

A TORY MP HAS KEY EXPERIENCE

The theft of vehicle keys and three cars from the home of a Conservative MP have highlighted the need to protect keys and not rely on vehicle alarms and immobilisers.

The London home of law and order spokesman, Edward Garnier was burgled last week. The thieves took keys for cars* belonging to Garnier and his family, and simply drove them away from outside the house in Stockwell. The MP for Harborough was quoted as saying that this was "an everyday story of London life" and that he did not expect to see the cars again. His 22-year old daughter was alone in the house at the time.

"Manufacturers have been very successful in making cars difficult to steal, so vehicle crime has moved on and stealing keys – sometimes using violence – is increasingly the method of choice for car thieves," said Wendy Rowe, boss of vehicle security marking and registration company, Retainagroup. "What's needed is a strong theft deterrent, as alarms and immobilisers are no barrier when you have the keys. Sadly, Mr Garnier's experience is all too common."

Rowe continued: "It is essential that keys should never be left in a vehicle, even for a minute, and that they are not left lying around at home or at work where an opportunist thief can easily find them. If a car is stolen with the keys, it might even invalidate the insurance."

Retainagroup's system of marking vehicles with a visible unique code, is a strong and proven theft deterrent, with marked vehicles 55 per cent less likely to be stolen. Marking vehicles makes them easy to trace and much harder to sell or break-up, which in turn devalues them for criminals. It is also a powerful tool in combating and detecting vehicle cloning – a growing problem for owners and the police.

Vehicle and ownership details of marked cars are held by the International Security Register (ISR), owned and operated by Retainagroup. Markings include a 24-hour phone number for the ISR which can be used by anyone including the police, to check ownership and police stolen vehicle records. If the etched code does not match a vehicle's registration number, VIN or other identifying marks such as an engine number, this immediately raises suspicion.

www.retainagroup.co.uk

www.theisr.org

Ends

*The three stolen cars – an Audi, VW and a Ford – are believed not to have been marked in any way.

About Retainagroup

Retainagroup Ltd. has been marking vehicle glass (and components) since 1982 and in 1986, introduced unique security code numbers and their 24-hour telephone number into markings. Customers include: Alfa Romeo, Fiat, Ford, Harley-Davidson, Hyundai, Kia, LDV, Lexus, Mazda, Proton, Saab, Skoda, SsangYong, Subaru, Suzuki and Toyota. The Retainagroup security marking and registration system uses state-of-the-art laser technology, stencils with chemical etching, and ultra-destruct and anti-tamper stickers to mark around 700,000 vehicles a year.

Well over 40 million vehicle windows have been marked. Retainagroup also operates the International Security Register (ISR) of over 10 million vehicles. Operating 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, the ISR is used by police, manufacturers, dealers, insurers and the public to check vehicle details, ownership and police stolen vehicle records. Retainagroup has offices and facilities in London and in Ashford, Kent.

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