

# SAFETY AND SECURITY FOR BOAT OWNERS



FIRST PRINCIPLE

[norfolk.police.uk/firstprinciple](http://norfolk.police.uk/firstprinciple)  
[suffolk.police.uk/firstprinciple](http://suffolk.police.uk/firstprinciple)

## Top Tips

- Take Security Seriously
- Always Report Offences
- Secure and/or alarm your outboard
- Use DNA Marking to identify your property
- Keep an Inventory of all equipment on your boat
- Do not store valuables on boats
- Keep a lookout for anything suspicious
- Call 101 if you see anything
- Suspicious or 999 in an emergency

## PREVENT CRIME

## PROTECT COMMUNITIES



**NORFOLK**  
CONSTABULARY  
*Our Priority is You*



**SUFFOLK**  
CONSTABULARY



**Much of the advice surrounding boat security is common sense and Put yourself in the shoes of a thief. Walk around your mooring and your boat and ask yourself: would I be able to steal anything without being detected and, if so, what?**

## Be Serious About Security

- Complete the short self-assessment in this booklet to check your level of security and identify any areas for improvement.
- Report all instances of criminal damage or theft to your boat, however small. This helps us to build crime patterns and forecast where we need to direct our staff.
- Mark your property. When we find stolen property, it is easier to return it to the owner if it is property marked. This can be done with DNA liquid ie "Smartwater" or "Selecta DNA" or with a marker pen. It also acts as a deterrent
- Remove valuable objects from your boat when not in use. The best deterrent is removal. Any items that can be, should be removed when the boat is not being used, especially through the winter.
- Secure, alarm or remove outboard engines or use security covers.
- Outboard engines are the most popular target for thieves. There are many ways to secure these to the boat if they have to be left attached. We would also advise everyone with an outboard to invest in a security engine cover which replaces the top cowling of the outboard when not in use, reducing the value of the engine to thieves. To get your cover contact [boatshield@norfolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:boatshield@norfolk.pnn.police.uk) or [boatshield@suffolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:boatshield@suffolk.pnn.police.uk) or phone 101 and ask to speak to a Broads Beat officer.
- Consider fitting a tracker. We would suggest that you invest in one approved by Secured by Design such as <https://www.trackersecurity.co.uk/boat-security.html>
- Look out for others. Be vigilant at all times in and around the water and report anything suspicious to the Police. Use the 101 facility for passing information or 999 in an emergency.
- Maintain an inventory of all equipment There is an inventory template included in this booklet. Keep it up to date and keep a copy away from the boat. It helps us a great deal if you could keep photos of your boat and equipment.
- Don't leave anything loose in the cockpit or on the deck

- Don't leave your engine key in the ignition
- Keep your boat keys separate from your engine keys
- Always keep your boat locked when not on board
- Use strong padlocks or rim locks where appropriate
- Keep your curtains closed so that no-one can look in
- Keep unused ropes, fenders and other items out of sight
- Make sure your life raft and outboard motor are secure

Address these issues  
now, not later.

## Outboard Security

Most insurance policies dictate that outboards must be securely attached to the craft using an outboard motor lock or other approved anti-theft device.

Smaller outboard motors should be protected using a good quality clamp lock over the outboard handles that prevent anyone from releasing the outboard clamps without removing the outboard lock.

Larger outboard engines should be secured with security bolts fixed through the transom and the nut securing the outboard should be either tack welded or fixed using a good quality stainless steel outboard motor bolt lock.

A combination of a clamp lock and an outboard motor bolt lock will provide additional security.

We recommend that all outboard engines are fitted with a security cover. This replaces the hood of your outboard motor when you are not using your boat. It devalues the outboard for the thief making it more difficult to sell on.

## Boat Alarms

There is a wide selection of Boat Alarms and the choice depends very much on the type of boat you have and where you keep it.

Think carefully before you buy and consider your needs. The location of your mooring could be key to your decision.

There is no point in having a stand-alone alarm if your boat is miles from anywhere. Get expert advice. Talk to your local Boatshield Information Point.

## Window Locks

Even boats with adequate door locks may have sliding windows fastened by small clips that can be forced open in minutes. These should be upgraded; the method will depend on the type and size of the window.

## Hatch and Door Locks

Many boats have hatchways closed by drop-in boards and a sliding hatch. The whole mechanism is usually secured by a hasp and staple secured with a padlock.

Almost any such boat can be made more secure simply by increasing the dimensions of the various components, or by replacing them with a rim lock fitted on the inside. Sliding doors on more modern craft with basic Yale-type cylinder locks can be made less vulnerable with a plunger lock through the track.

## “Immobilise”

“Immobilise” is a national property register and helps Police identify the owners of lost & stolen property.

Immobilise is free and can be used by members of the public and businesses to register their valued possessions or company assets. You can find Immobilise at [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com)

## Property Marking

Property marking can deter the thief who will find it harder to sell on goods and to enable the police to return your property if it is recovered.

Nowadays the preferred method is to use a DNA based liquid such as “Smartwater” or “Selecta DNA”. This is unique to the boat owner and is almost impossible to remove.

Together with this, there needs to be appropriate notices attached to the boat to alert the thieves that your property has been DNA marked.

## Propeller Locks

There are many proprietary devices to secure the propeller depending on size

and type. Seek the advice of a professional for advice.

## Equipment Alarms

The most vulnerable equipment on board is the gear that lives outside the accommodation because it's too bulky, heavy, or dirty to stow below. It's possible to buy an alarm that provides "perimeter protection", with a closed-loop electric cable that you weave around anything a thief might target. Any attempt to remove the cable by cutting it or bridging it sets off the alarm. Again, there are many to choose from so do your homework carefully and consider what it is you want to achieve

## When Leaving Your Boat

Make sure the boat is firmly secured before you leave it. If you have a pontoon mooring, put out the springs if possible. With a riverbank mooring, don't just drop a bight or an eye over a piling or a post: if the river floods, the rising hull will simply lift the warp up and off the post and the boat will float free.

Close all valves on through-hull fittings. Turn off the gas at the cylinder and the electricity at the master switch. (If you have automatic bilge pumps you may want to give them a separate power source, or route their power supply to bypass the master switch). If you need mains electric power for a dehumidifier, bring it directly on board from the shoreline to the dehumidifier, do not route it through the boat's own AC power circuit.

## Trailer Security

If your boat is stored on a trailer, take extra steps to make sure it's secure. At the very least you should have a "Sold Secure" wheel clamp and hitch lock. For extra security you should secure your trailer to an immovable object or block it in somehow to make it easier to remove it.

# Your Boat

Keep these details up to date and in a safe place away from your Boat

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Name of Vessel        |  |
| Make of Vessel        |  |
| Vessel Build Number   |  |
| Model                 |  |
| Length                |  |
| Colour of Hull        |  |
| Name Plate Position   |  |
| Colour of Antifouling |  |

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Colour of Trim                       |  |
| Make of Engine                       |  |
| Engine Model                         |  |
| Serial no                            |  |
| Make of Gearbox or Outdrive          |  |
| Serial no                            |  |
| Transom Shield Serial No.            |  |
| Tender/Dinghy <i>(if applicable)</i> |  |
| Make                                 |  |
| Model                                |  |
| Year of Manufacture - if known       |  |

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Is it marked with Parent Vessel Name? |  |
| Unique Marking                        |  |
| Cost to Replace                       |  |
|                                       |  |
|                                       |  |
|                                       |  |
|                                       |  |
|                                       |  |
|                                       |  |
|                                       |  |
|                                       |  |

Note: the boats hull identification number should be on the transom (usually the starboard side), otherwise search the interior, for example on the dashboard or helm position

*(if applicable)*

Note: you should find you engine serial number on a plate on the swivel clamp of an outboard or, if it is an inboard engine, on top of the engine on a sticker. Gearbox serial numbers are usually on a plate on the gearbox, whilst outboard and transom shield numbers are usually marked on stickers on the casing.

Once you have completed this inventory, keep a copy away from the boat and keep it updated as you change equipment. if possible keep a photographic record of your boat and equipment.

## Can you pass this Check?

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Do you leave your engine on your boat?          | We know this isn't always practical but if your engine is small enough consider removing it when not in use. |  |
| Is your engine secured to your boat or alarmed? | This is essential and there are many ways to do this. If you're not sure ask an expert                       |  |
| Do you use an Outboard Security Cover?          | Details are in the document.   |  |
| Cabin/Lockers/Storage                           | Strong closed shackle padlocks can be used for this.   |  |
| Are doors and windows able to be secured?       | The more layers of security you can install the better.  |  |
| Can curtains be closed?                         | Don't leave anything on display at any time.   |  |

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| If you have an Inboard engine is the engine compartment able to be secured?          | .   |  |
| Is there an alarm, immobiliser or tracker fitted?                                    | We recommend Secured by Design approved Alarms, immobilisers and Trackers   |  |
| Do you keep fuel on board your boat?   | Make sure you have a locking fuel cap?  |  |
| Is all valuable equipment on board properly security marked?                         | If you have to keep valuable equipment on board make sure you have it security marked and all details are logged. |  |
| Do you have an inventory of all equipment including makes/models and serial numbers? | Keep this up to date and away from the boat in a safe place.  |  |

## First Principle: Related links

Check out all of our Crime Prevention information using the following links or by using the QR code to take you to the First Principle Pages Alternatively go to our website at <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/> and look in the 1<sup>st</sup> Principle A-Z of Crime Prevention.

Allotment Security  
Anti-Social Behaviour  
ATM Security  
Beach Hut Security  
Boat Security  
Building Site Security  
Business Security  
Caravan Security  
Caravan Storage  
Card Security  
Catalytic Converters  
Church Security  
Cold Callers  
Commercial CCTV  
Counterfeit Banknotes  
County Lines Advice  
for Landlords  
Cyber Crime  
Cycle Security  
Dangerous Dogs  
Dog Fouling  
Dog Theft  
Domestic CCTV  
Domestic Violence  
Farm Security  
Fraud Prevention  
Grooming  
Hate Crime

Heating Oil  
Home Improvements  
Home Security  
Home Security for  
Tenants  
Horses and Stables  
Keyless Vehicles  
Key Safe Security  
Lock Snapping  
Mopeds and Scooters  
Motorcycle Security  
Neighbour Disputes  
Occupiers Liability  
Personal Security  
Power Tool Security  
Products Brochure  
Rural Crime  
Security Alarms  
Sheds and Garages  
Social Media  
Social Media for  
Parents  
Suspicious Behaviour  
Shoplifting  
Taxi Driver Safety  
Vehicle Security  
Windows and Doors



### Other Links you might find helpful

Ask the Police  
Secured by Design  
Sold Secure

Crimestoppers  
**0800 555 111**

Victim Care  
**0300 303 3705**