

Guidance on intruder alarms and responding to alarm activations

The following is the latest policy notes taken from the Lone Working Arrangement. The prime purpose of the policy statement is key holder safety.

'Are there any restrictions for Premise Key Holders attending alarm activations or call-outs?

Employees and/or spouses/partners should not attend to intruder alarm activations or call-outs without a Police or security guard presence. On arrival at a site or premises, employees and/or spouses/partners must not enter a site or premises before the Police or security guarding company.

It is preferable that Premise managers employ a security guarding company to be a key-holder for their premises in the event of an intruder alarm activation or call-out. An approved service is available through Shropshire Council Technical Support and further advice is available from the Council Crime Prevention Officer.'

Intruder alarms vary from property to property. They are either '**Bells Only**' or '**Remote Signal**' or '**Confirmed signalling 'Remote signal'**'.

The following explains the different alarms and response to alarm activations.

'Bells Only' intruder alarms - The activated alarm only rings at the property.

Who responds to an activation? The options are:-

- Nobody responds.
or
- The Council appointed security guarding company can respond. It is preferable that the security guarding company responds. For the security guarding company to respond following an activation, either a neighbour telephones the guarding company or preferably, an 'auto dialler' needs to be installed as a direct link to the guarding company. An 'auto dialler' costs a one-off fee of approximately £300. The property would have total control of the 'auto dialler' so not tied to the security guarding company.

'Remote Signal' intruder alarms - The activated alarm rings at the property and indicates at a central alarm monitoring station.

Who responds to an activation? The options are:-

- For intruder alarms that have Police response, the property key holder should attend but **only** if there is a Police presence. The Council appointed security guarding company can act as the property key holder or attend in support of the property key holder.
- For Intruder alarms that have **lost** Police response through false activations, the options are:-
 - Nobody responds.
or
 - The Council appointed security guarding company responds.

Confirmed signalling 'Remote Signal' intruder alarms - The alarm indicates at a central alarm monitoring station. The central monitoring station receives both 'un-confirmed' and 'confirmed' signals. Key holders are told whether it is a 'un-confirmed' and 'confirmed' signal. This is the modern standard for enhanced reliability in terms of eliminating false alarms. All new alarms or alarms that are up-graded for Police response must be Confirmed signalling 'Remote Signal'.

Who responds to an activation?

- An 'un-confirmed' activation doesn't require a response from a property key holder but it is preferable that the security guarding company responds. An 'un-confirmed' activation normally indicates a false alarm.
- With a 'confirmed' activation the property key holder should attend but **only** if there is a Police presence. The security guarding company can act as the property key holder or attend in support of the property key holder. With a 'confirmed' activation there is a high possibility of a break-in.

Notes

- 'Remote Signal' intruder alarms that have **lost** Police response require considerable improvements to enable them to be Confirmed signalling 'Remote Signal'.
- The appointed security guarding company (as below) can hold the keys to the property **or** support the key holder. When the guarding company supports the key holder, the key holder must not enter the site and/or property before the arrival of the security guarding company.
- Premises must contact their intruder alarm provider if the security guarding company is to be their key holder.
- False activations can be reduced by cleaning the intruder alarm detectors every six weeks. The detectors are delicate so light cleaning using a feather duster.
- If nobody responds to an activated intruder alarm and there is a burglary, the premises/property is vulnerable to further problems. If a burglary occurs on a Friday night or at the beginning of a school holiday when the premises is vacant for days, the potential risk is higher. The Council appointed security guarding company provides 24 hour response and key holding so Council staff do not need to respond out-of-hours or provide cover during holiday periods.
- Shropshire Council Crime Prevention Officer can advise on intruder alarm alterations/improvements.

The appointed security guarding company as per the Shropshire Council Framework Arrangement is Taybar Security Management Limited. This contract came into effect on 1st April 2009 and it is a four year contract. Their contact details are as follows;

Hadyn Jones
Operations Director
Taybar Security Management Ltd
11 Park Plaza
Battlefield Enterprise Park
Shrewsbury
SY1 3AF

Tel: 08712 508712
Fax: 08712 508713
Mobile 07973 726404

E mail: rhj@taybar.co.uk

The costs are £294 per year and £52 per call-out. Each hour after the first hour £12.75.

For further information and advice, please contact:-

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