Crime Prevention
ADVICE AND INFORMATION

BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE
fighting crime, protecting the public

COMMERCIAL PREMISES – SECURITY

PREMISES SECURITY

Your Boundaries

▶ Check fences, walls and hedges for damage and gaps and repair as soon as possible. Prickly plants are a good deterrent and can also be used under vulnerable ground-floor windows.

▶ A low boundary at the front of your property ensures good visibility from passers-by and your neighbours – the Home Office recommend shrubs are cut to a maximum height of one metre. If you have trees at the front, make sure branches do not hang lower than two metres.

▶ Your boundary at the back of your property should be approximately two metres high. You can increase security by using anti-climb paint or 'prickler' strip along the top (with appropriate warning signage). Adding a trellis panel not only increases height but is too fragile to bear body weight, therefore increasing the risk to a burglar.

▶ Are side entrances secure? Replace any damaged or rusty hinges, hasps and padlocks.

▶ Good lighting is essential to deter a burglar – consider low level dusk-till-dawn lighting that is cheap to buy and uses less electricity than halogen lamps.

▶ Consider other warning devices to let you know someone has come onto your property, such as a gravel drive or a driveway alarm.

Doors

▶ Check the framework around your external doors (including patio doors and cellar access). It should be securely fixed and in good condition.

▶ Check the thickness of doors: a door should be at least 44mm if you want to fit a mortise lock – if the door is too thin, then a rim deadlock should be fitted.

▶ Do you have any wooden panelled doors? Are they strong enough? Often panels are made of a thinner material but these can be easily replaced with something more sturdy.

▶ Ideally front doors should be secured in two places – usually a mortise lock at a mid-point in the door with a Yale-type latch lock approximately 60-80cm above it. Patio doors should also have bolts that go into the floor and lintel.

▶ Consider fitting a door viewer, a door chain or bar and even a letterbox cage.

▶ Does your patio door have suitable frame locks or an anti-lift device? If not, most double-glazing companies can fit these for you.

Windows

▶ Check the frames of your windows and repair any damage. Pay special attention to those that are vulnerable (ground floor, at the rear of the building, accessible by a flat roof).

▶ Modern UPVC windows now have locks fitted as standard – British Standard BS7950 – and can be fitted with window restrictors.

▶ Are the window panes made from laminated glass – this is glass that is extremely difficult to break. Don't confuse laminated glass with toughened glass which is designed for safety.

▶ Don't forget to check garage/outbuilding windows, especially if the building is attached to the main property with an internal access door.

▶ Garage and shed windows can be obscured with frosted adhesive vinyl – if a burglar can't see in, it reduces the temptation to break in.

▶ Your can stop people from climbing onto your flat roofs (and therefore accessing your windows) by painting them with non-drying paint. It is not necessary to do the entire roof but do paint the edges and at least a two foot wide border. Signage must also be displayed.

Locks

▶ Locks are only as good as the screws and framework they are attached to – replace any damaged parts.

▶ The recommended type of mortise lock is a five-lever lock to British Standard BS3621/EN12209 (most house insurance policies insist on this specification for the front door).

▶ If you've got a Yale-style latch lock, is it double locking (ie, if you turn the key, does the block stay in place)? These are more secure, especially if the lock is near a glass panel in the door.

▶ Mortise bolts operate only from the inside and are suitable for French windows and sliding doors, and are best placed at the top and bottom of the door.

Outbuildings

▶ Give your locks and bolts a 'health check' – replace any rusty items, ensure all padlocks and hasps bear the British standard kite mark and are made of hardened steel.

▶ Don't forget the hinges on your doors – if a burglar can't breach the lock, they may attempt to unscrew the hinges. Use coach bolts, non-return screws or simply damage the screw head; you don't need to do every screw, just a couple on the hanging plate and a couple on the door plate.

▶ Remember to secure outbuilding windows – even the ones that don't open can be vulnerable. Consider obscuring the window with an opaque window film (the type used to obscure bathroom windows) as this will reduce the temptation. Alternatively, fit a grille or a couple of bars across the inside of the window to reduce the window aperture.

▶ Consider using a battery-operated siren alarm in your garage or shed - they often cost less than £20 and are simple to install and use.

▶ Get into the good habit of putting everything away when you have finished with it.

General Advice

▶ Review your cashing up and banking procedures. Make sure you don't get into a habit of going to the bank on the same day at the same time – someone will notice and take advantage of it.

▶ Ensure your staff are fully aware of their obligations to protect the property, and that they know what to do in an emergency. Would they know who to spot a forged bank note?

▶ Review the security of your cellars and storage areas.

These are, of course, only a few ideas to help improve the security of your property. If you have any questions, please contact the Crime Reduction Team:
crimereduction@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk

SELF-ASSESSMENT OF BUILDING SECURITY

Below is a checklist to help you to identify the areas where your building may be vulnerable. It is not designed to cover all aspects of security, but will identify some common vulnerabilities.

Tick the appropriate box with your answer. This will help you to establish your building's strengths and weaknesses. There is space at the bottom of each section for your additional comments.

BUILDING SECURITY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Are there good quality locks on all external doors and ground level windows?	☐	☐	☐
Has all external door furniture been removed from fire doors?	☐	☐	☐
Are there good quality locks on all windows above ground level?	☐	☐	☐
Are any windows above ground level accessible by a flat roof or fire escape?	☐	☐	☐
Can internal doors be locked when left unattended for long periods?	☐	☐	☐
Are all the fire doors alarmed?	☐	☐	☐
Do you nominate members of staff to check that all doors and windows are closed and locked at the end of the business day?	☐	☐	☐
If you have a burglar alarm, are your staff familiar with the procedures for switching it on and off (in order to reduce false activation)?	☐	☐	☐
Do you maintain good visibility around the perimeter of your building, eg, cutting back overgrown planting or using metal palisade fencing instead of wooden panels?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have adequate lighting around your building during the hours of darkness?	☐	☐	☐
Is your building occupied 24 hours a day, every day?	☐	☐	☐
Is there secure storage for staff's personal belongings?	☐	☐	☐

INFORMATION SECURITY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you lock away all cash and business documents at the close of the business day?	☐	☐	☐
Do you employ the principle of least privilege (where a user be given no more privilege than necessary to perform a job)?	☐	☐	☐
Is CCTV information stored securely?	☐	☐	☐

continued

SELF-ASSESSMENT OF BUILDING SECURITY

CCTV	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you have your CCTV cameras and recording devices regularly maintained?	☐	☐	☐
Do the CCTV cameras cover the entrances and exits to your building?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have CCTV covering critical areas, such as tobacco, cash and alcohol storage?	☐	☐	☐
Do you store CCTV images in accordance to police evidential needs?	☐	☐	☐
Could you positively identify an individual from the recorded images on your system?	☐	☐	☐

COMMUNICATION	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you have a security policy or other documentation showing how security procedures should operate within your business?	☐	☐	☐
Is this documentation regularly reviewed and, if necessary, updated?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have a senior manager who takes responsibility for security within your business?	☐	☐	☐
Do you regularly meet with staff and discuss security issues?	☐	☐	☐
Do you encourage staff to raise their concerns about security?	☐	☐	☐
Do you speak to neighbouring businesses on issues of security and crime that might affect you all?	☐	☐	☐
Do you remind your staff to be vigilant when travelling to and from work, and to report anything suspicious immediately?	☐	☐	☐

What do your results show?

Having completed the checklist, you need to give further attention to the questions that you have answered 'NO' or 'DON'T KNOW'. The Crime Reduction Officers can assist you with these issues.

If you answered 'DON'T KNOW' to a question, find out more about that particular issue to reassure yourself that this vulnerability is being addressed or needs to be addressed. If you answered 'NO' to any question then you need to address that particular vulnerability as soon as possible.

Where you have answered 'YES' to a question, remember to regularly review your security needs to make sure your security measures are fit for purpose.