

Crime prevention advice for places of worship



The theft of lead and other metals is an issue, which affects churches and other places of worship across the whole of the United Kingdom. Whilst the price of such materials remains high, any building that has external metal work could be targeted by thieves. Please read the crime prevention advice below and consider what measures you may be able to make to your own premises.

Tips to consider

- Think about Closed Circuit Television (CCTV). This can be a good deterrent, and particularly useful if monitored and installed to protect the area covered by lead or other materials.
- Lighting can be used to good effect, and will help with CCTV.
- Installation of an alarm system. This could be for internal use or could also have external sensors, which would be good for protecting roof spaces. The alarm can be either a stand-alone system or one which is monitored by the company providing it.
- Property marking should also be considered. There are numerous products available that are overt and covert which can be used to good effect. These products are not visible once applied, but show up under Ultra-Violet light. Please visit www.warwickshireruralwatch.co.uk to see what products are available
- The application of anti-climb paint. This can be excellent deterrent, and anybody who has come into contact with it will be clearly and easily identifiable. Appropriate signage should be placed at a height of no less than 2 meters from the ground when using anti – climb paint.
- Installation of fencing around the building. These can be metal or wooden, and can also have prickly shrubs inter-planted around them. This is also known as defensive planting.
- Any trees or hedges around the building should be kept neatly trimmed. Ideally, hedges should be kept to a height of no more than one metre, and any foliage or branches on trees should hang no lower than two metres from the ground. This will then offer a good clear space for “natural surveillance”.
- Consideration should also be given to installing good quality gates or bollards when the church is unoccupied. This will restrict vehicular access.
- Ensure that any ladders are securely locked away and out of sight.
- Remove any easy access to roofs. Eg wheelie bins and water butts. These can be used as an aid to gain access to roof area’s and transport stolen metals.
- Ask any nearby neighbours to report any suspicious activity to the police.

