

- Do not leave your music player in a car and on display. Always take it with you
- Take extra care crossing the road as you might not hear oncoming traffic. Even better remove your headphones before crossing
- Back up all your work regularly and always keep disks separate from your computer so that you have proof of copyright and a copy of your files
- If you're ordering goods over the internet make sure the company has a secure server. (You will know the site is secure if you see a padlock at the bottom right of the screen)

Laptops

Thieves love laptops. As well as the money they will get from selling them, they often contain personal information (such as bank details). Criminals can use this information to steal money from you or pretend they are you to get money or goods from other places.

If you follow these steps you will make your laptop more secure:

- If you need to carry a laptop with you, try to be discreet about it. The bags that laptops come in are obviously laptop bags, so try to put it in something else
- Make sure your private information stays private. Keep PINs, passwords and personal financial information in a secure location away from your laptop
- Don't send your bank details by e-mail or store them on your computer.
- Do not leave your laptop in a car and on display. Always take it with you, if you can't take it with you lock it in the boot
- Consider security marking the battery and laptop with your postcode and street number

For further information please call your local Safer Neighbourhood Team.

Wear Valley and Teesdale Locality
Tel: 01388 742111
Sedgefield Locality Tel: 01388 816166
Derwentside Locality
Tel: 01207 693693
Durham Locality Tel: 0191 301 8669
Chester-le-Street Locality
Tel: 0191 389 5761
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safer.communities@durham.gov.uk
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Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

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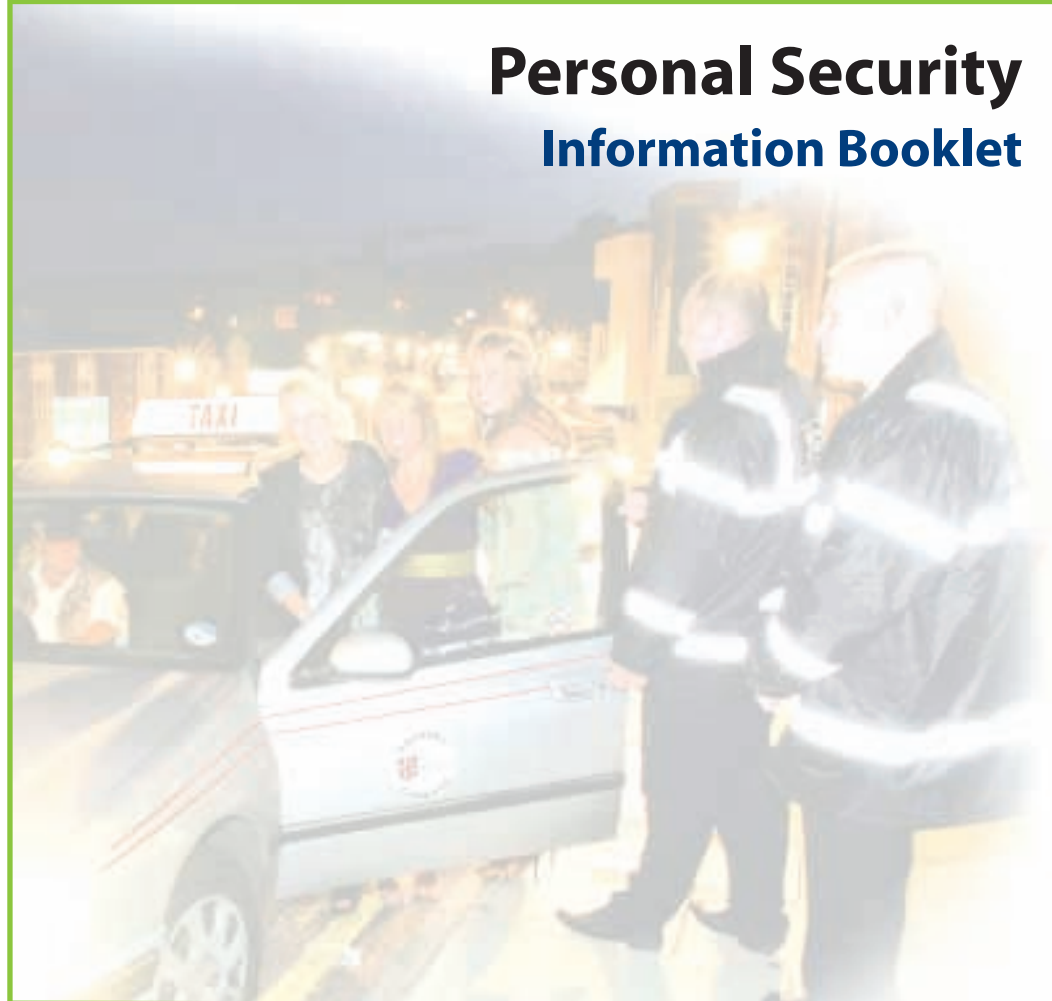
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Personal Security Information Booklet



Personal Security

The chance that you or your family will be a victim of an assault, rape or robbery is very low. However, we know that some people are still frightened that they, or someone they know, will be the victim of a violent attack.

The best way to cut the risk of an attack is by taking sensible precautions. You may already be doing this as part of your everyday lives without realising it:

- Plan your route before setting off. You will be safer in brighter, well-lit, busy areas
- Tell friend, families or people you work with where you are going and what time you will be back
- Take time to think about what you would do in an emergency and have a rough plan in your mind
- Carry your bag close to you with the clasp facing inwards
- Don't take short cuts through dark alleys or across waste land
- Cover up expensive jewellery

Stay Safe in Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (PHV)

Licensed taxi drivers have gone through a vehicle, criminal record and health check before they are licensed by Durham County Council.

- Always travel in a licensed taxi or PHV. Check the signs on the outside of the car and the drivers' badge before you get in. You should never agree to travel in

an unlicensed vehicle with an unlicensed driver.

- Remember touting for a taxi or PHV journey is an offence.
- If travelling alone always sit behind the driver in the back seat.

Staying Safe on Public Transport

- On an empty bus sit near the driver
- On a train try to find a carriage with other people and sit near the exit where you will be getting off. Check to see where the emergency chain is

Staying Safe when Driving

- Make sure your vehicle is in good condition
- Plan your route and stay on main roads if you can
- Make sure you have enough money and petrol for your journey
- Carry a torch in your car
- Do not pick up hitch-hikers
- Keep doors locked when driving and keep bags and valuables out of site
- If you park in the daylight, think what the area will be like if you will be returning after dark

If the worst should happen:

- If someone threatens you, shout or scream for help and set off a personal attack alarm if you have one, this might work to unnerve the attacker
- You can defend yourself with reasonable force using items that you have with you, for

example an umbrella. However, the law doesn't allow anything which can be described as an offensive weapon

- If you have been attacked call the police straight away and seek help

Personal Belongings

We all have gadgets nowadays, mobile phones, ipods, PDA's, Blackberries, even laptops are becoming more and more portable. Most of this equipment is very desirable and can become a target for crime.

It is important to keep these belongings safe, in most cases they store lots of personal information about us, let's not make it easy for a criminal. Mobile phone robbery is more likely to happen in big city centres. Although County Durham is mostly a rural area, we all travel to different places taking our phones, ipods etc with us.

Here are some quick and easy ways to keep you and your valuables safe:

Mobile phones / PDA / Blackberries

Research shows that children of school age are more likely to become victims of mobile phone theft than adults.

- In 23 per cent of incidents victims were using their mobile phone or had it on display when it was targeted
- Try not to use your phone or handset in crowded areas if you feel unsafe

- Avoid displaying your phone or handset in public view, where thieves can see it as a target
- Do not leave your phone or handset unattended and keep it with you at all times
- Do not leave your phone or handset in a car and on display. Always take it with you
- Register your phone or handset with your network operator and keep a copy of the IMEI number. (To obtain the IMEI number dial *#06# into your phone)
- Consider security marking the battery and phone with your postcode and street number
- Always report your phone or handset stolen, to the police and your network operator, (this will block the phone handset and SIM card making it useless)
- Always use your phone's security lock code or PIN number, protecting the phone and the stored number content

Ipods / MP3s / MP4s

When using your music player outside you will not be able to hear other noise and this may make you unaware of any danger that you might be in.

- Plan your route. You will be safer in brighter, well-lit, busy areas
- Make sure other people cannot see, or hear, your music player when you are using it
- Keep your music player with you at all times. Do not leave it unattended