

PUBLIC AND PERSONAL SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

It is important you learn to recognise situations where you are vulnerable, so you can avoid them or if this is not possible – be on your guard. For example, most people are relatively vulnerable when answering the door at home, preparing to drive off in their car or at any time when their movements can be predicted.

Good personal security should take into account both your work and home life. Here are some effective measures you can take. This list is not exhaustive and the precautions you use will depend on your individual circumstances.

House & Grounds

- To deter intruders, the perimeter of the property should be made as secure as possible. 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 m in height, to remove hiding places and enable good natural surveillance. Side and rear boundaries should provide robust defensive barriers to a minimum height of 1.8 m.
- Side and rear gates should be the same height as the side and rear boundaries (minimum 1.8 m), be lockable and located at or as close to the front building line as possible to avoid recessed areas.
- Garages, outbuildings and sheds should be kept locked when not in use.
- Windows should have key operated locks and can be further secured with internal diamond mesh grilles.
- Metal up-and-over garage doors can be secured by fitting purpose made locks to either side, approximately 300 mm up from the floor or by fitting an external floor mounted, locking 'T' bar with a closed shackle padlock.
- Keep the area around your home clear and tidy. This will enable you to identify unusual or suspicious objects quickly 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 secure gates until collection day to prevent them being used as climbing aids.
- 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.

- Intruders do not want to be seen or heard so setting off an alarm and attracting attention is their enemy. Police recommend that you select an installer 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).
- 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.

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 24:2012 or the equivalent, which includes the door and/or window, frame, locks, fittings and glazing. Further information is available at: www.securedbydesign.com

Meetings & Surgeries

Ask yourself the following questions:

- When conducting meetings or surgeries, particularly where you may be alone in an office, you may meet people who are confrontational or in different states of distress. They may display different emotions and be upset, angry or aggressive. It is important to continually assess your surroundings, the person's behaviour and potential threats before and during meetings. You should take proportionate steps to reduce the risks and stay safe.
- Is there an appointments system which identifies the visitor, location, start time, finishing time and ensures proportionate checks are conducted to reduce the risk?
- Is the designated surgery/meeting room close to other members of staff in case I need assistance?
- Are colleagues aware of where and when I am holding my surgery/meeting and do they know how to contact me?
- Have I checked the room to make sure that it is set up correctly with no items lying around that could be used as weapons?
- Do I have an escape route and have I identified a safe area for me and my staff?
- If I have concerns during the meeting how would I excuse myself without causing further issues?
- Have I got my mobile phone with me, is the battery charged and can I get a signal?

- Have I agreed a key phrase to alert staff in the event I need assistance?
- Have I got a personal safety alarm with me and have I checked that it's working? These can be carried discreetly; they are designed to disorientate, giving vital seconds to get away.

Motor Vehicles and travel

- It is important to consider the security of any vehicles you use regularly; this includes personal and work usage. You may wish to consider alternative routes for regular journeys to reduce the predictability of your travel routines. Carry a fully charged mobile phone.

Vehicle Security

- At home or in work, park your car in a locked garage or a secure parking area. If neither of these is an option, leave your vehicle where it can be seen by the general public. Try to park in a well-lit area, within view of a CCTV camera or in a staffed car park.
- Be alert to any visual changes to your vehicle. If you notice a suspicious object on or near the vehicle, do not approach or enter it. Contact the police and give them the location and registration number of your vehicle.
- Carry a torch so you can check your vehicle after dark.
- Never leave laptops, documents, corporate clothing, parking permits or papers in unattended vehicles, as they may identify you or your employer.
- If possible, avoid setting patterns in your travel arrangements which could make it easy for anyone to predict your whereabouts. Vary your routes and times of departure as much as possible.
- Make sure someone at home or work knows your route and the time you expect to arrive.

If you think you are being followed, try to keep calm, keep the vehicle moving, even if only slowly. Close all windows and ensure doors/boot are locked. Contact the police immediately. If you can, make your way towards the nearest open police station, do not drive home and if possible record the registration number of any suspicious vehicle.

Mobile devices

You need to be aware of the security risks and take steps to protect your devices. Think about the activities you use your device for – online banking, personal emails, social media and photographs. Do you want these to be made public or used against you?



Use all of the security facilities available, e.g. device tracking, screen and SIM passcodes.

- Disable your Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connection when not in use.
- Record the IMEI numbers for your phone and tablet. An IMEI is 15 numbers long and uniquely identifies your phone. It is under the phone battery or can be found by typing *#06# into your phone.
- Change the default PIN for voicemail access.
- Avoid using public Wi-Fi hotspots. These may not be secure.
- Disable location services if appropriate and review privacy settings to prevent someone tracking your movements and identifying your home address or place of work. Geotagging marks a video, photo or other media with a location, this can reveal private information to a third party.

‘Stay Safe’ principles (Run Hide Tell) give some simple actions to consider at an incident and the information that armed officers may need in the event of a firearms and weapons attack. Full guidance is contained on the NaCTSO website www.gov.uk/government/publications/recognising-the-terrorist-threat

Security advice

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counter-terrorism-security-office

Centre for Protection of the National Infrastructure: www.cpni.gov.uk

General crime prevention advice

Secured By Design: www.securedbydesign.com

Anti-fraud advice: www.actionfraud.police.uk

Sold Secure: www.soldsecure.com

Master Locksmith Association (MLA): www.locksmiths.co.uk

Personal safety advice

Crimestoppers: www.crimestoppers-uk.org Tel: 0800 555 111

Suzy Lamplugh Trust: www.suzylamplugh.org

Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk

Cyber/Information security advice

Get Safe Online: www.getsafeonline.org

Cyber Street: www.cyberstreetwise.com

Internet Security & Safety Advice: www.knowthenet.org.uk



Call Police

Call 999 (Emergency) if:

- a serious offence is in progress or has just been committed
- someone is in immediate danger or harm
- property is in danger of being damaged
- a serious disruption to the public is likely

Call 101 for non-emergency enquiries or <https://www.westmercia.police.uk> West Mercia Police Website via the Report or Tell Us about sections.

Call the UK Anti-Terrorism Hotline on 0800 789 321 if you've seen or heard something that you think could suggest terrorist activity.

