



HOME SECURITY SURVEY

A guide to help prevent crime occurring in and around your home



Preventing crime, protecting the public and helping those in need

www.west-midlands.police.uk

Crime Prevention

The Police understand that burglary can be emotionally devastating and financially costly to victims and their families.

This information offers you practical advice on how to improve the security of your home and protect your belongings.

You can use this simple Home Security Survey to identify weaknesses in your own home security and do something about it by following the advice contained in this leaflet.

How to Use the Checklist

Use the checklist, together with the notes at the front of this booklet.

Consider each item and decide “does it require attention or not?” and tick appropriately. If attention is required tick off the ‘Action Taken’ box when you have taken action to rectify the problem.

At the end of your survey you should be able to identify any weaknesses in your home security. You will know when you have done all that you can as each item should be ticked as ‘yes’ or ‘action has been taken’

1. Lighting

Criminals prefer to commit crime where they cannot be seen. Opportunist thieves often target houses that look like no-one is at home, so consider installing timer switches to lights around the house so it appears that the property is occupied. Consider fitting sensor lighting, which will activate from dusk to dawn, to the front and back of your home.

2. Overgrown shrubs or bushes

Keep a check on your own plantings around your home. If they get out of hand they can assist criminals with hiding places. Plantings should ideally be no more than one meter high and tree canopies no lower than two metres from the ground. High hedges at the front of your property will reduce natural surveillance and allow intruders to operate without being seen. This may prevent your neighbours from seeing any criminal activity and raising the alarm for you. We recommend low hedges at the front of your property and high hedges to the rear.

3. Stepping Stones

These are all those opportunities for a criminal to gain access to your garden by using anything convenient to climb over your fence. This could be as simple as a 1m fence joining a 2m fence, or a dustbin or even a pile of wood. Check the outside perimeter of your property for anything that might be of use to the criminal to climb over your fence.



4. Fencing

Is your fencing in good condition? You are allowed a 1m fence at the front and a 2m fence at the rear of your property. Front fences will create a defensible space; rear fences will form a secure barrier against intruders and can be increased in height with trellis where necessary. Barbed wire, razor wire and carpet gripper etc. should not be used as you have a duty of care to prevent anyone accidentally injuring themselves. Trellis should not be robust enough to become a climbing aid and the diamond shaped trellis is the preferred style as it is harder to climb. If using fence panels with concrete posts then these need to be secured with galvanised strips to stop offenders from lifting the panels.



5. Doors

Your front door should be in good condition and of strong design. Wooden doors should be solid timber with a British standard 5 lever mortice lock and a deadlocking rim lock on. Consider when your keys were last replaced, whether past owners or tenants may still have access to your home, and whether anyone may have made copies of your keys without your knowledge. If you are worried, ask a professional locksmith to change your locks and fit an approved patented system, whereby keys can only be copied with proof of ownership. The door should be fitted with a door viewer unless any callers can be clearly seen by other means. When considering buying new doors the security standard is PAS 24 (2012 or 2016) or LPS1175 Security Rating 2, which is recommended by Secure by Design.

UPVC doors should always be locked with a key and ensure you engage the multi locking mechanism.



6. Windows

Check the strength and condition of your windows and frames. Remember the most vulnerable windows are those at ground level and any above a flat roof.

Wooden windows can be just as strong as UPVC windows providing good hinges and locks are used. Normal double glazed units do offer a good level of security under normal circumstances. Consider fitting laminated glass if you have a considerable fear of crime. Security films are also available, which can be applied to glass to give it the properties of laminated glass. Always consult a specialist.

If considering new windows, ensure that all opening windows are fitted with multi-point locking and shoot bolts. Remember to make sure you can escape from an upstairs window in the event of a fire. The Standard is PAS24 2012-2016.

7. Gates

Do you have gates that will deter intruders? Any side gates should always be kept locked and bolted and be in good working order. Again trellis could increase the height if required, but make sure this does not create a climbing aid when used with the supporting rails.

8. Defensive Planting

Spiky or thorny plants can provide an effective barrier to intruders, there is a list at the back of this leaflet that will help you decide what type of plants are best. You can use such plants to improve security at the perimeter of your home where an intruder may try to climb a fence, wall or gate. Ask at your local

garden centre what is available, and how to use it. Remember to ask how quickly it grows and how big it will get.

Defensive planting can also be used under any accessible windows to stop offenders gaining access to them to either look inside or attack.

9. Garden Ornaments and plants

Some of your garden ornaments and plants may be very expensive and very desirable to a thief. It is suggested that you use low value plants and ornaments at the front of the property which may be targeted by thieves, and keep the best ornaments and plants for the privacy of your rear garden.

10. Items of use to a criminal

Often criminals are opportunists and are not necessarily prepared for what they do. If you leave items out for them such as ladders, garden implements, or even a plant pot to put through a window then you make their job easier. Check around your property both front and back, and remove or lock up items the criminal might find useful to commit the crime.

11. Dustbins

Dustbins have uses for criminals. They use them to climb over fences, climb up to open windows and to wheel away your stolen goods. Make a secure fixing that the dustbin can be secured to away from side gates, flat roofs and windows.



12. Garden Shed

Make sure that your garden shed is secure. Valuable items such as fishing tackle and golf equipment should not be stored there. If the shed cannot be secured then make sure no items are stored there that could be used to break into your home, such as ladders, garden tools and electrical equipment. Make sure that the roof and walls of the shed are fixed and robust in construction. Any glazed panel should be internally protected using, for example, timber batons, chicken wire or hard board. Consider chaining all larger items together with a chain and padlock. Also consider fitting a shed alarm.

13. Net curtains/ Blinds

Net curtains do a simple job. They allow you to see out of the house but prevent anyone looking in. If intruders can't see in then they can't see what you have and are not tempted to try. If you have blinds fitted ensure they are closed or angled sufficiently to serve the same purpose.

14. Valuable Items on display

It is a good idea if you can place valuable items such as laptops, tablets, games consoles, smart phones' and then carry onto TV's etc. away from view. Again remove temptation and remove the risk.

15. House Alarm

If you want a professionally fitted house alarm you will have to approach a reputable company. The regulatory bodies for alarm companies are SSAIB and NSI. Any companies who are members of these organisations will provide a quality product and service. Alarms should have dual or Quad tech sensors, live front and back bell boxes and have auto dialler fitted as standard. If you do fit an alarm, consider who will respond to it. Do not just assume that someone will respond if it is a bells only alarm. Locate friendly neighbours who agree that they will check the premises if the alarm activates.

16. Bogus Callers

Do not open door to unknown persons. If genuine they will call back or consider using the password scheme run by all general utility companies.

17. Insurance

Insurance gives peace of mind and may not be as expensive as you may think. If you are a homeowner then you will need to insure the building, but contents cover should be considered.

18. Property Marking / tracking

Mark valuables using one of the numerous methods of marking that are available, such as engraving for jewellery.

Remember if it is marked and stolen you stand a greater chance of getting it back. It will also be of reduced value to the thief.

Make a note of all serial numbers of electrical goods etc. using the form provided in this booklet.

Download tracking Apps onto laptops, mobile phones etc.

Keep valuables items, such as jewellery, hidden and preferably locked away. Do not leave safes unsecured in wardrobes.

19. Car Parking

Never leave Keys in ignition (warming or defrosting the car), or near a window or door. If the only place to park is out on the street then fit a car alarm, vehicle immobiliser, steering wheel locks or wheel clamps. If you have a drive or garage please use it. Park your car under a window or consider installing an external light to light up the parking area at night. Put up gates or a security post and lock them at night. Make sure your car is locked if left unattended.

20. Finally

DON'T keep large quantities of cash in the house.



Useful websites



Official Police Security Initiative

The Secured by Design initiative supports the aim of 'designing out crime' from homes and commercial premises.

Look for this logo and you can be sure that Crime Prevention has been taken into account at the design and construction stage.

www.securedbydesign.com

Victim Support
www.victimsupport.org

Crime stoppers
0800 555111

Local Police Team
101
www.west-midlands.police.uk



Sold Secure is one of the UK's leading testing and certification agencies for Security Products. Started by the Police in the early 90's this non-profit distributing company is dedicated to the reduction

of crime through rigorous testing against stringent test standards, replicating what thieves do, to ensure that approved products provide an adequate level of security.

www.soldsecure.com

Your premises	Action required		Action taken
Front of house and boundary	Yes	No	
Overgrown shrubs and bushes			
Stepping stones			
Defensive planting			
Garden ornaments and plants			
Items of use to a burglar			
Lighting			
Gates			
Fences			
Tools			
Live alarm box			
Front Door	Yes	No	
Strength of door			
Frame reinforcement			
Five lever mortice lock or 3 star			
Securable letterbox			
Door viewer			
Door chain / bar			
Door glazing			
Glazing near to door			
Windows	Yes	No	
Condition			
Glazing			
Sash locks			
Window locks			



Your premises	Action required		Action taken
	Yes	No	
Inside Your House			
Net curtains / blinds			
Valuable items on display			
Insurance - home contents			
Insurance - buildings			
Photographs of expensive Items			
Note of model and serial numbers			
Property marked			
Timer switches on lights			
Large amounts of cash			
A safe			
House Alarm			
Rear of house and boundary	Yes	No	
Overgrown shrubs and bushes			
Stepping stones			
Defensible planting			
Trellis or fence toppings			
Valuable garden items			
Items of use to a burglar			
Dustbin			
Shed			
Fence			
Gates			
Lighting			
Live alarm box			



DEFENSIVE PLANTING – Rambling and climbing Roses

Climbing and rambling roses are used up walls, trellises, pillars, fences, posts, trees and any unsightly area within the garden.

Rambling roses generally have stems that are much more lax and pliable making them easier to grow through trees, hedges and fences. They are also very useful as a screen in the garden.

For further advice you can visit your local garden centres.

Rambling Rose examples:



Bobbie James - Huge sprays of semi-double creamy white blooms, scented. Very vigorous. Summer flowering. Good for climbing into trees and hedges. Size: 9m x 6m.



Kiftsgate - extremely rampant Rambler bearing huge trusses of small single creamy flowers. Strong fragrance.

Summer flowering. Suitable for growing into a tree. Red hips in autumn. Size: 9m x 6m

All of the below are suitable for defensive planting around your garden. They all have thorns and spikes which can prevent an intruder from gaining access to your garden. They are all available from local garden centres. If you are unsure about the suitability of a plant you see, consult the staff at the garden centre and will be happy to help.

Juniperus x media Juniper 'Old Gold'	Evergreen, golden tipped foliage
Juniperus horizontalis, 'wiltonii', Creeping Juniper	Blue carpet
Mahonia bealei 'Winter sun'	Evergreen with yellow flowers
Gunnera Manicata-Giant Rhubarb	Rhubarb like leaves on erect stems
Picea pungens 'Globosa' Blue Spruce	Spiky needles
Phyllostachys aurea - Golden Bamboo	Very graceful
Ulex europaeus	Common gorse
Pyracantha	Climbing evergreen, 10 ft
Hippophae rhamnoides	Large thorny shrub with silver foliage
Berberis julianae	Yellow, early flowering
Berberis stenophylla	Graceful evergreen, prickly branches
Berberis ottawensis superba	Rich purple foliage
Berberis gagnepainii	18 ins
Berberis Thunbergii-Autropurpurea	3 ft
Berberis Buxifolia Nana	2 ft
Berberis Calliantha	3-4 ft
Berberis Candidula	3-5ft (slow growing)
Berberis Dictyophylla	Hawthorn
Berberis Verruculosa	4-5 ft
Crataegus Monogyna	3-5ft
Mahonia Bealei	Ground cover, shrubs and hedges
Chaenomoles Japonica	Hedge, trim to required height
Rosa fruhlings (gold yellow)	
Rosa rugosa rubra (Crimson)	
Rosa blanc double de Coubert (White)	
Rosa Frau Dagmar Hastrup	
Albertine (blush pink, scented)	Climbing roses
Helena (creamy white, scented)	
Leverkusen (lemon yellow, scented)	
Francis E Lester	Rambler



The Victims' Code

Victims of crime: Understanding the support you can expect



Support and information

Being a victim of crime can be distressing. The impact of crime will vary, but many people benefit from receiving some support and information to help them cope and recover.

The Victims' Code is a statutory Government document which explains what support and information victims of crime – both people and businesses – can expect. Some victims in special circumstances, for example children or victims of the most serious crimes, are entitled to extra support. This is also explained in the Code.



Reporting the crime

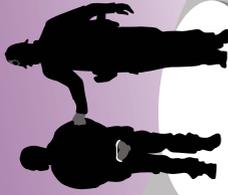
You can report a crime to the police by visiting a police station, by phone or online.

The police will give you information about what to expect from the criminal justice system after reporting the crime. If you agree, they will pass your details on to victim services organisations who will get in touch and help you.

Victim services organisations, such as charities, are not covered by the Victims' Code which focuses on making sure criminal justice agencies – such as the police and the courts – give victims the service they are entitled to.

However, victim services can offer valuable help for people who've experienced crime, including practical and emotional support.

You may be asked to make a witness statement to explain what happened to you. If you want, you can also make a Victim Personal Statement (VPS) explaining how the crime has affected you.



Keeping you informed

The police will update you on progress with the investigation, letting you know of any arrests or suspects being charged.

You can agree with the police how often you would like to hear from them about the investigation.

Going to court

If your case goes to court, you may well be a witness in the trial. If your case does not go to court, you should be told the reason for this decision.

If the case goes to trial, you will be assigned a Witness Care Officer or other point of contact. You can ask them any questions you have and they will keep you up to date about what's happening. This includes information about the dates and locations of court hearings and updates on whether the suspect has been released on bail or is being held in prison. They will support you until the case is finished.



Being a witness

If you are a witness in the trial, you can ask to use Special Measures which can help you to give your best evidence. Special Measures might mean having a screen around the witness box or giving evidence by live video-link, so that you don't have to face the suspect or their friends and family.

You can also ask court staff if you can wait in an area away from the suspect and their friends and family.



The verdict

If the suspect is found guilty, you can ask to read out your Victim Personal Statement in court, or for somebody to read it for you if you prefer. The judge will take this into account when deciding on the sentence.

Your Witness Care Officer or other point of contact will explain to you what the sentence means.

If the offender is allowed to appeal against the sentence or conviction, your contact should tell you where and when the appeal hearing will take place.



Restorative Justice

As a victim of crime you may be able to take part in Restorative Justice. This is when those harmed by a crime have contact with the offender so that both can find a positive way forward. Both the victim and offender need to agree for the contact to take place.

The Victim Contact Scheme is a special service for victims of sexual and/or violent crimes where the offender is sentenced to twelve months or more in prison. If you use this scheme, you will be kept up to date about what happens to the offender after they are found guilty and until they have completed their sentence.

For more information see the West Midlands Police website and search for 'victims code'

<https://www.west-midlands.police.uk> or call 101

Other sources of information can be found at the following

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/> or call 0808 16 89 111

www.victimsinformation.service.org.uk or call 0808 168 9293

<http://www.cps.gov.uk> or call 0203 357 0899

www.west-midlands.police.uk



The new WMP website allows you to find a wide range news, advice and support as well as the ability to report incidents to the Police and track the outcomes of your cases.

Website	http://www.west-midlands.police.uk
Twitter	www.twitter.com/wmpolice
Facebook	www.facebook.com/westmidlandspolice
YouTube	www.youtube.com/westmidlandspolice
Flickr	www.flickr.com/westmidlandspolice



**stay updated
get involved**

The WM Now messaging service allows you to receive relevant information about your area.

You will be kept up to date with alerts about local crime, advice about protecting yourself and your family and have the chance to reply to appeals and make comments back to your local policing team.