

Crime prevention advice for CCTV



Do you really need CCTV?

Look at a number of ways to improve the security of your home before considering purchasing a CCTV system.

However, when installed correctly and used for the right purpose, CCTV can be an effective tool. It can discourage anti-social behaviour and reduce crime because offenders don't want to be caught on camera.

If you own the property then it is perfectly legal to install CCTV (even with recording and playback capabilities) to protect your property against intruders and trespassers. You cannot put cameras up on other people's property without their consent. So if you do not own the property you will need the written permission to use CCTV.

If you wish to use CCTV:

- **Check** - with your local authority before you install a CCTV system as certain installations require planning permission.
- **Positioning** – decide on the most effective positioning of the camera(s) and field of view. Make sure that your CCTV camera(s) trained on your own property rather than that of your neighbours.
- **Installation/Maintenance** – whilst it may be possible to do this yourself, if you intend using a private company it is always a good idea to check references first to satisfy yourself they are of good character. Whilst most are reputable, there are still some who may use this unique opportunity to gain inside knowledge of your system.
- **Safety** – ensure your camera(s) are fitted and installed correctly, securely and safely to avoid risk to either you or other members of the public.

Remember

Whilst it is lawful for you to monitor your own property for security purposes, you should however make sure that your field of view does not extend beyond your boundaries or focused on adjacent private areas.

Cameras being deliberately trained on areas outside an individual's property, could amount to harassment and potentially give rise to prosecution under the Public Order Act or Protection from Harassment Act.

The Human Rights Act covers our right to privacy. Article 8 of the Act entitled:

“The Right to Respect for Private and Family Life, Home and Correspondence” means that your CCTV cameras should be sited so that they only observe activity on your property.



When considering CCTV what do you want the cameras to provide, this will determine what system you chose and its installation.



Detect



Identification

If you run a business and wish to install CCTV, your system must conform with the below:

CCTV and the Data Protection Act 1998

All aspects of the CCTV system must comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. The Office of the Data Protection Commissioner has produced guidance in relation to how the Act should be interpreted, including advice on the required signage.

Registering with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

All businesses that have CCTV must register with the ICO. Owners should be aware that under the Data Protection Act notification is a legal requirement for organisations processing and collecting CCTV images. Therefore it is important that businesses that operate CCTV equipment notify the ICO, as failure to notify is a criminal offence.

If you go onto the following website, all the relevant information can be obtained to register your business

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/register/>

For more information

- Visit the Home Office website for more information about Photographic evidence in anti-social behaviour cases
- Visit the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) website for their CCTV codes of practice document. You can phone the ICO helpline on 0303 123 1113 the helpline is open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Maintenance of your CCTV should be carried out on a regular to keep the images crystal clear; there are products on the market to keep spiders and their webs off the lens of your cameras.