

## Operation Spoke

A significant proportion of cycle theft across York, relates to thefts of bikes from garden sheds. Operation Spoke is a partnership led operation which aims to property mark a large proportion of bikes in the city. Property marking means your bike can be easily identified by police officers should it ever be lost or stolen and quickly reunited with you.

Under this scheme your bike will be given a small unique marking that will be linked to your details on the Operation Spoke database. Every bike registered in this way will also be registered with IMMOBILISE, a national property register. It will also give you the opportunity to register other valuable household items.

The marking of your bike will take less than a minute and you will not need to do any thing else. Your details will not be used for any purpose other than the prevention and detection of crime.

Please see [www.saferyork.org.uk](http://www.saferyork.org.uk) for a list of Operation Spoke events running across the city.



# Securing Your Shed

**Sheds are often full of expensive goods. They can be relatively easy for a burglar to access as they are often insecure or in a poor state of repair. As we've all become more vigilant about the security of our homes, sheds are often the next best option for a thief.**

Firstly, it's important to ask yourself if your garden shed is the most appropriate place to store valuable items. Traditionally a garden shed was designed to store a few gardening tools and a mower. Now, for convenience we often use them to store expensive bikes, sports equipment or even quad and motorbikes. Sheds are simply not designed for this purpose.

In addition, by allowing a burglar easy access to your shed, you're also giving them access to the tools they need to break into your house.

However, if your shed is your only means of storage there are a number of simple steps you can take to improve its security and protect your belongings.

## How well is your shed constructed?

Make sure your shed is properly constructed and anchored to the ground. Ensure your shed is in a good state of repair and that hinges and locks cannot be removed. If you do not need windows consider boarding them over or use perforated mesh grilles if you need the light. At a very minimum obscure the view from the window of the contents inside.



**For more crime prevention advice, please see:**  
[www.saferyork.org.uk](http://www.saferyork.org.uk)



## Think about where your shed is sited

Avoid placing your shed against a house or garage where it can be used to climb to a first floor window. Ideally you should ensure a good sightline to the shed from your home.



## Secure your shed

Secure your shed with a good quality lock. It may not always be appropriate to fit a heavy duty padlock, hasp and staple as a shed door and frame may not be strong enough to support them. Smaller, but sturdy, padlocks, padbolts, hasps and staples are available for this purpose. Whether fitting heavy duty devices or otherwise, always use coach-bolt fixings through the door and frame.



It's also worthwhile considering the purchase of a shed bar which helps prevent the shed door being opened. This protects the lock and hinge side of the door and provides a highly visible deterrent.

Never leave your shed insecure. Ensure it is locked at all times, even if you are in the vicinity.



## Consider purchasing a shed alarm

In addition to fitting physical security measures, it's worth considering the installation of a shed alarm. There are various stand-alone devices on the market and they fall into two main categories:

- ▶ A passive infra-red detector within the shed to detect movement and body heat.
- ▶ A door contact system

Both systems will operate a sounder if the shed is accessed without the correct de-activation. They are available with battery or mains power supply and can be purchased from your local locksmiths, DIY or discount store.



## Anchor down your items

Consider installing an anchoring point into the floor of your shed for use with bikes and other high value items. If you are unable to fit an anchoring point fill a bucket with cement and chain items to this. Tools can be secured by chaining them together. Strong, lockable boxes or cages can also be purchased for storage of expensive goods.



## Mark All Your Property

Mark all valuables with your postcode and house number. Keep a record of all marked equipment. Take photographs of your more expensive items of equipment. Register goods free of charge on the IMMOBILISE national property register [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com). Goods recorded on IMMOBILISE can be identified by police officers, from forces across the country.



## Outdoor Lighting

Good outdoor lighting can put off or draw attention to a burglar.

The most appropriate form of lighting to use is high-efficiency, low-energy lighting, controlled by a dusk-to-dawn sensor so that it only comes on when it is dark. This provides a uniform and constant level of light. It costs very little to run.



## Hostile Planting

Prickly or 'hostile' plants can slow down or deter unlawful entry to your premises. You can even use them underneath vulnerable windows to prevent anyone getting near enough to look inside. Varieties of plant can include:

- ▶ Pyracantha (Firethorn) all varieties
- ▶ Prunus Spinosa (Blackthorn)
- ▶ Mahonia – all varieties
- ▶ Ilex (Holly) – aquifolium varieties
- ▶ Rose – climbing and rambling
- ▶ Ulex Europeaus (Gorse)
- ▶ Crataegus Monogyna (Hawthorn)
- ▶ Berberis – Ottawensis Superba, Stenophylla, Darwinii