

# Lothian & Borders Police



City of Edinburgh Division

## Home Safety And Security Guide

Information and advice on  
how to improve the safety  
and security of your home

Some say “whilst you are at home, safety takes precedence and whilst you are away, security takes precedence”. In reality, whether you are home or not, BOTH are equally important. This guide briefly explains how to survey your own home, identify weak spots and risks and recommends measures to tackle them.

### The Boundary/Approach

Is your street well lit and are all the street lights working? If not, contact the Council or factor to replace or mend broken lights. If lighting is generally poor, fit your own external lights – it keeps you safe and illuminates people coming to call.

### Walls, fences & hedges

If you have high walls, fences or hedges, they may offer you privacy but also provide cover for thieves.

- Hedges or trees should be trimmed or cropped so as not to provide cover for thieves.
- Train thorned plants along the top of walls, fences and even around window frames as it makes these more difficult to climb over.

### Paths and driveways

Don't obscure these with plants or shrubs, they provide cover for thieves

- Use pebbles instead of slabs. Its cheaper, easier to maintain, safer underfoot and makes a noise when trodden on.

### The Building

**Doors;** Both front and back doors should be of solid construction and fitted with locks that at least meet British standard 3621 (e.g. mortice locks, integrated multi-locking systems). Look for the BS Kitemark .

**Garage Doors** are not secure. Therefore any internal doors connecting to your garage need to be as secure as your front and back door.

**UPVC and patio doors;** Do they have anti-lift devices and multi-locking systems? Consult your supplier to make sure.

**Fit a door-viewer** so you can see who is at your door.

**Glass panels** should be laminated and fitted into the structure of the door. Not merely held in place by putty, wooden or UPVC batons.

**Door Frames;** These should be well fitted, secure and robust with little or no cavities about them. If not, the door will give way.

WHY? THIEVES ARE NOT SHY KEEP YOUR FRONT AND BACK DOOR LOCKED – EVEN WHEN AT HOME. ABOUT SNEAKING IN THROUGH AN UNLOCKED DOOR – EVEN WHEN YOUR HOME. NEVER KEEP KEYS IN

LOCKS, KEEP THEM NEARBY BUT OUT OF SIGHT IN CASE OF EMERGENCY.

**Windows;** Ground floor windows or those accessible from rooftops are most at risk.

- These should all have key operated window locks. For safety, keep the keys nearby, but out of sight and reach from outside.
- Sash and case windows can be easily fitted with locking sash bolts
- Thieves don't like smashing glass, it may draw attention to them. If you're replacing glass, fit laminate glass as this is the most resilient against attack.

### Tenements/Flats

**Fit an entry-phone system.** Sharing the price vastly reduces the personal cost.

**Never grant access** to anyone you don't know. Utilities and Public Services personnel will identify themselves – if they are not calling for you, don't let them in. If in doubt, phone the police.

**Never wedge the door open** and ask workmen to close and lock the door too. If you find the door lying open or insecure – close it and lock it.

**Got a communal back door?** Keep it locked and secure too.

### Belongings

Thieves like **CRAVED** articles; Concealable, Removable, Available, Valuable, Enjoyable and Disposable, i.e. small items of high value like jewellery, digital technology, cash and cards. Think about where you store these. Keep valuable jewellery – sentimental or otherwise - separate from everyday jewellery.

**Property marking** will help prevent theft. Mark your property clearly and indelibly, making it less valuable to the thief.

Keep receipts, photographs and full descriptions of jewellery and other expensive possessions safely with your insurance documents.

### Bogus Callers

#### **THE LAW**

YOU DO NOT NEED TO ALLOW ANYONE INTO YOUR HOME. ONLY the POLICE and FIRE BRIGADE can FORCE OR DEMAND entry to your house – but ONLY in exceptional circumstances. Utilities companies MUST have the POLICE with them to demand or force entry to your home, but only for reasons of safety.

#### **THE FACTS**

Most callers to your home will be genuine. **UTILITIES COMPANIES** will happily arrange to call on you when it is

**CONVENIENT FOR YOU.** They may even use an agreed password.

**ALWAYS CHECK IDENTIFICATION BADGES BEFORE ALLOWING ANYONE INTO YOUR HOME.** If in doubt, phone the company BUT NEVER USE THE TELEPHONE NUMBER GIVEN BY THE CALLER.

### **Contacts and further information;**

Free Crime Prevention and Personal Safety advice is available from the Police, for you, your family, friends and neighbours. Contact Community Safety Department on 0131 221 2088 or at [adivcommunitysafety@lbp.pnn.police.uk](mailto:adivcommunitysafety@lbp.pnn.police.uk)

Information is also available at;

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime)

To arrange a Home Fire Visit and have a free smoke detector fitted, or for any confidential Fire Safety advice, call Lothian and Borders Fire Brigade free on 0800 169 0320 [www.lbfire.org.uk](http://www.lbfire.org.uk)

