ProtectUK

Security at Home

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You should encourage a security mindset and apply sensible precautions to maximise your security at home.

Guidance to keep secure at home

Routines

- establish a routine for completing checks to confirm all doors and windows are secure before going to bed or leaving the premises
- check for signs of a break in before entering the property and for suspicious behaviour before departure
- be aware of your surroundings and recognise situations where you may be more vulnerable

These precautions increase opportunities to spot unusual or suspicious behaviour.

Perimeter

To deter intruders, there are reasonable measures that can be taken to reduce vulnerabilities to the home and protect the perimeter of the property. Keep fences and walls in a good state of repair. It is important that boundaries clearly define the difference between public and private space.

- front boundaries should be kept low, not exceeding 1.0 metre in height, to remove hiding places and provide good natural surveillance
- side and rear boundaries should provide robust defensive barriers to a minimum height of 1.8 metres. An additional diamond style trellis topping (not exceeding 300mm) is difficult to climb and provides an ideal framework for spiky defensive planting, such as climbing roses

Any boundary structure at a height exceeding 1.8 metres which may be considered permanent, may require approval from the local authority planning department. Approval must be sought before the structure is constructed.

Gates

Side and rear gates should be in a good state of repair. They should be the same height as the side and rear boundaries (minimum 1.8 metres), be lockable and located at, or as close to the front building line as possible to avoid recessed areas.

Garages, outbuildings and sheds

These measures should be considered in order to reduce recognised vulnerabilities:

- keep locked when not in use
- metal up-and-over garage doors can be secured by fitting purpose made locks to either side, approximately 300mm up from the floor, or by fitting an external floor mounted locking ‘T’ bar with a closed shackle padlock
- wooden garage double doors can be secured externally with two substantial hasps and staples with closed shackle padlocks, one towards the top and one towards the bottom to reduce leverage points
- wooden side and rear doors can be secured with a BS 3621:2017 5-lever mortice deadlock or sash lock fitted half way up the leading edge of the door, with internal locking throw bolts or mortice rack bolts fitted one third from the top and bottom to reduce leverage points. The door will need to be at least 44mm thick to accommodate the lock
- shed doors can be secured externally with two substantial hasps and staples with closed shackle padlocks, one towards the top and one towards the bottom to reduce leverage points. External hinge screws should be replaced with security screws to prevent them being removed and access gained this way
- windows should have key operated locks and can be further secured with internal diamond

mesh grilles Check garage doors and windows each morning for signs of forced entry

- ensure tools and ladders, which could be used to access your home, are locked away or securely fixed (i.e. locked to a structure if space is at a premium)
- keep the area around your home clear and tidy. This will assist you to identify unusual or suspicious objects and remove anything that could potentially be used to cause damage, e.g. loose bricks, large stones and garden ornaments
- if possible, keep your dustbin/recycling bins behind and away from secure gates or secured to a structure (until collection day) to prevent them being used as climbing aids

For further information: www.soldsecure.com

Doors, windows and locks

A large proportion of newly built properties have been awarded ‘Secured by Design (SBD)’ certification, which means that they have had attack tested doors and windows installed under the SBD Scheme.

Some existing properties have had their doors and/or windows replaced with attack tested products that meet BS PAS 24:2016 or the equivalent, which includes the door and/or window, frame, locks, fittings and glazing. If there is documentation to confirm that this is the case, the measures detailed in this section will not be required.

Alternatively there may be documentation to prove that an existing building has had the doors and/or windows replaced to the above standard.

For further information: www.securedbydesign.com

Further advice around secure locks for doors and windows can be found on the Master Locksmiths Association (MLA) website.

Security measures to be considered:

- establish a routine for completing checks to confirm all doors and windows are secure before going to bed or leaving the house
- ensure good quality locks are fitted to external doors and access windows
- solid timber doors should be at least 44mm thick and supported with substantial hinges. Hinge bolts (metal pins that automatically engage or disengage as the door is opened or closed) can provide additional security, particularly for outward opening doors where the hinges are exposed

- a house with a solid timber front door should have a Kitemark (British standard or European Standard) BS 3621:2017 5-lever mortice deadlock (single point locking mechanism that can be opened or deadlocked with a key from both the inside and outside), fitted one third of the way up the leading edge
- a solid timber front door belonging to a flat or house that has been converted into flats or separate rooms should have a Kitemark BS 8621:2017 deadlock (all of the security benefits of a BS 3621:2017 lock, but has an internal thumb turn to enable quick exit without a key), fitted one third of the way up the leading edge of the door (see LACORS Housing - Fire Safety Guidance)*
- a surface mounted BS 3621:2017 automatic deadlocking rim latch lock for a house or BS 8621:2017 automatic deadlocking escape night latch lock for flats or separate rooms in converted houses should be fitted one third of the way down the leading edge
- fit a 'Door and Hardware Federation Technical Specification (DHF TS) 003' fixed arm limiter to outer doors and make sure you use it
- fit an internal shield/cowl (letter guard) to prevent car and house keys being fished through the opening. Alternatively, if the risk dictates, either blank off the letterbox slot and fit an external mailbox or fit an internal fire-proof letterbox

** LACORS is the body which co-ordinates local authority regulators and has published guidance on fire safety in residential accommodation including single dwellings, shared houses, bedsits, flats and flats of multiple occupation. The purpose of LACORS guidance is to provide a common set of guidance for each type of property, irrespective of which legislation applies.*

- to protect thumb turn locks from being opened from outside, adjacent glass panels should be replaced with laminated glass which meets the minimum requirements of BS EN 356: 2000 class P1A. Alternatives are security film which meets the minimum requirements of BS EN 356: 2000 class P1, installed to the edge of the glass, under the beading or fixed internal grilles that meet one of the following:

– LPS 1175 Issue 7.2:2014 SR1
– LPS 1175 Issue 8:2018 SR 1/A1
– STS 202 Issue 7:2016 Burglary Rating 1
– LPS 2081 Issue 1.1:2016 SR A

If the door has a key operated multi-locking mechanism, make sure that you always lock it with a key. Simply closing the door and pushing the handle up will not prevent someone entering. You must push the handle up to engage the multi-locking mechanism and then use the thumb turn or key to lock it – **LIFT, LOCK, REMOVE**.

- remember to keep the key out of sight but in a secure, accessible place in case of fire
- a UPVC, aluminum or composite doors, including external double/French or patio doors, will often have multi-point locking mechanisms. This should include either a DHF TS 007 Kitemarked 3-star cylinder or alternatively a DHF TS 007 1-star cylinder plus a pair of DHF TS 007 2-star handles. If not, these can usually be upgraded quickly and easily
- solid timber side and rear doors should have a BS 3621: 2017 5-lever mortice deadlock or sash lock fitted half way up the leading edge of the door, with locking throw bolts or mortice rack bolts fitted one third from the top and bottom on the leading edge
- lower hardwood panels can be reinforced internally with a 12mm overlapping plywood panel, glued and screwed into the door. The void created between the existing hardwood panel and the overlapping plywood panel should be infilled with chipboard of an appropriate thickness
- patio doors should have a minimum of three locking points, with an anti-lift device to prevent the sliding door being lifted off its track. Surface mounted patio locks can be fitted to provide additional security
- solid timber external glazed double doorsets should have a Kitemark BS 3621:2017 5-lever mortice sash lock fitted half way up the leading edge, with either mortice rack bolts or surface mounted locking throw bolts fitted to the top and bottom of each of the two doors, securing into the frame, not into the opposing leaf
- double doors require two pairs of hinge bolts located as close as possible to the hinges. Alternatively, new hinges with integral bolts can be fitted
- a DHF TS 002 door viewer or audio/visual door entry system (video entry/intercom) will enable you to identify callers before you open the door. Even then, only open the door with the fixed arm limiter on
- all accessible windows should have key operated locks, unless they are designated fire escape routes. Ideally windows will have multi-point locking, but if not, additional surface mounted key operated locks can be fitted
- easily accessible externally beaded windows should have the glazed panels secured with security clips, double sided security tape or silicone sealant which has been applied to the frame and the glazed panel bedded onto it
- obscure the view into your home by fitting blinds, curtains or film including glazed exterior doors. Get into the habit of closing curtains or blinds when occupying a well-lit room

Replacement door and window standards

If you replace doors, windows and security products, ensure they have been tested to withstand attack and meet one of the following standards:

For doors, one of the following:

- PAS 24:2016
- STS 201 Issue 7:2015
- LPS 1175 Issue 7.2:2014 SR 2+

For windows, one of the following:

- PAS 24:2016
- STS 204 Issue 6:2016
- LPS 1175 Issue 7.2:2014 SR 1
- LPS 1175 Issue 8:2018 SR 1/A1
- STS 202 Issue 7:2016 BR1
- LPS 2081 Issue 1.1:2016 SR A

For further guidance: www.securedbydesign.com

All security improvements should be made in consultation with your insurance company.

Key care

Improvements in keyless technology now allows the user to gain entry to a property or vehicle using a fob that emits a signal to release the locking device.

Criminals have identified that a ‘relay’ can replicate the signal to unlock the mechanism and gain entry illegally.

To reduce this risk of compromise for both (keyless and for conventional keys) the following should be applied:

- keep keys (keyless fobs – in a signal blocking pouch or faraday bag) out of sight and away from doors and windows
- do not leave keys under the doormat or in other obvious hiding places. It is better to give responsible members of the household their own keys
- do not label your keys – if you need to identify keys, use a random colour-code
- keep control of your keys, make sure you know who has copies and if you cannot account for all the keys, change the locks. Do not give keys to people you do not know, e.g. trades people
- make sure the keys for doors and windows which could be used to exit the building in the

event of a fire are readily accessible. They should not be visible or easily reached from outside

Alarms

Intruders do not want to be seen or heard, so setting off an alarm and attracting attention can be an effective deterrent.

It is recommended that a contractor who is affiliated to one of the recognised alarm inspectorate bodies, such as the National Security Inspectorate (NSI) or the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB) are contracted to undertake an installation.

For more information and advice, approach an insurance company and or an accredited trade body for the best alarm suitable for the situation/property.

Generally, there are four types of intruder alarm system:

1. monitored: may provide a police response via the alarm company
2. speech dialer: automatically calls pre-programmed key-holders (not police)
3. audible only: relies on neighbours or passers-by to react
4. smart Home Security: relies on an internet based app alert sent to a smartphone or tablet etc.

Additional options to consider:

- to maximise the deterrent, place external, active alarm bell boxes with flashing lights and sounders at the front and back of the property (burglar alarms)
- consider fitting mains-operated smoke detectors or a fire alarm system in your home, if there is not already one installed.
- have a fire extinguisher for example, available for emergencies
- consider door alarms which announce when the door sensor contact is broken e.g. “Front door open” designed to alert parents/carers but this can also be a good warning of intruders

NB: That DIY alarms will not necessarily receive a police response and that smart devices can be compromised by third parties.

Lighting

Good external lighting can help to deter intruders.

- low wattage lighting is recommended to illuminate all external doors, car parking and garage areas and footpaths leading to your home
- external lighting should switch on using a photo electric cell (dusk to dawn) with a manual override
- bollard lighting is not recommended as it does not project sufficient light at the right height to aid facial verification and reduce the fear of crime
- consider fitting other forms of security lighting for use in emergencies, or if suspicion is roused. Floodlights, sited in strategic places, make it difficult for would-be assailants to hide from view
- always have reserve lighting available such as a torch. Consider a torch with between 100-250 lumens

Any changes should be completed by a competent installer who is accredited and approved by The Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP).

The installer should have the professional and technical competence to assess the levels of lighting required to improve the security.

CCTV

When considering the use of CCTV, the primary consideration must be for other people’s privacy.

Seek further advice from a professional CCTV installer accredited to one of the recognised CCTV inspectorate bodies, such as the National Security Inspectorate (NSI) or the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB).

If the CCTV captures images within the boundary of the private domestic property (including the garden), then data protection laws will not apply.

However if the system captures images of people outside the boundary of the private domestic property; e.g. a neighbour’s house or garden, shared spaces, or on a public footpath or street, then the following legislation will apply:

- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

It is the responsibility of the owner to protect the privacy of others, however since 2018, there is no longer a requirement for the owner to register with the ICO.

For more information about the legal requirements of CCTV: https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/domestic-cctv-systems-guidance-for-people-using-cctv/

Subject Access Request (SAR)

Individuals have a right to access the personal data you hold about them, including imagery and audio where applicable. This request can be made to you verbally or in writing.

You must respond to a SAR within one month and provide the requesting individual with a copy of the data.

You should delete footage of people if they ask you to do so within one month of the request being made.

You can refuse to delete it if you specifically need to retain it for a genuine legal dispute. If this is the case, you should confirm this with the individual and tell them that your decision can be challenged in court or through a complaint to the ICO.

Visitors

The safest option is not to open the door to strangers in any circumstances. A door intercom system permits you to speak to a caller without opening the door.

Other measures could include:

- fit a door viewer with a privacy cover (DHF TS 002) or audio/visual electronic door entry device to positively identify callers before you open the door
- a fixed arm door limiter will allow you to open the door a little way to speak to a caller without opening the door
- ask friends and relatives to inform you of intended visits
- arrange fixed times for tradespeople to call; check their identity on arrival and never leave them alone in the house
- be wary of late night callers to your home

- instruct children never to answer the door or let strangers in to your home

Waste disposal

When discarding sensitive, confidential or personal material, ensure that you treat it as confidential waste and shred where possible. Packaging from expensive items should not be discarded in view of passers-by, as criminals could target your home.

Do:

- shred correspondence, put it in a confidential waste bag and keep it safe (not in a public area) until it can be disposed of correctly
- carefully dispose of CDs, DVDs, USBs, PCs, laptops, tablets and other devices that contain sensitive, confidential or personal data
- ensure the packaging from expensive or high end purchases are discarded out of sight so not to alert others of these items being recently purchased or inside the property
- separate it from normal waste

There are reputable companies that specialise in disposal of confidential waste and should be considered where applicable.

Neighbourhood Watch

A scheme for local residents who agree to keep an eye out for anything suspicious and tell one another or the police.

Neighbourhood Watch schemes can:

- help to reduce crime and the opportunities for crime
- be a good way to help people feel more secure in their neighbourhoods
- encourage neighbourliness and closer communities

For further information: www.ourwatch.org.uk

Fire safety

Ensure everyone in the household knows the evacuation plan and where the keys are located. Make sure that your home security improvements do not stop you from escaping quickly in the event of a fire.

Safety is important either when you're in, or away from the house. Fit approved smoke alarms with a British Standard Kitemark or Loss Prevention Certification Board (LPCB).

For further information: www.gov.uk/government/publications/make-your-home-safe-from-fire

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