



Planning Your Journey Home – Staying Alert, Using Public Transport, and Walking Alone

Essex is a safe county and the chances of you, a friend or a member of your family becoming a victim of violent crime are low. However there are a number of steps you can take to keep yourself safe. Planning your journeys, staying alert and avoiding poorly lit alleyways and car parks are just a few. Suzy Lamplugh Trust is a charity devoted to providing practical support and personal safety guidance. Visit the trust's website for detailed advice and take a look at our tips below.

Plan Ahead

Before you go out, from heading out with friends or even making your journey into work, think about how you are going to get home. Avoid travelling alone and set aside some money in advance. Can you travel home with a friend? What time does the last bus or train leave? Think about what you need to take with you. If you must take valuables with you try not to keep them all in one place. Instead place valuables such as wallets in an inside pocket. Think about carrying a personal safety alarm. We all have the right to wear what we want but it's worth remembering that you can help to reduce the risks by wearing clothes you can move in easily.

Stay Alert

Be extra careful when using cashpoints. Make sure nobody is hovering nearby and don't count your money in the street. Keep your mind on your surroundings – if you're chatting on your mobile phone or listening to your iPod you won't hear trouble approaching. Trust your instincts if you think you are being followed. As confidently as you can, cross the road, turning to see who is behind you and head for a busy area where you can tell people what's happening. If necessary, call the police.

Public Transport

Obtain timetable and fare information before travelling to prevent you waiting around for long periods at bus stops or stations. When waiting for public transport after dark, try to wait in well-lit areas and near emergency alarms and CCTV cameras.

Walking Alone And Street Safety

It takes three things for a violent or aggressive situation to happen - a victim, a perpetrator and an opportunity. By taking some suitable safety precautions such as those listed above, you can reduce the opportunities and therefore the risk of becoming a victim. Avoid danger spots like quiet or badly lit alleyways, subways or isolated car parks. Try to use well-lit, busy streets and use the route you know best. To avoid kerb-crawlers when walking, walk facing the oncoming traffic. If you are at all worried, stay near to a group of people. Avoid passing stationary cars with their engines running and people sitting in them. Beware of someone who warns you of the danger of walking alone but then, offers to accompany you. This is a ploy some attackers have been known to use.