



SECURITY – GENERAL GUIDELINES

Reviewed July 2011

The prime object of this paper is to outline in brief the many areas that the Secretary of a Golf Club needs to keep under constant review to ensure the SECURITY of the club. Many factors have to be taken into consideration including the area the club is situated and what level of SECURITY are the members prepared to pay for.

The following sections are covered:

- ☛ Contacts.
- ☛ Clubhouse
- ☛ Professional's Premises.
- ☛ Steward/Caretaker's Flat.
- ☛ Course Equipment Buildings.
- ☛ Car Park.
- ☛ Golf Course.

1. Contacts

It is important to regularly have contact with those persons who can assist and advise the club on different aspects of SECURITY this will include the following:

Local Crime Prevention Officer

They will always help the club and advise on many aspects and if the club has members in the local constabulary they will usually arrange visits for you. Their advice can often save the club money and it is generally totally independent.

Insurance Company

Always inform them of any additions you are considering to make your premises more secure by extending alarm systems and other action. It could be that they will not approve of what you are doing so do not spend until you have consulted.

Security/Alarm Company

Be wary of dealing with unknown firms and check with your insurers and the police that they belong to appropriate organisation. Their advice although slightly biased can be extremely helpful and save money. It is important to know what after sales service and back up they provide. If changing to a new firm find out from customers they already have and especially other golf clubs. Be able to advise your committee because the cheapest system may well be more expensive long term.

2. Clubhouse

Security out of hours and locked up at night

These days having someone sleeping on the premises is not always advisable but at the same time many clubhouses are situated way out of the beaten track so that alarm systems unless they are transmitted to a third party are not very effective. Normally the alarm will be connected to a central HQ of the alarm company and they will inform the appropriate authorities. The large number of false alarms that occur annually means that the police may not respond to your premises unless they are satisfied something is amiss. Also telephone lines can be cut so additional systems that monitor the line constantly are needed to avoid this happening.

The main attraction to the average thief to a clubhouse is the gaming machines so if they can be locked away each night in a secure area or covered over with a suitable cover this will help to eliminate one major problem. The wine, spirits, cigarettes and other valuables should be kept in a secure area which ideally is situated in the clubhouse and can only be reached by breaking through several doors and windows. Any cups or trophies should be kept in a well built cabinet with good locks this should also include any memorabilia which if very valuable should be kept in the safe or at the bank. All safe's in the clubhouse should be approved by your insurance company and cash only kept within the agreed limits.

Care should be taken in seeing that administration offices are alarmed and secure and that copies of all computer data kept away from the clubhouse and updated on a regular basis. In these days of hard disks if your computer is stolen then bang goes all your records make sure your staff update on a daily basis and keep at least one copy away from the premises.

It pays you to make the office as secure as possible and items like steel shutters for the windows and extra locks on the door are helpful. Remember not to have the office key hanging up in the bar for all to see. Keep all keys in properly locked case in a secure area. Set out the guidelines for taking and fetching cash from the bank and see that they are adhered to.

The bar area is usually protected by metal grills and this will at least act as some deterrent they should be closed when area is unattended.

If possible external windows should be steel shutters which operate from inside but if you decide this is too costly then make sure you have good locks on them. External doors and locks should be as specified by the insurance company and in some cases they are protected by metal grills which are secured on locking up. Remember to see that all fire escapes exits are not only clearly marked but are checked last thing at night. Draw up a set list of locking up for the staff and make them aware of their responsibilities. Also see that they know who to contact if the alarm fails to set and see that their job descriptions cover this situation.

In the club locker rooms remember that if members keep their clubs and equipment in lockers that they are covered by insurance. If the clubhouse has rooms upstairs remember that they are properly protected and especially areas like fire escapes which can make it all too easy to enter a premises.

Some clubs employ the services of a Security Firm who regularly patrol the area after dark this is costly and if done, you need a reliable firm. But remember thieves have been known follow these people around and time when they visit. If you have a major event on at the club then for that period it may be necessary to have security on the premises all night.

Security in daylight hours

The security during daylight is equally important and in many cases because it is the member or guest who is affected more so. There are a variety of systems on the market to prevent entry during opening hours to only authorised persons. These systems are as good as the members and club like to operate them. Digital locks help the situation but you have to convey the code to members and guests which invariably weakens the system. Smart cards to gain access are another idea providing you have a reasonable system of control especially for guests. Unfortunately members often hold the door open for visitors without ascertaining their credentials. Locker room attendants are useful on big occasions at the club and cameras on a video system can deter but all systems will fall down at the efforts of a determined thief. So beware and try to encourage at least the staff to be prepared to tactfully challenge persons they do not know. Make sure that they obtain proof of identity from any visitors claiming to represent organisations. This is particularly important with regards to the gaming machines. If you are fortunate to employ a regular maintenance person get them to regularly check all items to do with the system that are visible.

Good flood lighting is a must and this can also include additional lights that come on when intruders are around. If ram raids are possible then take the necessary measures to prevent this by whatever means your advisers suggest.

3. Professional's Premises

This area is extremely vulnerable and in many clubs because of the isolation of the building insurance cover can be impossible. If you are building a new club house make sure you site it within the building if it is across a wide passage that players walk through with their equipment try to have steel gates at each end this can save a lot of problems. If you have an existing shop built years ago then you have a problem but again get advice from the experts. Steel or concrete posts will be necessary to prevent ram raids if these are likely and metal shutters on the doors and windows are a must. Also remember that thieves have been known to enter through the roof so see what precautions can be taken. Alarm systems in line with the club house are essential along with monitor on the telephone lines. If possible always flood light the entire building and have extra lights that come on when intruders are about.

4. Steward/Caretaker's Flat

The main thing is to provide your staff with adequate means of protection. Many clubs provide a portable telephone along with a panic button linked to the central alarm system. You should make sure that their premises is secure by means of good doors, windows and suitable locks. If it is away from the main building then good flood lighting that comes on when someone is around can be a deterrent.

5. Course Equipment Buildings

Bearing in mind the amount of equipment needed to maintain a golf course it is surprising how many clubs take little care in protecting buildings. However machinery has become attractive to more professional type of thief and greater care must now be taken. In many cases the buildings are situated away from the clubhouse at an isolated spot on the course. A good alarm system is essential along with well constructed and protected doors and any windows. If you can fence or wall the area off and have good solid gates that are locked at night so much the better. All machines should be immobilised and made as difficult to get to as possible. Some clubs use special wheel clamps on tractors and put them in such a position that nothing else can be got at without moving them. This creates extra work but in some instances is necessary. Make the staff aware of the needs to make things secure and also beware of strangers during working hours especially if they turn up with a truck or trailer.

6. Car Park

There is nothing more disconcerting to play a good round of golf and return to your car to find it has been the subject of a theft or worse still it is has been stolen. Worse still is not very pleasant to visit a golf club and find the visitors car park at the back of beyond with no lighting and the first thing you see is glass from broken windscreens scattered all over the place. Not only that you are expected to pay perhaps between £30-100 for this privilege. Although it is impossible to make a car park totally secure many clubs could do a lot more than they do. Visitors should be treated far better and at least every effort made to avoid thefts. Try to avoid having areas that are unlit and if possible fencing the area can help. Several clubs have installed car park barriers which prevents you leaving without the appropriate card or disk. Good lighting is a must and this can be controlled by coming on when movement is detected, video cameras also act as a deterrent and on busy club days security in the form of attendants can avoid problems. Probably the greatest problem is members and guests who leave their cars unlocked and sometimes with the keys in the ignition also valuables are left in full view.

7. Golf Course

As the average golf course of 18 holes will cover anything from 65 - 250 acres there is little you can do to guard the course. If you cross roads and have gateways for course vehicles then these can be locked when not in use which will help to keep joy riders at bay. But you still have to have gateways for golfers with buggies and other equipment which means that motor bikes can still get in. Some clubs employ course wardens who operate during daylight primarily to catch unofficial golfers and in cases warn official players for slow play. If you have public footpaths crossing the course this adds to the problems although it can act as a deterrent because walkers will be about in most cases they will report anything suspicious to you. It pays to have good relations with these persons because they can be useful at times.

CHECKLIST

You should check the following items at regular intervals:

- ☒ Check alarm system and update as necessary.
- ☒ Annually check with Insurance Company/Police all aspects of security at the club.
- ☒ Keep records of thefts and other breaks in security to see what action might be taken in the future.
- ☒ See that all sensors and other alarm equipment is working correctly.
- ☒ Make sure all staff are aware of security problems and have regular discussions to pinpoint faults in the system.
- ☒ Put notices in prominent positions warning members and guests.
- ☒ See that fences, gates and other barriers are regularly checked.
- ☒ See that car numbers and details are kept of any suspicious persons seen on premises.
- ☒ Try to impress upon members the need to protect their property.
- ☒ Always check out any suspicious matter reported to you as soon as you can.
- ☒ If you have video equipment that records make sure it is inspected daily.
- ☒ Make sure all members and visitors have tags on their golf bags when playing and check this frequently.
- ☒ If you have digital locks then change the number at frequent intervals.
- ☒ For major events consider having security guards on the premises for 24 hours.
- ☒ See that areas of course such as woodlands and other unused areas are regularly inspected for unauthorised intruders.
- ☒ Make sure you have a secure system when bar is open during dark evenings.
- ☒ Always change all locks if keys are lost or stolen.

GCMA 2001

[This document is prepared for guidance and is accurate at the date of publication only. We will not accept any liability (in negligence or otherwise) arising from any member or third party acting, or refraining from acting, on the information contained in this document.]