

Following some recent break in and robberies on the Square plus a number of other security related incidents very close to the Square, some of the residents kindly initiated a meeting at their home with some members of Met Police and also Jonathan Brandling Harris (who has initiated Primrose Hill Neighbourhood Watch Scheme) to provide security advice to all Chalcot Square residents. We are all conscious that this is a small but great community and the overall aim of this get together was to see how we can collectively work together in our small community to protect ourselves and our homes from crime and ensure we are doing all we can around the Square to give out a strong clear message to criminals that this area is safe and protected.

Here is a summary of some take home messages and also useful contacts for Met Police for you to follow up individually if you have more queries or would like them to come and check your home and provide you with advice on what key steps you could take to step up on your individual security.

### **1. Make it difficult for burglars to break in**

Key point to remember is that the average burglar does not want to risk getting caught inside your home! Their overall aim is to find somewhere which is empty and easy to get into and out of quickly. If you leave your door on the latch or not locked securely locked - the clear message is that you will be targeted and they will get in.

Be vigilant and take all steps to keep your property secure.

Doors and Lightwells are vulnerable areas.

**NB** Your job is to ensure you make it difficult for them to break in!

### **2. Check External barrier of your premises**

Think about creating multi layers of external barriers/protection to your premises to make it difficult for them to get in. Check the security of your windows, doors, and locks.

**CCTV cameras** are very good and should be used but there are also many other steps you can consider spending money on which may not cost as much as a CCTV camera

### **3. Doors, Windows, Locks and Hinges**

Check your door thickness. 32 mm door thickness is recommended.

Check and improve all your locks. Yale locks alone are not enough. Fit and Use deadlocks or deadbolts to all doors.

Fit and Use Locks on ALL windows.

Use more than one lock where possible and reinforce your locks with London Bar and Birmingham Bar. Replace hinges with Hinge Bolt

Police recommend to use 3621 and 8621 which are British Standard and Secure

#### 4. **Rear Boundary**

Concerns raised about houses which back onto Berkeley Grove and vulnerability being close to empty premises.

Advice and leaflets given out on use of defensive plants and shrubs. It is all about making it more awkward for burglars to consider attempting a break in from a rear boundary.

Install outdoor security lighting, so burglars have nowhere to hide.

Keep gates, sheds and garages locked and don't leave tools lying around.

Metropolitan website has a lot of advice on many fast growing and thorny/spiky shrubs which would make great deterrents (Pyracantha; Berberis and even a trellis which may well break if someone attempted to climb over but at least it would make a noise, create a delay and distraction for the burglar.

Visit [www.met.police.uk/burglary](http://www.met.police.uk/burglary)

#### 5. **Tips when out of the house or away on holiday. Should we leave shutters closed when away or not?**

**Very Important** to make your home look occupied! Police advise to use a range of deterrents such as use of TV and/or Radio on a timer; timed lighting. If you are away ensure a neighbour visits regularly to change the pattern of opening and closing curtains or shutters and the timing of your lights. Leaving the curtains and shutters closed for the whole of your stay away is a clear message that no-one is home.

#### 6. **Use of a Safe for Valuables?**

**This is a good idea!** If you have high value items, there are some very good concealed safes on the market, which will be difficult for the thieves to either move or break open. Once again to be breaking open a safe will simply delay them when their overall aim is to break in easily and get out quickly.

#### 7. **Alarms**

Lots of people have alarms but many people don't use them or service and maintain them.

Police see the alarm as another layer of security protection to your home.

Banham is seen as a very good secure system but Metpolice clearly cannot advise on which security firm we should use.

**NB** The alarm does need to be linked to the police and be serviced and updated regularly

Think about **Beware of the Dog Sign?**

## 8. **MetTrace**

Visit [www.met.police.uk/mettrace](http://www.met.police.uk/mettrace)

**Met Police is currently providing a property marking kit and taking photos which makes everything unique to you and makes it impossible for the thief to sell on as the items are easy to trace.**

**Place signs in prominent positions that your home is Mettrace Protected**

JBH raised the point that there are no CCTV cameras at all on Regents Park Road or around Chalcot Square or Road. His query was how this process worked. MetPolice to follow up.

## **Contacts**

Visit [www.met.police.uk/burglary](http://www.met.police.uk/burglary)

[liam.Harrison@met.Police.uk](mailto:liam.Harrison@met.Police.uk) for any queries or more advice on all the above points

[jim.co@met.police.co.uk](mailto:jim.co@met.police.co.uk). (contact Jim if you would like some advice on your security at home)