



Developing Your Club

Cricket Ground Security,
Crime and Anti-Social
Behaviour Prevention



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Introduction

There is nothing better than to visit your local cricket club, whether that be in a rural or urban environment, and see a vibrant, busy and successful club with member and non-member participation from across the local community at all age groups.

In order for this to be achieved it is necessary that the club and its immediate environment is a secure and safe place for people to visit. If people feel safe and relaxed, they will continue to attend and allow their younger family members to attend.

This in turn leads to increased numbers, greater income through the social aspects of the club and also players. A strong player base leads to success on the field which raises the profile of the club, which in turn leads to a greater interest from outside and so the circle of success and sustainability continues.

It is also important that expenditure at the club is kept under control. A need to repeat-buy expensive items, by way of theft, damage or poor maintenance, can have a significant impact on club finances; spending increases, insurance premiums increase and in some cases insurance can no longer be obtained. With this in mind, clubs should ensure they maintain such items sensibly to maximise usage.

The aim of these pages is to provide generic crime prevention advice in relation to the many aspects of a cricket club life. Preventative measures need not be expensive and in many cases your club will already be undertaking similar practices or procedures.

“The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) is pleased to support the ECB in producing this guidance booklet for cricket clubs. It offers sound advice and will help to ensure clubs are familiar with current crime reduction strategies.”



ASSOCIATION OF
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Perimeter

All cricket grounds are different and have many varied surroundings dependent upon their specific location. For example, they can be in rural locations surrounded by fields and open space, within the town environment near to shopping areas and businesses and also within the heart of the immediate community surrounded by dwellings.

Security of the club perimeter is not a simple matter of ‘do this and do that’. When addressing security issues, it is often a case of making good use of what you have available to you and what is already there. It should be noted that your club’s boundary or perimeter is its first line of defence. This is your first opportunity to ‘defend’ your club and, in many cases, the local layout will assist you.

Taking the village ground as an example, there is no requirement to erect expensive security fencing. In many cases the grounds are surrounded by hedges bordering local farmers’ fields. Work with the local farmer where possible to maintain the hedges and keep them trimmed and full. In many instances these hedges are of the Hawthorn variety or similar, having spikes and thorns. A naturally occurring fence in keeping with the environment, is pleasant to the eye and just as effective as long as it is maintained.

Cricket clubs need to be welcoming and blend into the local community and environment.



Perimeter (continued)

Whilst having a cricket club surrounded by houses can lead to its own problems (tensions caused by balls bouncing off roofs and into gardens etc.).

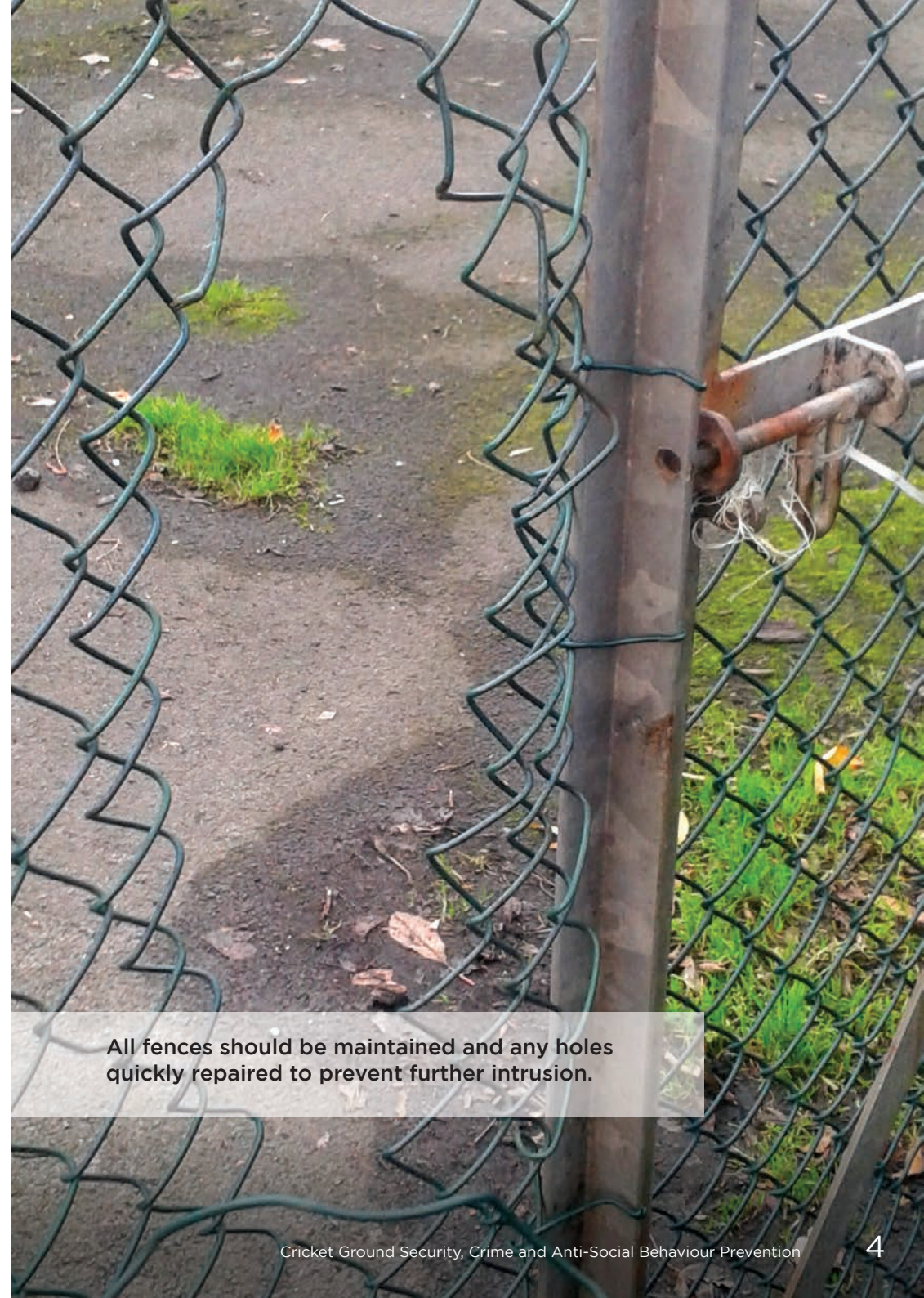
It pays to build up a good relationship with your neighbours and in many cases they will act as guardians over your property when there is nobody at the club.

They are likely to question the presence of strangers when they expect the club to be quiet. To assist with this, how about a friendly leaflet drop to neighbouring properties with appropriate club contact details. Ask them to report anything suspicious via the non emergency telephone number, 101 or 999 if a crime is taking place.

'Unwanted guests' will fear being seen from the multitude of dwellings. This fear is likely to drive offenders elsewhere to easier pickings. The surrounding houses and gardens can also act as a third party boundary to the club thereby restricting entry to the ground through the formal gates and entrances.

Where it is necessary to fence grounds, especially in the more urban environment, it is important to ensure that the fencing is properly installed to reduce the risk of undermining (sliding under) or removing or damaging sections at weak points.

In many cases, intrusion into grounds is merely as a means of a short-cut to save people the time and energy of walking around the exterior of the ground. If a fence is breached and not repaired in a timely manner, then the habit will form with the local community as a cut through and will, therefore, become more difficult to stop.



All fences should be maintained and any holes quickly repaired to prevent further intrusion.

Perimeter (continued)

What initially became a short-cut can quickly become a source of on-going anti-social behaviour leading to damage to the playing field, clubhouse and groundsman's store or shed, as those passing through over time start to loiter and spend time within the confines of the ground.

There are many types of fencing on the market and all have varying degrees of security, cost and effectiveness. That said, any form of secure and well maintained fence or wall will act as a deterrent to intrusion.

Weldmesh security fencing and chain link fencing are all available in a variety of heights and colours which can and will blend into the local environment and surroundings.

An important point to consider when erecting fences and walls is to look at the immediate surroundings to ensure that 'climb points' are not created.

These are locations where the height and security of a fence or wall can be compromised. This could be the availability of items to stand on, trees which can be climbed to drop over the fence, and often by the placing of fencing on top of a wall which enables a person to stand on the wall and step over the fence.

Ground

The ground and square is arguably the most important physical aspect of any cricket club. If these become unplayable whether through a poor playing surface or damage caused by anti-social behaviour there is an immediate negative impact on the club.

Damage can be caused through vehicles driving on the pitch, glass and other foreign objects being thrown about the surface and damage through 'digging' and foreign substances being thrown across the surface.

Clubs should also ensure that a 'sweep' is made of the area following games and social events. Offenders are unlikely to bring items with them to cause damage such as broken glass, weed killer etc. They will use whatever they find lying about. Empty beer glasses and bottles, paint and weed killer left open and insecure, groundsman's tools left in the open. A simple tidy up at the end of play or practice will dramatically reduce the risk of criminal damage to the square.



Ground (continued)

Another major risk to grounds is the anti-social use of vehicles.

There are a variety of methods to prevent vehicles from gaining entry to the grounds and these include gates and security poles that can be fixed into position.

They are however only effective when they are used. An open gate or 'dropped security pole/bollard might as well not be there. If you invest and install any security measure then use it.

Consideration should also be given to the prevention of vehicles accessing the playing surface. These need not be expensive options but simple steps such as the use of painted rocks and/or strategically placed and secured benches can be just as effective and do not look out of place.

It's all a case of defining between vehicular and non vehicular access with immovable or difficult to move objects.



Groundsman's Shed and Equipment

Invariably, this is the area in a cricket club where the majority of the clubs' assets are housed and probably the most insecure area of a club. How many times, and take a look at your own club, do you find that mowers, rollers and strimmers etc. are stored in a rickety rotten old shed, with a simple bolt to stop the door actually falling off?

Take time to consider the value of the property stored in there, and the impact of losing some, if not all, through theft, damage or arson. Does the condition of the hut meet the necessary insurance requirements or would any claim be rejected?

Petrol, diesel and oil are also often stored in in these sheds. They may not be valuable in real terms but think of the damage that can be wreaked around the club with those liquids. Damage to the square and outfield, and arson to the pavilion and hut. The list is endless. Steps can however be taken to reduce the risk to your club.

Ensure that the 'hut' is in good repair. Can access be gained through holes in the walls or roof where rot has set in? If so, and the cost of replacement is out of reach for your club, then repair them.





4.

Groundsman's Shed and Equipment (continued)

Don't just simply nail a board over the hole either on the inside or outside as they can easily be kicked through. Use 'non return' screws or bolts and secure to an internal baton in the interior which extends well beyond the damaged area. This will be much more difficult to remove.

Are there windows in the hut, if so, are they really needed? If not, consider boarding them over as they are a weak spot for entry and allow possible offenders to 'survey' their pickings.

Are the door, hinges and locking mechanism in good order? If not, replace them and use non return bolts and ideally use a metal brace on the inside of the shed to increase security and make it difficult for the hinges, lock and hasp to be prised off.

If you have a padlock, consider purchasing a 'closed shackle' padlock. This is a padlock where the shackle is built into the body of the lock and far more difficult to cut or wrench off. Ideally, corrosion resistant padlocks should be used.

If your hut has a solid floor, consider purchasing single or multiple anchor points, which when properly fixed and fitted can be used to anchor single or multiple items to the floor. These are generally advertised for sale as motorcycle anchor points.



Delaying any offenders is the key element. They will not hang about if they are delayed and need to make noise to gain entry. They risk being seen and drawing attention to themselves so will move on to easier targets.

Groundsman's Shed and Equipment (continued)

As already identified, the value of equipment is high and its loss would impact severely on the club. There are many ways to make your property easily identifiable to you, the police, and others clubs which might be offered stolen items for sale.

This can be undertaken by the club as a DIY package or, alternatively, there are commercial products readily available via the Internet.

Clearly mark club property with the name or post code. It is important that this isn't done on the smooth painted area which would be easy to rub off.

Always try to write this information on non smooth areas. The paint or ink will run into grooves and make it difficult to remove. You could also consider stamping the name, post code or other identifying mark with lettered punches. However, if you do this, consider the warranty of any equipment and always protect paintwork with a cover of varnish or similar after marking.

There are many commercial property marking products on the market which vary in price from a couple of pounds to much more. The more expensive products do tend to offer support in the event of theft and will help police forces to aid recovery and prosecution should offenders be identified. These include products where a unique compound or liquid is painted or sprayed into equipment to identify it.

These schemes are reinforced with signage and stickers that are placed around the club and on appropriate items. In some cases an annual membership fee is payable. Suppliers include Selectadna, Smartwater and RedWeb Technologies to name but a few.

Finally, ride on equipment should be disabled / immobilised when not in use.

Pavilion/Clubhouse

The pavilion is an important aspect of any cricket club and come in many different styles, types of construction and sizes. It will however, be used for fund raising, social events, teas and quite probably these days, as a source of income outside of the cricket season when it can be rented for private parties and functions.

As detailed under the Groundsman's Shed and Equipment Section (see pages 8-11) it is important that any building is maintained to the best ability of the club. There is a term 'broken window syndrome'. This means that any locality or property that is not maintained and kept will enter a spiral of disrepair and degeneration. Eventually this will have a severe impact on the ability of the club to continue to exist.

All doors and windows should be a proper fit. This will not only reduce heating costs but more importantly increase security and make it more difficult for offenders to insert implements and prise them open. If necessary (but having consideration for health and fire safety issues) secure windows closed, if they cannot be repaired or replaced. Consider fitting window locks and restrictors to prevent them being fully opened from the outside. Additional window security such as external roller shutters or hinged wooden shutters that don't affect the aesthetics too much should be considered if budgets allow. Also, internal film can be considered to add protection to the windows if appropriate.

Consider the installation of Passive Infrared (PIR) lighting around the outside of your pavilion. This should be at a height where it is difficult for the lights to be damaged and smashed. PIR means that the lights will illuminate when movement is detected. If offenders fear that they can be seen during the hours of darkness, even from a distance they will leave and seek an easier and more risk free target.

Any general bins should be secured in a free standing area away from buildings and perimeters.

Pavilion/Clubhouse (continued)

Remember, however, that security measures will only work, and act as a deterrent if they are used. It doesn't matter how well fitting a door or window is if it's left open. Security lights have no effect when the bulbs have blown and have not been replaced. Intruder alarms, whether they are monitored at a central station or simply activate an external bell, will not work if they are not set or batteries maintained.

There are auto dialers on the market as an alternative to just audible or centrally monitored stations. These can be configured to notify the main key holders should the alarm be triggered. Alarms should also be considered for sheds and outbuildings and linked to the main intruder system if possible.

For the more remote clubs, there are strobe light alarms that could also be considered.

At the end of play or evening, ensure that someone knows that it is their delegated responsibility to check around the ground and its buildings to ensure that all equipment has been put away and secured.



It is important that the Pavilion is a secure, friendly and welcoming environment for all who visit.

Pavilion/Clubhouse (continued)

Your club could consider these options:

Inside the clubhouse:

- Bandit cages to protect any machines used within the club.
- CCTV Systems – Possible requirement of holding an alcohol licence. Always purchase a system that can be added to should further cameras be required (for problems further down the line or building improvements etc.) at a future date.
- Smoke Cloak – A thick dense cloak of harmless smoke that fills the room when the alarm is activated thus disrupting intruders' efforts. This can be expensive, however, it is very good if premises are broken into.

Outside the clubhouse:

- Anti-vandal paint for existing fence tops if high enough, or prikka strips (warning signs will be required for these).
- Any wood fencing should be high quality overboard/overlap fencing and not fence panels etc.
- Roping the square during the season and fencing it during the winter. Even if vehicles get onto the outfield they will be less likely to damage the square. Whilst the outfield can be repaired relatively easily, damage to the square is expensive and hugely impacts on the playing of cricket.
- CCTV should also be considered to protect the exterior of your buildings as well as the interior.

When installing CCTV, physical security of the cameras must also be considered which may require installing them on extension poles.

New Developments and Refurbishments

If your club is in the fortunate position that it has sufficient funds or has gained funding for a new Pavilion then consider seeking the advice of your local Police Force to see if they have a Crime Prevention Design Advisor.

These are specialist officers who have received training and gained experience at designing crime out of buildings by advising on layout and tested doors, windows and locks etc. that can withstand sustained attack over a period of time. This is known as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design and has been shown to be an effective tool in crime prevention.

The scheme is backed by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and is known as Secured by Design (www.securedbydesign.com). If you build to the appropriate detailed specification, your club will be more secure, less at risk from crime and anti-social behaviour and will receive 'Secured by Design' certification.

For further details and to discuss any proposed plans or seek any crime prevention advice, please contact your local police station or police force.



Car Parking and Transport

The car parking facilities at cricket clubs are wide and varied with some clubs having parking areas, some utilising nearby local authority parking and, in many cases, on street parking is used.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the vehicle owner to take some simple precautions to reduce the risk to their vehicle and contents.

This is easily achieved by removing any valuables from sight, particularly Sat Navs and mobile phones. Owners should also remember to 'wipe' the window where any suction cup holding a phone or Sat Nav has been placed on a window – this is a clear indication to any offender that there may be such a device under the seat or in the glove box. All valuables should be securely locked in the boot or taken away by the driver.

Vehicles should be secured prior to being left. There is very much a temptation to leave windows and sun roofs open during the hot summer months whilst away playing cricket for the day. This is an ideal opportunity and invitation to any potential offender.



Car Parking and Transport (continued)

Remember that you may well belong to a friendly local cricket club, however, non-members and strangers are actually encouraged into the club on match days and you cannot foresee what their intentions may be. Do not be lulled into a false sense of security due to complacency.

You may wish to give security provision at the club for members who travel by way of motorbike and bicycle.

This is simply achieved by the provision of anchor points where machines can be secured to the floor or wall with a secure chain and padlock. There are many options on the market, all of which can be easily researched (for compatibility with your club and surroundings) and purchased via the internet.

The ACPO 'Secure by Design' scheme also offers a certified car parking award based on a similar premise. If your club owns its own car park, or achieves funding for improvements, and wishes to consider accreditation then contact The British Parking Association via www.parkmark.co.uk.

Changing Rooms and Personal Effects

Much of the previous guidance relating to clubhouse and groundsman's shed security can be applied to changing rooms/umpire rooms, particularly if they are a separate build to the main clubhouse. Therefore, we will not focus too deeply on the physical aspects of the security as they have already been addressed.

It must be noted, however, that these locations are particularly vulnerable to 'sneak in' thefts. This is where offenders will take a brief opportunity to enter unobserved and quickly search through bags and pockets to steal small, concealable items such as money, jewellery and mobile phones.

Teams should, therefore, be encouraged to lock their changing rooms whilst engaged on the field of play and a key held by a non-playing member of the team/coaching staff who can easily allow access to authorised persons when the need arises.

This may seem a little inconvenient, however, this is only slight compared to the inconvenience of replacing bank cards, mobile phones and the loss of cash and personal items.

Players should also ensure that any windows to the changing rooms are also secured. There is little point locking the front door and then leaving windows open to the rear that may be out of sight and easily accessible for offenders.

Where clubs have the financial capability, they may wish to consider providing individual lockers for players. These could be large for the provision of clothing and kit or on a much smaller scale simply for the secure storage of smaller personal and valuable items.

Cash and Stock Security

A vibrant and active club, both on the playing and social sides, will no doubt lead to an increase in revenues coming into the club which in turn will lead to further increases in playing and social activities. It is, therefore, important that clubs give very serious consideration to the security of monies and stock held on the premises.

The first thing that clubs need to do is check their insurance policy. This will detail the amount of cash and value of stock and equipment that are covered whilst they are stored on the premises.

Any club with cash flow should consider the use of a safe to protect this money in the short term before it is banked at the earliest opportunity. Safes are available in a variety of formats and also have specific ratings for the amount of cash and valuables for which they are insured and designed. Any reputable locksmith or safe supplier would be able to provide the necessary advice and guidance to a club.

Any safe should be properly fixed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and placed out of general sight and access. Failure to do so is likely to render the safe and club insurances invalid in the event of theft.



Cash and Stock Security (continued)

The number of members with access to the safe should be kept to a minimum. It is understood, however, that in many cases a number of different members will be responsible for collecting subscriptions and match fees etc. Safes are available with a 'non return' slot which would still allow deposits to be made without the need for access into the actual safe.

As previously stated, all excess monies should be transferred to the bank at the earliest opportunity. If the transfer from club to the bank is sizeable, (for example following a large social function/fund-raiser) consideration must be given to two members making the trip. It is advisable to vary the routine of when this is done as well as the route to the bank.

Many clubs have a bar facility and this is again an area that can be a target for theft. Bar areas should be shuttered to restrict access to authorised members only and to protect the integrity of the stock when the bar is not open. Tills should be emptied and left open during closed hours.

Beer barrels and gas bottles are invariably stored outside the clubhouse and often just left lying near to a convenient door for the bar. These bottles are particularly desirable to offenders due to their high value in today's scrap metal market.

Barrels and bottles should be stored in a secure area with a good quality lock and padlock. If a suitable store is currently unavailable then purpose made cages and racking systems are readily available.



General Club Security

Finally, for overall protection, here are some precautions to consider:

- **Site Surveys** – Recommended every 3/6 months. Consider asking social members or neutral persons to carry it out so that they can view the whole site with an open mind. Work towards little improvements step-by-step.

- **Covert CCTV** – Consider remote or covert cameras for places such as work shed or machine sheds that are likely to hold very expensive items and potential for targeting. This can aid and assist conviction.

- **Crime Prevention Signs** – Even if club your club doesn't purchase certain products or have them in place, it is worth having some signs in place at designated places at least as a visible deterrent.

- **Ground Checks** – Use membership base on a rota to regularly visit your club site and conduct checks around the ground. For example, on the way home, on the way out at weekends or on the way to school etc. This is particularly important during the winter to observe any changes or report problems. Consider allowing members or local friendly businesses to use the car park etc. so that the area is active throughout the year.

- **Remove large objects** that can be climbed on or used to gain access to buildings.

Further information and useful links

Further information and guidance with regard to crime prevention can be obtained from a number of local and national sources including:

Your local police station or police service websites. The force email address can easily be obtained via the usual internet search engines and will have areas on the site where guidance and advice will be available. There will also be links to your local policing team and contact details for Crime Prevention Design Advisors.

Alternatively, dial 101 as detailed above. This is the national police 'non-emergency' number and will connect you directly with your local police station.

www.securedbydesign.com

This is the website for the Secured by Design website. This is an Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) accredited crime prevention scheme. The site gives crime prevention advice and contact details for all Police Crime Prevention Design Advisors across the country who will offer free advice in relation to the building and extension of pavilions and changing rooms.

There is also access to a list of approved suppliers whose products have been tested to stringent standards making them more difficult to bypass thereby increasing security.

Further information and useful links (continued)

www.ourwatch.org.uk

Your club may fall within an area that is currently covered by a local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme (NHW). This is a national voluntary scheme where communities watch out for each other, have contact with the local policing team and share information. This site gives information with regard to schemes and contact facilities. Alternatively contact your local police and request to speak with the local Watch Liaison Officer.

Become involved with your local NHW and this is an ideal opportunity to forge new community links and may be a source for increased membership and players.

www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Crimestoppers are an independent charity helping law enforcement to locate criminals and help solve crimes. They have an anonymous 24/7 phone number, **0800 555 111**, that people can call to pass on information about crime; alternatively people can send them information anonymously via their Giving Information Form.

You don't have to give your name or any of your personal details. They do not trace calls or track IP addresses.

There is also crime prevention advice and guidance available from their site.





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