

## **OPEN HOME THEFT**

Recently, there have been a growing number of thefts from properties during Open Homes.

For you, as a potential home seller, it is important to consider what steps you can take to prevent theft occurring during an Open Home, or if a theft occurs, whether your insurance will cover you.

Generally, the prevention of theft may represent a better alternative than the cure of insurance. It is therefore wise to take practical measures such as placing valuable items either out of sight or under lock and key before the Open Home is conducted.

If the theft does occur you can look to your insurance policy for cover. However, there are two matters you should keep in mind when making a claim. Firstly, policies often depend upon showing that the home was actually broken into before accepting the claim. In the case of Open Homes, as the house is freely accessible to the public, the thief may steal an item without the need to break and enter. If your policy includes this provision then you probably won't be insured.

Secondly, the policies often require that "reasonable care" be taken by you in preventing the theft of property. Whether you have taken reasonable care will depend upon what security measures you have in place before the Open Home.

It is advisable that you discuss with the real estate agent, before the Open Home, the security measures that agent will put in place to prevent a possible theft occurring.

However, in recent times, real estate agents have been seeking exemptions from home owners, the effect of which is to prevent that agent from having any liability in the event your property is stolen.

If you have got any doubts about the Open Home process, please contact one of the Fortune Manning property team.