

HOW NOT TO BE BURGLER ENVIRONMENT WEEK

The following notes have been prepared by a Crime Prevention Officer attached to the local Police Station and includes advice to every householder who may have an Alarm system, or is thinking about having a system installed, or is affected by the noise of a nearby neighbour's alarm. Please read these notes as it may help you, if not now at some time in the future.

If you are considering installing, or have been instructed by your Insurance Company to install an Alarm system, contact the Crime Prevention Officer at your local Police Station for advice. The service from the Police is free, unbiased and could save you money and inconvenience, not only to yourself but to your neighbours.

"An Alarm box attracts a thief because it indicates that there is property worth stealing within the house."—No, this is not the case. Every house in your street has property in it worth stealing. We live in a consumer society and most householders own televisions, cassette players, cameras, music centres and radios. Many people now have video recorders and cameras, jewellery, silver, stack systems, computers, microwaves, paintings and antiques. This is a list of property which is normally stolen, and if you own this sort of property with a replacement value of about £2,000, you should be considering installing an Alarm system. A basic simple Alarm system, commercially installed, will cost about £400 to £500. Everyone has a different threshold point and the above figures are purely quoted as a guide. Clearly displayed Alarm boxes will help to deter, not only the opportunist thief but even the professional. It shows you have taken extra precautions to protect your property and home. It will also help to prevent damage caused to windows and doors by the thief when gaining entry.

"Nobody takes any notice of an Alarm Bell when it is ringing."—Again this is not the case. There is one person who takes immediate notice of an audible Alarm and that is the thief himself. Police records show that the thief will normally flee as soon as he is discovered, either by being confronted by the occupier or the start of an Alarm. Invariably they will leave empty handed, because if a description was given to Police, the thief takes a tremendous risk should he be seen by patrolling Police officers and is still in possession of stolen property which links him back to the scene of a crime.

When an Alarm system has been installed that is not the end of your responsibility. Please contact your local Police station by letter and inform them of your work/business telephone number, and at least two other people that the Police could contact in an emergency. These people are referred to as Keyholders and if they permanently or temporarily change details you should again notify the Police. You should also contact a few immediate neighbours and advise them what to do if

your Alarm bell starts to ring. Although it seems obvious, some neighbours are reluctant to call the Police unless instructed to do so, and it really is in their interest to call. If you are not on good terms with your neighbour, then write a letter to them, or request your own Alarm Company to write, advising them to dial 999 and call the Police as soon as the Alarm bell starts ringing. It is to their own advantage that they call the Police, because the sooner the Police arrive and check the premises the sooner the Keyholder will be contacted and requested to attend the premises and silence the Alarm. Keyholders should be given full instructions as what to do on arrival, i.e. check the premises, make a note of the possible cause for the Alarm activation. They should also be instructed as who to call in an emergency, i.e. plumber, electrician, carpenter, glazier and alarm company. On leaving the premises the Keyholder would reset the Alarm. In return for your neighbour's co-operation you would of course offer to keep an eye on their house, calling the Police if you heard or saw anything suspicious.

"What system do I install?" Police do not recommend any company, a however, we will offer a number of company names and suggest that you contact at least two or three for a survey and quote. Beware of an Alarm salesman who claims to be recommended by the Police, we offer names only and most of my colleagues offer a list of at least six company names for you to choose from. Insurance Companies sometimes demand that you install an Alarm system otherwise they will refuse your cover, and sometimes one or two Alarm Companies may be recommended. There is still no reason why you should not obtain advice from your local Crime Prevention Officer who may be able to assist as to where and what type of equipment to have installed. Insurance Companies normally prefer Alarm Companies that are NSCIA approved, and provided your specification is from a listed company I can see no reason why the Alarm company of your choice should not be accepted by your Insurance Company. All Alarm specifications should in the first instance and before acceptance be submitted to your Insurance company for their comments. Some insurance policies specify that when

the house is left unattended the Alarm must be set otherwise any loss will not be covered. This can only be an added incentive for you to ensure that the Alarm is always set whenever the house is left empty. If you have decided on an Alarm system without it being an Insurance request, Police can and will offer either non-NSCIA listed or NSCIA approved Alarm companies for you to choose from, but again you are advised to submit any specification to your Insurance company.

"Why do I not get a reduction on insurance premiums when I have an Alarm system installed?"—As a Police officer I cannot answer this question, but it is one that should be directed to your Broker or Insurance Underwriter. However, the answer some Insurance Companies give is that they make no reduction on premiums, but that they would be prepared to accept cover of your risks once an Alarm had been installed. May I respectfully suggest that this comment is not in reply to the question. It seems illogical that two identical houses with exactly the same risks, that the one with an Alarm system installed, whilst benefitting from the fact that the probability of a burglary is greatly reduced does not benefit from a reduction in premium costs. Why should householders of their own choosing try to reduce the number of burglary claims when their Insurance Company give no incentive for them to do so. It is normally after a very high claim that Insurance Companies demand the installation of an Alarm if insurance cover is to continue. Insurance cover can be very difficult and I think it worthy of the editor to contact a spokesman for an Insurance Company to obtain general advice for householders when arranging insurance.

"Do I really need an Alarm System?"—Only you can decide, it is at your cost and approval, but helped with a tremendous amount of information from your local Crime Prevention Officer the decision could be made easier. Some areas within the Metropolitan Police District have different problems, where the installation of an Alarm system may or may not be the answer. Generally, in a residential area Alarms can be an effective deterrent, but before you decide please contact the Crime Prevention

WEEK

Starting on Saturday 3rd May and continuing until the following Sunday, 11th May, is the second annual nationwide Environment Week, initiated by the Civic Trust. Nearly 1,000 local amenity societies are registered with the Trust and the main aim of Environment Week is to highlight the work they do to improve our surroundings for the benefit of us all.

Nearly 700 events will be held nationwide—practical improvement schemes, clean-ups, competitions, exhibitions, open days, guided tours and ceremonies to mark the successful completion of societies' projects. Contributions will be made not just by local amenity societies but by buildings preservation trusts, councils for voluntary services, women's institutes, schools, museums, libraries and branches of the Keep Britain Tidy Group.

This year Ibstock Building Products, of Leicester, makers of high-quality clay facing bricks and roofing tiles are helping the Civic Trust with sponsorship. Ibstock will be hosting launches, events and exhibitions at their Brickwork Design Centres in Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds and Manchester. The national Civic Trust/Ibstock launch will be held on 1st May in a unique location—the Upper Walkway of London's Tower Bridge—so Environment Week 1986 is aiming high!

Its Director, Michael Middleton

CBE, commented:

"Though the local amenity movement's aggregate membership of over 300,000 exceeds that of all but one of our major political parties, its collective achievements tend to be under-rated. This is because the individual societies are all independent bodies (not 'branches' of the Civic Trust), appeal mainly to local loyalties, and work mainly in isolation from one another.

"Yet we owe them an incalculable debt. Think of some well-loved landmark—it may have been saved by the local society. Think of those lovely trees along the river bank—they may have been planted by the society twenty years ago. Think of that pleasant public garden near the shopping centre—it may have been a festering eyesore until the society saw its potential and transformed it.

"It all adds up to an enormous amount and without it Britain would be a much less attractive place.

And what is our special hope for Environment Week 1986? Simply that many more of those who benefit from the efforts made by local amenity societies and similar groups will join them and become active members. The annual subscription usually costs less than four gallons of petrol and the more support societies have, the more they can do to make Britain a better place in which to live, work, shop and relax."

PARRY MEMORIAL

A very pleasing ceremony took place on Tuesday, 18th March outside Fellowship House in glorious spring sunshine when a plaque was unveiled to the memory of Edward Parry.

Officer for help and advice.

"Can the burglar cut the wires and silence the bells?"—No, a professionally installed alarm system is difficult to silence and the burglar will only succeed in making it ring.

Peter Hayward,
Crime Prevention Officer
Golders Green Police Station

Brief addresses of appreciation were given by Ralph Baldry, chairman of the Fellowship, and Jean Dyson, chairman of the Fellowship House Club. The unveiling of the plaque was performed by Edward's son Christopher supported by members of the family. The wording read:

"Edward Charles Parry inspired the building of Fellowship House on the site of the old Club House and was Chairman of the Club until his death in 1985."

The large attendance of Fellowship Club members and friends then enjoyed tea and cakes in a happy atmosphere which would have greatly pleased Edward. E.H.



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STOP PRESS TRUST GETS TOUGH

On April 14 contractors appeared at 20 Midholm and commenced work on digging up a hard standing.

They were employed by the Trust that was using its powers to do so, under the Scheme of Management, for the first time.

The owner of 20 Midholm had never applied to the Trust for permission for a hard standing but had received approval from both CAC and Barnet Borough Council.

Under the Scheme of Management the Trust is empowered, after three months written notice, to employ its own contractors to rectify any infringement and charge the householder with the cost involved.

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