

Keep Your Bike In Sight To Prevent Theft

Consumers have been advised to be aware of the risk of theft during National Bike Week, which starts tomorrow.

June 15, 2008 (FPRC) -- According to insurance service provider Halifax, one bike is stolen in the UK every 65 seconds, with London identified as the bicycle theft hotspot. In an effort to reduce the risk of being caught out by the crime, the group advises consumers to take a number of precautionary measures to reduce risk. Indeed, having a bike stolen can be a costly affair, with the average insurance payout for replacement of a bicycle said by the insurer to amount to £337. For those who have been unfortunate enough to fall victim to the crime, taking out a personal loan may provide the necessary funds to get back on the roads again and enjoy the health benefits that cycling brings.

Among the methods proposed was making use of available bike racks and always locking bicycles securely, regardless of how long the rider plans to be away from it. People should also look to lock their bike in well-lit, public areas wherever possible to reduce the likelihood that opportunistic thieves will attempt to take it quickly. Furthermore, consumers are advised to keep bikes locked away indoors when they are not in use and make sure that doors to buildings in which bicycles are kept remain locked at all times. Halifax suggested that opportunistic thieves will be happy to take their chances if they see a bike that is unprotected, even if homeowners are nearby.

The group also advised against using cable locks as these are easier to cut than steel U-locks. For further security, anti-pry devices are also recommended. These protect the bike from being levered away from the object it is secured to, thus acting as an additional deterrent to thieves. Consumers were also urged to register with bike ownership agencies and mark their cycle with a UV pen detailing postcodes.

Commenting on the recent crime survey statistics, David Rochester, head of underwriting at Halifax, said: "One bicycle theft every 65 seconds is shocking. While cycling has many benefits for people's health and also the environment, it is important that people take adequate measures to protect their cycles and also make sure they are insured, both in the home and also when out in public places."

For those who do not currently own a bike but wish to get involved in National Bike Week and improve their health and reduce their carbon footprint, taking out a personal loan could prove an effective way to finance a new bike and additional security devices to ensure that it does not join the list of statistics cited by Halifax.

People living in Reading and Bristol may be particularly interested in taking additional security precautions while riding around as these two conurbations were found to have the highest rates of bike theft outside of London. Gloucester, Oxford, Chester and north Wales were also identified as particular problem areas when it came to thieves targeting bicycles.

Earlier this year, insurance provider LV= also advised people of the need to look out for expensive sporting equipment kept in their homes, which the group estimated to amount to an average value of 1,132 pounds.

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