

# Halifax press release

## Is your 'safe place' a safe bet for Britain's thieves?

**Thursday 21st August 2008**

- Under the bed is identified as the most stereotypical hiding place
- 23% of people still 'hide' valuables in recognised stereotypical places
- People in South East are the smartest when it comes to hiding places
- Midlanders and the North of England are helping the thief out the most

*During National Home Security week (due to start on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> August), Halifax Home Insurance highlights the need for smarter thinking when it comes to protecting our possessions.*

Research suggests that our safe places are thieves' safe bets when finding our treasures is concerned. The research carried out by Halifax Home Insurance identified which places homeowners perceived to be typical hiding places for valuables.\*

Under the bed is the most favoured place followed by the sock drawer and on top of the wardrobe. Despite respondents who took part in the research identifying these places as 'typical', a staggering one in four homeowners (23%) still used them. It seems that in order to foil the thief we need to stop lending them such a helping hand when it comes to locating our beloved possessions.

Proof that these places are a safe bet for a thief is the amount of occasions the named places were searched in real-life burglaries. Of all the homeowners who took place in the research, 20% of them had been a victim of robbery. Of these burglaries, there was evidence to suggest the named locations had been searched, on over 250 separate occasions.

David Rochester from Halifax Home Insurance said: "This research is proof we need to get smarter in our thinking on protecting our possessions. Safes are a good idea as this allows your possessions to be locked away. Opening a safe would be time consuming for a thief, or difficult to transport, therefore making the thief think twice about taking it."

Research did however suggest that Brits are becoming more safety conscious when extra security measures are concerned. Over half of all Brits have taken additional security steps such as fitting window locks or installing burglar alarms in the past 12 months – a quarter of home owners plan to take similar steps in the forthcoming 12 month period.

People in the South East are least likely to take extra security steps. However, it is people living in this region who are least likely to use any of the listed locations to hide valuables in. People in the North of England and Midlands are the most useful to a browsing burglar as they are the most frequent users of the identified places.

David Rochester continued: "Our homes and contents are very valuable to us and all steps to protect them should be taken. Burglar alarms, window locks and door chains are all great deterrents. The harder we make it for the thief to gain entry the better. However, on the terrible occasion where they do gain entrance we need to think really carefully on how we can prevent them from locating our favourite possessions."

The top stereotypical hiding places:

Rank	Location
1	Under the bed
2	In the sock drawer
3	Top of the wardrobe
4	Bedside table

\*Source: Halifax Home Insurance

During National Home Security week, Halifax Home Insurance urges all homeowners to pay particular attention to security of their home including the revision of their insurance needs.

Ends

Sample: 2,089 homeowners questioned nationwide in April 2008 by OnePoll.com

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