

Tech IT Easy Group – Report on Home Security Meeting Monday 15th May 2023

On Monday 15th May Dean Sanderson, from Garforth Security, provided a very informative and engaging session on improving our home security.

He started by explaining that there were 3 approaches to improving home security:

- Installing better locks
- Installing camera/CCTV systems
- Installing alarm systems

Dean talked us through each of these areas. Some key messages from each area are included below.

Locks

- Fit anti-snap, anti-bump, anti-burn locks to all doors. Good quality ones can be bought for less than £50 each.
- Use window locks.
- Fit patlocks to double French doors and patio doors to prevent entry. They are available for under £50 from sellers such as Amazon.

CCTV/Cameras

- CCTV/Cameras provide video (and audio) evidence after an incident but do not prevent entry (although they can provide a visual deterrent).
- CCTV records video 24h a day and will store the footage for some time afterwards on a hard drive (like a DVD recorder). They are most often used to provide security outside a property rather than inside. Many also have motion-activated or always-on security lights. A CCTV system is often wired into mains electricity and can be either wired or wifi to the hard drive. Should provide at least 1080 video quality and ideally at least 2k. Cost for a CCTV system is about £800 for equipment and installation but varies depending on specific circumstances and needs.
- Camera systems (such as Blink and Ring) are often battery operated, so don't need a power lead, and are motion activated. However can also be mains or solar powered. Can have security lights which activate when the camera detects motion. Can also be incorporated into video door bells such as with Ring and Blink. Most upload video and images to the internet using wifi and alert the owner to activity. They are more modular than CCTV systems and can be added to and expanded over time. Camera systems can often be scheduled to arm and disarm at certain times of the day. Cost from as little as £30 per camera but costs vary widely and the cameras are often sold in multiples with an internet hub. Professional installation often not needed.

Alarms

- Alarms can warn of attempts and prevent entry but do not provide evidence of the incident.
- If you have an alarm system installed, use it! Many people have them and do not use them. Reasons for not using alarms systems include being worried about nuisance to neighbours and not believing that anyone takes any notice of them. If you have a break in this may give the insurance company grounds to refuse your claim.
- Most systems now only sound the alarm for 4 minutes as it has been found that most action in response to the alarm occurs within about 2-3 minutes of the alarm starting.

- Alarm sensors include: motion sensors usually mounted in the corner of a room; window and door sensors to detect unauthorised opening; there are now vibration sensors available for cars that can be linked to your home alarm system – the house alarm goes off if any movement/vibration is detected in the car.
- Can often be scheduled and exclude motion from pets. Modern systems are often easier to use (arm, disarm, schedule) than older systems.
- Cost for a system is approx £800 but varies depending on specific circumstances and needs.

General home security advice

- Leave your car keys downstairs – your safety is more important than preventing thieves from taking your car!
- Never confront intruders – your safety is a priority.
- If you suspect you have intruders, tell the police you can see them/they are still on the property as this will ensure they send officers to your property.
- If you have a Faraday pouch for keyless entry keys, check it is still working by approaching the car with the keys in the pouch. They stop working after some time. Placing keys in a tin box may work as well as a Faraday pouch.
- There are 2 types of thieves. The first are professionals, usually after high value cars and other items (but generally not Apple devices as they are locked down to the owner and traceable from other devices). They often work in groups, wear clothing to disguise their identity (such as black hoodies, balaclavas, black trousers) and can use fear to intimidate. The second type are addicts who are stealing to fund their habit and will take anything they can sell quickly to generate cash. They are frightened as discovery and arrest will mean they miss their next fix.
- Items such as red lights (flashing?) displaying in windows and dummy alarm boxes can deter a burglar even if there is no alarm system. Any visual signs of alarms/cameras are likely to encourage burglars to go to another house with no indication of home security systems.
- Don't sign up for annual service on home security systems – it is not necessary.
- Many modern CCTV/camera and alarm systems are linked to mobile phones and notify the owner of activity/incidents – and can be managed remotely from a smart phone.

Finally, (although nothing to do with security as such), we also learned about powerline adaptors - an effective way to extend your wired broadband connection to other parts of your house using the neutral wire in your house's main power wiring! This link will tell you more

<https://www.smartaerials.co.uk/blog/powerline-adapters-all-you-need-to-know>

Got a problem with your tablet or phone? Need to know how to do something? Want to get more from your phone, computer, tablet? Want to use social media or WhatsApp or email? If you have any technology related questions, don't hesitate to contact the group via our web site page

(<https://u3asites.org.uk/garforth-kippax/page/125840>) or by emailing us on

techiteasy799@gmail.com. If we can't answer your question, we'll point you in the direction of someone who can! We also hold regular meetings and presentations on different aspects of technology such as spotting scams, buying a lap top, free software programmes, using social media etc. Contact us for more details!