Business Crime Prevention Advice

Detective Inspector Helen Fletcher, from Leicestershire Police has given security measures to consider with regard to preventing your business from being targeted by thieves.

There is further crime prevention information available at **www.leics.police.uk**

*Perimeter security*

When installing perimeter security, fencing is highly recommended and effective against criminals. It is important to also make sure that all entry points are secure, especially when the premises are empty.

*Surveillance*

The level of security you invest in should depend on the level of risk your business is subjected to. Things to consider include where the business is located, the age of the building and business specialism. CCTV, alarms, security lighting and naturel surveillance by employees are some of the most important security features to consider.

*Alarms*

Alarms are an effective deterrent against criminals as they are more likely to be caught if an alarm is activated There are a wide variety of alarms available to purchase depending on requirements and budget. A reputable alarm company will be able to advise you on options available. It is also worthwhile checking with your insurer as your premium can be reduced by taking extra security measures.

*CCTV*

CCTV systems are an effective and useful tool for crime prevention and can help the police when investigating a crime. However careful consideration should be taken to the placement and management of any CCTV system. For systems to be effective you should consider the following:

•Make sure the camera faces towards the main doorway/entrance so you can get a clear head and shoulder image of everybody entering and leaving the premises

•Make sure there is enough light for the camera to give a clear picture

•Place CCTV signs and public warning signs so that people know they are being recorded around your building/s and inside reception areas

*Security lighting*

Installing security lighting outside your business is a good deterrent as it makes criminals feel vulnerable and observed. Security lighting should highlight high-risk areas and allow occupiers to see people approaching. The type of lighting you require will depend on the level of risk, the geography of the area and the type of surveillance you already have in place. The most common form of lighting is passive infrared, with is activated when someone comes into its field of vision.

*Car parks*

Car parks should be in good view and in well-lit areas that are safe to access from the buildings they serve. Professionally installed CCTV systems and guard patrols (for larger car parks) are ideal for car park security. Barriers are also effective.

*Building security*

Your building security is vital to help prevent thieves entering your premises. It is important to identify possible weak points; these can include doors, windows, delivery bays, skylights, access hatches and ventilation grilles.

*Windows*

•Windows on the ground floor and at the back or side of your building should be fitted with good quality window locks

•blinds can be fitted to prevent criminals from seeing any high value goods or stock inside

•Shutters and grilles can be added as additional security

*Doors*

•Quality door locks still provide the most cost effective and simple security measures for many businesses

•External doors should by strong enough to withstand an attack. Ideally it is a good idea if they can be linked to an alarm as well

•Consider security for internal doors, as well as external, so you can limit access for thieves if they do get in. We also recommend locking away valuable items making them less accessible if someone did manage to break in

*Reception Areas*

•One of the most important areas of security is your reception area. It is normally the first point of contact in any business so it provides the first line of defence

•The reception area should never by left unattended during business hours

•Every visitor entering the building should sign in and out, along with being issued with an identification badge or security pass

•Ensure your reception staff are given basic security training

•Ensure reception has an emergency alarm button

•Install electronic or mechanically controlled doors where necessary

•Bank your takings daily, try not to keep cash on the premises if at all possible

•Try to bank at different times of the day and preferably at different branches, try not to keep a regular routine

•If you have a safe, make sure it is secured to the floor and out of view