

Rural churches, in particular, are often targeted due to their isolated locations. However, other buildings have also been targeted.

Sgt Brian Calver of the Rural Crime Team said: "Communities can act as our eyes and ears, and by making a note of any suspicious activity of people or vehicles we can deter thieves. Don't ignore anything that you think looks out of place - report anything you think may be suspicious to the police. I would also urge scrap dealers to report any attempts at lead disposal to us, as the lead from church roofs is often marked with smart water and so we can easily identify where it's come from."

Owners, staff of retail, public, and other vulnerable buildings are urged to take all appropriate measures to monitor and secure their properties in order to reduce their risk.

Measures to consider:

- Checking your roof regularly for any missing lead – early detection can allow for roof repairs before it rains and creates additional internal damage.
- Regularly reviewing your perimeter fencing and gate security - check for weaknesses which could allow access.
- Installing outside lighting on dusk till dawn sensors.
- Restricting vehicle access wherever possible.
- Improving visibility by cutting back vegetation, moving bins or improving the lighting.
- Ensuring any objects, equipment or materials stored near the building do not allow easy access to the roof.
- Anti-climb paint or physical barriers can be used to prevent access, but all anti-climb devices must be clearly signposted to comply with the Occupiers Liability Act 1984.
- Encouraging neighbours to be vigilant and to report any suspicious behaviour immediately.
- Installing CCTV/intruder alarms/roof alarms. <http://www.suffolk.police.uk/advice/business-security/cctv-security-alarms>
- Using a forensic solution to mark any lead - warning signs saying forensic marking has been used should be displayed. Products can be found at <http://www.securedbydesign.com>

- Where a theft has already occurred, you should consider using lead replacement products - check with your local planning officer to see if this is allowed on your building.

Any suspicious activity should be reported immediately. Stealing a large amount of lead takes time and a reasonably large vehicle to transport it, so any early reports will assist police in locating the offenders.

Call 101 to report suspicious activity. Always call 999 in an emergency, or if you think a crime is in progress. If you prefer to remain anonymous call Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

Security advice can be viewed via [https://www.suffolk.police.uk/sites/suffolk/files/church\\_security.pdf](https://www.suffolk.police.uk/sites/suffolk/files/church_security.pdf)

Help us keep our communities safe.

Police advice on a variety of subjects can be accessed via <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/advice>

To report something, or to otherwise contact Police, use the link <http://www.suffolk.police.uk/contact-us>

To report something anonymously call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or visit [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

Alternatively call **101** for non-urgent matters.

**Always call 999 in emergencies, or if an immediate police response is required.**

Police Connect Team