

Spokes Competition 2011 – My Cycling Solution - Entry Comp2011-6

A problem I have encountered with cycling...

I got my shed broken into and two bikes stolen. I realised, too late, that my security measures were very poor and needed to be greatly improved.

There were too major weaknesses with my old set up –

1) I had a basic padlock fixing (a hasp and staple) secured by ordinary screws. Even though the screw heads were protected by the design, it was easy for the thief to prise off the whole mechanism using a crow bar. In one quick action they would have yanked the screws out of the wood. It would have made a bit of a noise but it would have been an isolated single burst. I suspect people are less likely to wake up or react to such noises compared to something loud that goes on or happens a few times.

2) The hinges of the door were attached by ordinary screws and could have been unscrewed to provide access to the hut. This method would have been more silent but a good bit slower and difficult to do in poor light.

How I solved it...

My improvements addressed the two weaknesses.

For the hinges I used four coach bolts to secure the top and bottom hinges (one coach bolt for each part of the hinge - see photo). Unlike screws, coach bolts have a plain domed head and can't be removed from the outside when they are bolted up. They could be prised off using a crow bar but they would need to be done one at a time and this would involve a lot of noise from shattering wood.

Instead of a hasp and staple, I got a good quality padlock fitting from the hardware store. It is secured by coach bolts and there is a steel plate on the inside so that if anyone attempts to prise it off there will be an awful lot of shattering of wood and a good number of attempts before the thief could get in.

My shed could still be broken into using a saw or crow bar but the chances of it being done without being detected are not good. The visible coach bolts should act as a deterrent and put off a would-be thief from attempting a break in. If they are tempted to try, then hopefully they will quickly discover that things are not going to be easy and they'll give up.

The materials cost about £15.

