

Please see below a timely reminder on how to stay as safe and secure as possible at this festive time of year.

When you're out shopping

- Stay alert and be aware of what's going on around you.
- Keep valuables in inside pockets of clothing or bags.
- Only carry the cash and cards that you need. Always shield the PIN pad when entering your PIN.
- Park in an open, well-lit area. Visit www.parkmark.co.uk for details of approved car parks.
- Avoid going back to your car to leave your shopping part-way through your trip. If you have to keep presents in the car, make sure they are out of view in the boot, the car is locked, and keep the receipts with you.
- Deter pickpockets and muggers. Don't overburden yourself with bags/packages. Be extra careful with purses and wallets. Always carry a purse close to your body and not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front trouser pocket, likewise with your phone and keys.
- Shopping with children? Make sure they learn to go to a store attendant or security guard if you get separated.
- Never leave your bag unattended on your trolley whilst shopping and don't leave it in your vehicle when returning your trolley.

At cash machines

- If you see anything suspicious alert the bank or call the police on 101.
- Shield the keypad when typing in your PIN at a cash machine or in a shop.
- Only withdraw as much as you need and avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Put your money and cards away (not in your back pocket) safely before leaving the machine. Ideally pay with a debit/credit card wherever possible.

When you're out for the evening

- NEVER leave your things unattended.
- Make sure someone knows where you are going and when you'll be home.
- Avoid walking home alone and never with someone you don't know well.
- Drink responsibly, arrange for a member of your group to be a designated driver.
- Check your taxi drivers ID and never get into an unlicensed taxi.

At home

- Don't leave presents under your Christmas tree if they are visible from windows or doors.
- Never keep large amounts of cash at home.
- Make sure you keep your doors and windows locked at all times.
- Keys should always be kept out of sight and not left in doors or in view of windows.
- Make your house look occupied, use a timer switch to operate lamps as it starts to get dark, leave a radio on.
- Don't open the door to anybody you don't recognise. Not sure? Don't open the door!

Many thanks to the Erith SNT who originally sent this out.