

PRESS RELEASE



March 23rd 2016

Pest control

Protect the garden from unwelcome visitors as thieves clock in

As the clocks go forward bringing more hours of sunshine, green-fingered homeowners are keen to dig out summer valuables including tools, bicycles, play equipment and patio furniture. But before they do, Lloyds Bank Insurance is urging them to consider securing their borders against the common garden thief.

Unforced burglary claims cost an average of £1,120 last year. Last summer, Lloyds Bank Insurance recorded a 14% increase in unforced burglary claims when compared to the winter months*. These claims tended to rise along with the mercury, reaching their peak in July.

The Lloyds Bank Insurance Britain at Home Report** showed UK homeowners spend an average of £318 on items for the garden every year, with parents of under 18s spending even more, averaging £380 a year.

The report suggests this higher spend among parents may be a bid to tempt kids outdoors and away from computer screens, as more than a third (37%) said their children do not spend enough time outdoors.

With one in five (20 per cent) of parents investing in Wendy houses, a quarter (26%) purchasing swings and slides and almost a third installing trampolines, it seems they want to create mini-playgrounds to encourage children to go outside. Despite the significant investment in outdoor space, 41% haven't got secure locks on garden gates, 22% said items left outside are not insured, and a further 16% don't know whether outdoor items are insured or not.

Tim Downes, senior claims manager at Lloyds Bank Insurance, said: "We know that burglars will often follow the path of least resistance, so it's a good idea for homeowners to ramp up security outside the home at this time of year to avoid becoming an easy target. Taking some cost effective simple steps and having adequate insurance which includes garden cover can help you avoid stumping up for stolen items should the worst happen."

Tips from Lloyds Bank Insurance for keeping your garden safe:

Lock up: Always ensure garden sheds, gates, garages and outbuildings remain bolted with a secure lock and make sure there are no gaps in fences or bushes for opportunistic thieves to slip through

Please weight: Put bricks or stones in the bottom of patio tubs to make them more difficult for would-be thieves to carry off

Tag it: Mark valuable items, such as patio furniture and ornaments, with your postcode, and keep photos of your garden valuables in case anything is stolen or vandalised

Border control: If you can't block access to you garden by locking a gate, high walls, spiky fences and prickly bushes can make it more difficult to access the garden

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Long distance gravel: Filling your driveways or front paths with pebbles or gravel can help you to hear someone approaching your property

Hide and don't seek: Avoid leaving tools, lawnmowers and bicycles in plain view in the garden – always lock them away out of sight. Remember tools and ladders can be used to break in too

Join forces: Look into joining your local Neighbourhood Watch scheme in order to help protect you and your neighbours' properties

Total spend on garden equipment, upkeep and maintenance by region

Region	Average spend	Rank
London	£1,441	1
Yorkshire and Humber	£1,122	2
South West	£1,094	3
Wales	£1,022	4
East Midlands	£988	5
North West	£830	6
West Midlands	£827	7
East of England	£774	8
South East	£756	9
Scotland	£719	10
Northern Ireland	£710	11
North East	£648	12

Source: Lloyds Bank Insurance Britain at Home Report April 2015

www.lloydsbank.com/insurance

Notes to editors

*Lloyds Bank Insurance claims data – Summer months are April – September inclusive

**Lloyds Bank Insurance Britain at Home Report, 2000 UK homeowners April 2015

About Lloyds Bank Insurance

Lloyds Bank Home Solutions is underwritten by Lloyds Bank General Insurance Limited and has a 5 Star Defaqto rating. Lloyds Bank Home Options is underwritten by Lloyds Bank General Insurance Limited.

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