



1ST CLASS PROTECTION NEWSLETTER

Your Security News, Information & Updates

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1080P

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RESIDENTIAL CRIME

In recent months, we have seen an unprecedented increase in enquiries for residential security patrols.

It is incredibly worrying that so many Londoners are either themselves victims of burglary, aggravated burglary (entering the home with a weapon) and driveway muggings or close neighbours of someone who has been.

We have dedicated this issue to **Residential Crime** to both highlight the problem and provide advice on how you can help bolster security and deter criminals from targeting you and your home.

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Police are investigating a spate of burglaries in the Kensington and Holland Park area, where property worth £270,000 has been stolen in recent months. Items include: watches, jewellery, luxury handbags, cash and cards.

The male suspect has so far targeted five properties since March this year - on three occasions breaking in while families with young children were inside.

Notting Hill Detective Constable Eve Kelly said:

"The man behind this spate of burglaries is organised and diligent. Waiting until it is dark, he climbs into gardens looking for opportunities to scale walls and climb roofs and drainpipes."

West London

A recent account on social media reported 28 aggravated burglaries occurring over a 48 period in Hounslow, Ealing, Yeading, Isleworth, West Drayton & Northolt.

Whilst many forces have been given extra funding to tackle this disturbing trend, the turnaround time for those funds being able to have a noticeable effect will undoubtedly lead to more anxiety being felt by many.

Our Experience:

Whilst not always reported by the media, we have also heard from prospective customers worrying reports of driveway muggings in areas including: Mill Hill, Bushey, Chiswick, St John's Wood and Harrow.

Poor street lighting, lack of resources, restricted budgets and lack of Police interest in the aftermath of such incidents have all been listed as probable contributing factors to this terrifying crime.

We urge all of our customers to be extra vigilant.

"In recent months, we have seen an unprecedented increase in enquiries for residential security patrols."



DRIVEWAY MUGGING

In response to a number of worrying incidents of driveway muggings across the capital, our Area Manager, Tzvi Gamsu, [blogged](#) with some excellent advice on how to be vigilant when returning home. We have summarized Tzvi's Top Tips here:

- Before arriving, scan the area for suspicious people or vehicles following you.
- If you suspect someone is following you or acting suspiciously in the area, circle the block and call the police on 999. Then call your 1st Class Protection security officer.
- Utilise our **Meet and Greet** service: our security officers are on call through their shift to escort you and your family in or out of your property safely. Call them 10 mins before arriving or leaving; they will check the area for any threats and greet you as you enter or exit your home.
- Wait in the road for your security gate to open fully before parking in the driveway - and scan the area around you. Reverse into the driveway, as this will allow you a full view of the street and anyone approaching.



APARTMENT BLOCKS

The Met Police has published some excellent advice, specific to those living in a flat, which we believe would be useful to share here; some of this advice will be relevant to house security as well.

Boundary

Protection of a flat begins from the outside. Check that the managing agent or landlord cuts shrubs and planting back regularly.



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If left overgrown they could obscure someone from view or interfere with your lighting or CCTV. If you notice something not working properly or if a light is out, let the managing agent or landlord know so that it can be fixed straight away.

Outbuildings

Keep cycle stores, bins, sheds and other covered areas locked and secured. These hidden spaces can attract loitering and lead to antisocial behaviour, especially after dark.

Communal door

Your communal door is only effective if it is closed and secure, so always remember to check that it locks behind you. If it doesn't, then report it to your management agent or landlord so it can be repaired quickly.

Don't ever buzz anyone in that you don't know – even if they say that they're expected by another resident – and don't let them follow you in.

The best communal door entry system as recommended by the police is an audio and video entry system where residents can see and talk to a visitor before they let them in. The ideal communal door will be robust, security accredited and fitted with a good self-closing arm and two magnetic locks top and bottom. It should also be linked to the fire alarm and an electronic access control system operated by a key fob.

Communal doors should automatically open and remain so in the event of a fire but be fitted with buttons or handles that allow you to manually override if needed.

Key fobs

For even tighter security on communal entrances in blocks of flats, it's always a great idea to have personalised security key fobs that can track who is leaving and entering the property. With all multiple occupancy buildings, you never know who is coming and going.



And that is why it is advisable to collaborate and get a key fob for front and rear doors to the building. You can share the expense or, if properties are rented, then approach the landlord, explaining the benefit to them.

The way fobs work

Each flat has its own keys plus one or two security key fobs for common entrances – dependent on the number of occupants. If someone loses theirs, then they must pay for a replacement. The added benefit, apart from closer scrutiny of visitors to the building, is that there is no fumbling to get keys in a lock while on the doorstep.

Common areas

Consider where the post boxes are located as these are often targeted by criminals. Ideally, they should be in a secure lobby area and be lockable so that no one can easily access your mail.

Windows

Ensure that your windows are closed and locked every time you leave your flat, especially if you live on the ground floor.

'MET TRACE' & SMARTWATER

MetTrace is a project run by the Met to reduce burglary across London. Over a three-year period police officers be visiting one in seven homes to provide residents with crime prevention advice and free SmartWater® property-marking kits.

SmartWater

SmartWater is a way for police to definitively link your valuable items to you. Almost invisible to the naked eye, the advanced liquid glows yellowy-green under UV light and every bottle has a unique forensic signature.

This means if we recover a stolen item that has been marked with SmartWater, such as a bicycle, forensic analysis can be used to identify the address where the SmartWater is registered and return the bike to its rightful owner.

SmartWater can be used to invisibly tag all of your valuable items, from watches and jewellery to laptops and mobile phones. Guaranteed to last at least five years, once SmartWater has been applied it's almost impossible to remove.

Not only does it give you peace of mind, it gives police around the UK a better chance of reuniting owners with their recovered items and catching the criminals that benefit from crimes like theft, burglary, robbery and handling stolen goods.

To date, the use of SmartWater has had a 100% conviction rate in court and has been proven to reduce burglaries by 85%.

STOP AND SEARCH

The home secretary, Sajid Javid, enhanced section 60 powers earlier this year, giving police more power to stop and search people without "reasonable suspicion" in an attempt to combat knife crime.

Together with Scotland Yard's focus on tackling violent crime, especially in light of the knife crime epidemic, this has prompted a five-fold increase in the number of stop and searches.

Searches under section 60 had increased in the capital from 1,836 in 2017-18 to 9,599 in 2018-19.

Metropolitan police deputy commissioner, Sir Steve House told the London Assembly police and crime committee:

"I think we use it far more assertively than before, but I think it is an appropriate use. They are authorised either in anticipation of serious violence or immediately after serious violence."

LOCAL NEWS

Camden

A 63-year-old woman suffered a serious head injury after a man wrestled her handbag from her arms, knocking her to the ground on Camley street last month.

Detectives investigating the bag-snatch are appealing for witnesses and information about the suspect, and for a member of the public who stopped to help the victim to come forward.

Maida Vale

Five men have been arrested after a daylight robbery at a jewellery shop in north-west London.

Police received reports of a group of moped riders armed with machetes, a hammer and a crowbar targeting Amir Jewellery on May 20th.

Pictures and footage from the scene show a group of men pulling up outside before they reportedly smashed into the shop. Brave members of the public frantically chased two male suspects on foot and detained one nearby.