank so you have a clear view of it from your office window or home.

A locked gate or barrier at your farm entrance will make life much harder for thieves as they will have to carry heavy fuel a considerable distance.

Thieves often come armed with tools so it's worth investing in quality locks, locking fuel caps and anti-siphoning deterrents to slow down the criminals and reduce the likelihood of success.

If possible isolate the power to your tank.

With the majority of thieves striking at night install automatic security lighting. Low energy dusk till dawn lights are a low-cost option.

If your tank has a lid fit suitable locks. Your installation engineer or fuel supplier can advise you.

Prevention products to consider

The Oil Defender by Fuel Alarms Ltd
– with SBD Accreditation
www.securedbydesign.com
www.fuelalarms.com

Watchman Oil Tank Alarm -
Kingspan, Great Britain
www.kingspan.com

Hare Coursing

Hare coursing is no longer a seasonal issue and can occur at any time of year on large areas of relatively flat land.

Those involved often travel long distances to engage in this form of criminality and use dogs of varying breeds to chase hares by sight. Coursers will regularly drive into fields causing significant damage to crops and allowing livestock to wander onto roads by leaving gates open.

Limit the number of access points into a field and secure gates with quality padlocks and chains. Block off unused gates. This gives coursers less options for accessing property and making good their escape.

Incidents of hare coursing should be reported to Police Scotland via 101 or 999 in the case of an ongoing incident.

State clearly that someone is hare coursing. Explain that they are using dogs to pursue and kill hares.

Advise if the coursers are subjecting you to other criminal activity such as assault, causing damage or antisocial behaviour.

Provide your location details. Consider using what3words.

Describe the people involved, their appearance and behaviour.

Describe any equipment and dogs such as breed, colour and size.

Describe the suspect vehicle - make, model, registration, colour, identifiable features and if possible their direction of travel.

Take photographs or video footage if safe to do so.

Protect yourself from fraud

The chance of buying at a bargain price in the current financial climate can be very appealing but there is always a risk in buying from an unknown source or without seeing the item first.

If the equipment price seems too good to be true then it probably is – check the market value and find a legitimate reason the price is so low before progressing.

Ensure the seller has a valid address and telephone number. If possible visit them at their home or business premises. Be suspicious of anyone offering to meet halfway at a services or car park.

Google and Trustpilot can provide information on a company including reviews about their services. Use multiple different sources to carry out research.

Check important, identifiable features such as serial numbers. Make sure they haven't been scratched away particularly on trailers and quad bike frames.

Always check the documentation related to the machinery or vehicle. Check the details on the Vehicle Registration Cert (log book) with the tractor serial/chassis number.

Only buy from a trustworthy source. Buying from a trusted dealer can help to reduce the risk of being scammed and can also make it easier to get redress or have any problems rectified.

Usually it makes most sense to pay by credit card. That way criminals can't empty your bank account and you'll get more consumer protection.

Don't be rushed into making the wrong decision.

If you're unsure walk away until you have carried out more research and checks.

What makes a good padlock?

Hardened boron alloy steel closed shackle. The 'shackle' is protected in the body of the padlock giving cut and twist resistance.



Anti-drill protection
on cylinder

Solid hardened steel
lock body

Anti-corrosion
storm proof cover

The North East Crime Reduction team always recommend using a 'closed shackle padlock' but what exactly does that mean?

What makes a good hasp & staple?

Be wary of those that are made from thin material - especially the staple (the 'eye' that the padlock fits through) as this is frequently the attack route for thieves.




Always ensure both sides are bolted through. Don't just use wood screws

Quality hasp sets have a vertical staple eye. This allows a closed shackle padlock to hang properly. A horizontal eye means a closed shackle lock will protrude outwards making it more vulnerable to attack with a hammer.

What makes a good ground anchor?

Chaining your machinery to something solid and secure makes it much less likely it will be stolen. Ground anchors can be used for bikes, caravans, quad bikes, ATVs, lawnmowers and trailers.




Different fitting kits are available for concrete, brick wall, block wall or inside vehicles.

The shackle resists freezing, cutting and grinding attacks and cannot be bolt-cropped.

The Torc Ground Anchor is Sold Secure Gold accredited. The 22mm diameter forged hardened steel shackle has to be cut twice to defeat it.

What makes a good chain?

A high quality chain combined with a Sold Secure Gold Accredited RoundLock made specifically for the size of chain you are using presents a formidable barrier to any thief.



If securing multiple items use more than one chain and position a ground anchor at the centre of the group. Have one chain going one way and another chain going the other with both chains coming back and looping through the anchor. If a thief manages to defeat a single chain they don't get everything in one go.

When securing high value items such as quads and trailers use a chain with a minimum diameter of 16mm. These are all but impossible to cut with a bolt cropper. High quality 22mm chains will withstand attack from angle grinders.

Security Standards Explained

When looking for new security products we recommend buying items that are accredited as being 'Secured by Design' or 'Sold Secure.' But what does that mean?

Secured by Design (SBD)

operates an accreditation scheme on behalf of the UK police for products or services that have met recognised security standards.

Such products or services must be capable of deterring or preventing crime and are known as 'Police Preferred Specification.'

Sold Secure is administered by the Master Locksmiths

Association. Approval is classified into 3 main categories; Bronze, Silver & Gold (with an addition of Diamond for certain product types).

The categories reflect the amount of time allocated per test and the type of tools used. This can vary depending on what test is specified.

what3words

Street addresses often aren't accurate enough to specify precise locations such as building entrances and don't exist for remote rural areas.

This makes it hard to find places and prevents people from describing exactly where help is needed in an emergency.

what3words divides the world into 3 metre squares and gives each square a unique combination of three words.

Around the world, emergency services are using what3words to find and help people in need. You can even use it to assist with deliveries.

Download for free at your Apple or Android app store.

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Rural Watch SCOTLAND

We aim to ALERT you to:



Local crimes and emerging trends that may impact you and your community



Information on safety, resilience and community wellbeing



Prevention tactics to protect your home and business



Approved "Secured by Design" products and recommendations



Advice on how to secure your property, equipment and machinery



The opportunity to share best practice



**Rural Watch
SCOTLAND**

Delivered by Neighbourhood Watch Scotland



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**Sign up to Alerts
to register**

www.ruralwatchscotland.co.uk



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