

PERSONAL SAFETY

At Work

- Place valuables in a locker or drawer away from areas to which the general public has access. A bag left at the side of a desk or behind the counter presents easy access for the criminal. Wallets left in jackets on the back of chairs, or purses on view, prove similarly attractive. The theft of a handbag, wallet or purse is inconvenient, upsetting, and a personal affront.
- If you are working late unexpectedly, let your family know and if you have not got any transport, try to arrange to be picked up

At Home

- Fit door chain - always put the door chain on when answering the door.
- Fit a door viewer - check callers by looking out of the window or spy hole.
- Check identity of caller before letting them in.
- Always make sure your house or flat is secure. Always secure outside doors.
- Use appropriate alarms.
- Fit window locks.
- Hedging - large hedges creates good hiding places for people to dodge behind, consider cutting them back.
- Fit outside lighting.
- Consider gravelling your footpath - makes a noise under foot to alert someone walking up the path.
- Draw your curtains after dark - make your house look occupied.
- Join a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme (obviously!).
- Secured by Design . Some new properties are built to Secured by Design standard . if looking to buy a new property, enquire if it meets this standard.

Malicious Calls

- Don't answer with your phone number or name.
- Stay in control - show no emotion but tell the caller you don't want their calls and for them to stop ringing you.
- Don't feel obliged to talk to malicious callers, put the phone down.
- If the calls are continuous, consider having football whistle and blowing it loudly into the phone before hanging up.
- Use initials in phone book rather than Mrs Louise ã

- Never reveal you are on your own or any security arrangements.
- Keep a record of the calls . times, dates and if you know the telephone number or name of the caller for the Police and your phone call supplier.
- Inform your phone call supplier and the Police.

Defending Yourself

Personal attacks are rare but they do happen so think about what you would do if someone attacked you. Only you can decide whether you would fight back or avoid confrontation and wait to escape. Prepare yourself for every possibility.

- Assess the situation.
- Is there an opportunity to escape?
- Keep talking . it gives you time to memorise your assailant and look for escape routes.
- Attract attention by shouting - noise is a powerful weapon, it doesn't matter what you shout, just make a lot of noise; FIRE is always a good thing to shout because people will be more willing to get involved if it is a fire and it will confuse your attacker.
- Try not to freeze.
- Buy a personal alarm and carry it with you. Have it in your pocket, be prepared to use it.

Anyone under attack or who has a good reason to believe they will be attacked has the right to defend themselves with such force as is reasonable in the circumstances.

You are not permitted by law to carry anything that can be described as an offensive weapon.

If you have been attacked

Whether you are male or female, if you are the victim of a sexual or violent assault, committed by a stranger or someone you know, it is important that you report your assault to the police, so that we can try and find your attacker or perhaps prevent someone else from being attacked. Information such as:

- Name and address of any witnesses.
- Try to remember what the attacker looked like, did he have any scars, prominent features.
- If a car was involved, try to note the colour, model and registration number.
- Do not shower or wash any clothing as this is vital for medical evidence.

It may be unpleasant or embarrassing for you to talk about it, but the Police will be supportive, sensitive and caring. They will carry out a full investigation. If the violence is within your family, legal protection is possible under either civil or criminal law. In some cases for example, they can require the offender not to enter your home, or even your neighbourhood.

By taking appropriate preventative measures you can greatly reduce the risk of attack.