



The Guidance below will walk you through your church, from the entrance to the churchyard, and give you things to think about to make the church and site secure while still leaving it open to visitors, worshippers and other users.

Gates

Gates that allow vehicle access should be kept locked when not in use. Gates should be maintained and not easily lifted off their hinges.

Boundaries

A defined boundary, especially one that will prevent vehicular access, is an important part of your security.

Hedges

The best form of hedging for a barrier is one that is thick and difficult to penetrate, like hawthorn, privet, holly, yew or laurel. It should not be left to grow so tall that it stops people seeing the church.

Walls

Stone or brick walls should be maintained and any broken stones or blocks should be replaced or repaired as quickly as possible.

Trees

If you have trees near or within your boundary, keep them pruned to allow people to see the building and to prevent them giving easy access onto the church roof.

The roof and fall pipes

Access to the roof is normally relatively easy due to large cast iron fall pipes or fuel tanks close to the building. Keep visual access to the roof as clear as is reasonable. Use anti-climb paint on

downpipes, with signage to say that it is in place.

Ladders

Ladders must NEVER be left outside, even for just one night during works. Ladders stored in areas of the church usually open to the public should be secured.

Sheds and outbuildings

If you have a shed or outbuilding to house tools and machinery it should be kept secure. If you have motor mowers or other equipment that uses flammable fuel try not to store this. If storage is unavoidable it needs to be secure and in accordance with relevant legislation, as appropriate.





Lighting

The use of effective security lighting is an important element of security. The easiest method to switch lighting on and off is to use a photoelectric cell or a movement sensor. Lights are only effective when they light areas which are visible to the public. Lighting areas that are not overlooked may be counterproductive.

Doors

During the day, when the church is open to visitors entry should be confined to one door and the other doors locked. Criminals will be less interested in a building where they may become trapped.

Key security

Never leave keys hidden near the church, under a mat or loose stone, etc. Criminals know where to look. A register should be kept of all authorised key holders and no keys cut without permission.

Boiler house and Cellars

The boiler house and cellar door should be kept locked. If there is a flap or hatch to give access to a cellar, maybe for delivering fuel, it should be secured from the inside.

Windows

More information on protecting windows can be found at:

http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/Window_guards.pdf

Safes

Experience has shown that not all old safes withstand an attack with modern drilling and cutting tools. The choice of safe for a particular risk is influenced by a number of considerations.

- (a) The value of items you intend to keep in the safe.
- (b) The size of items you wish to place inside.
- (c) The location of the safe, it should be either in a wall or free standing bolted to the floor.
- (d) The weight of the safe. Removal of the safe so that it can be attacked elsewhere is a method often used by criminals.

If you have concerns about your safe consult with a qualified locksmith or your insurers.

Offertory boxes

Offertory boxes should be metal wall safes and grouted into the masonry. It is essential they are emptied frequently.

Intruder alarms

An intruder alarm is designed to provide a warning of entry or attempted entry by a criminal into the protected premises. It should conform

to BSEN 50131 and be fitted by a company that is a member of NACOSS.

Consult with your insurance company for advice and to ensure that the alarm is appropriate for your needs.

Photographs

Taking photographs of precious items is important for two reasons:

- (a) Should an item be stolen, you can accurately describe it and provide the relevant photograph for use by the Police and insurers.
- (b) Should you be needed to identify property, a photograph can help you prove ownership.

Police advice on photography is available at <http://content.met.police.uk/Site/crimepreventionartantiques>

Inventories

It is a requirement that you keep an up to date inventory. Everything of value should be included. Measure items accurately and record all signs of damage such as scratches, dents, splits, tears and any other indentifying features.





Substitute items

Consideration should be given to keeping valuable items securely for use only during services. Less valuable substitutes could be in place at other times if necessary.

Forensic Marking

Forensic marking is a method to put a permanent mark on church property, including roof metal and downpipes, which can be linked to a central database which identifies you as the owner. If the property is stolen this is invaluable in establishing provenance which is essential for a successful prosecution. see here for more:

<http://bit.ly/s6LWHx>

