



Lead Theft

Around the county we are seeing a number of thefts of lead from roofs again from churches, historic buildings and also more modern buildings. All too often the theft of lead from a roof is only discovered after a downpour of rain and then the value of the theft is often exceeded by the value of the water ingress damage, sometimes with heritage properties irreversible. For this reason it is important to know your building, where those attractive metals have been used and check regularly that these are intact.

Listed below are a few crime prevention tips in relation to metal theft, but not all will apply to your property as each location may have site-specific issues:

1. Make it difficult for the thief; where possible remove any climbing aids.
2. Metals are heavy so make them walk a distance by securing gates when possible, and keep wheel barrows and wheelie bins locked away.
3. Keep sheds and outbuildings secure with good locks (see www.soldsecure.com), it adds insult to injury if they have used your tools and ladders.
4. Maximise surveillance by sympathetically cutting back shrubs and trees where possible.
5. Ask neighbours to watch over your property and report any suspicious activity whilst it is happening, crime being committed 999, after the event 101. Start a neighbourhood watch if you don't already have one.
6. External lighting for security? Only if someone will see what is being lit up or notice the lights have come on if it is a PIR activated light. If not, the only person to benefit from lighting is the thief.
7. Illusion of occupancy – a light and radio left on inside etc.
8. Consider using a forensic marker suitable for roofs (see www.securedbydesign.com), and if you have it ensure that you have clear signage at possible climb points like downpipes and at your perimeter.
9. Consider a roof top alarm and possibly CCTV (see www.nsi.org.uk or www.ssaib.org); again if you have security flaunt it, ensure you have clear signage displayed.
10. Consider planting prickly shrubs at possible climb points and to reinforce boundaries to deter the thief.
11. Consider the use of anti-climb paints, but remember not below 2m and signage must be displayed.

Further useful advice can be found on the internet including these webpages:

<http://thecrimepreventionwebsite.com/other-crime-prevention/728/metal-theft/>

<http://www.ecclesiastical.com/churchmatters/churchguidance/churchsecurity/theftofmetal/index.aspx>