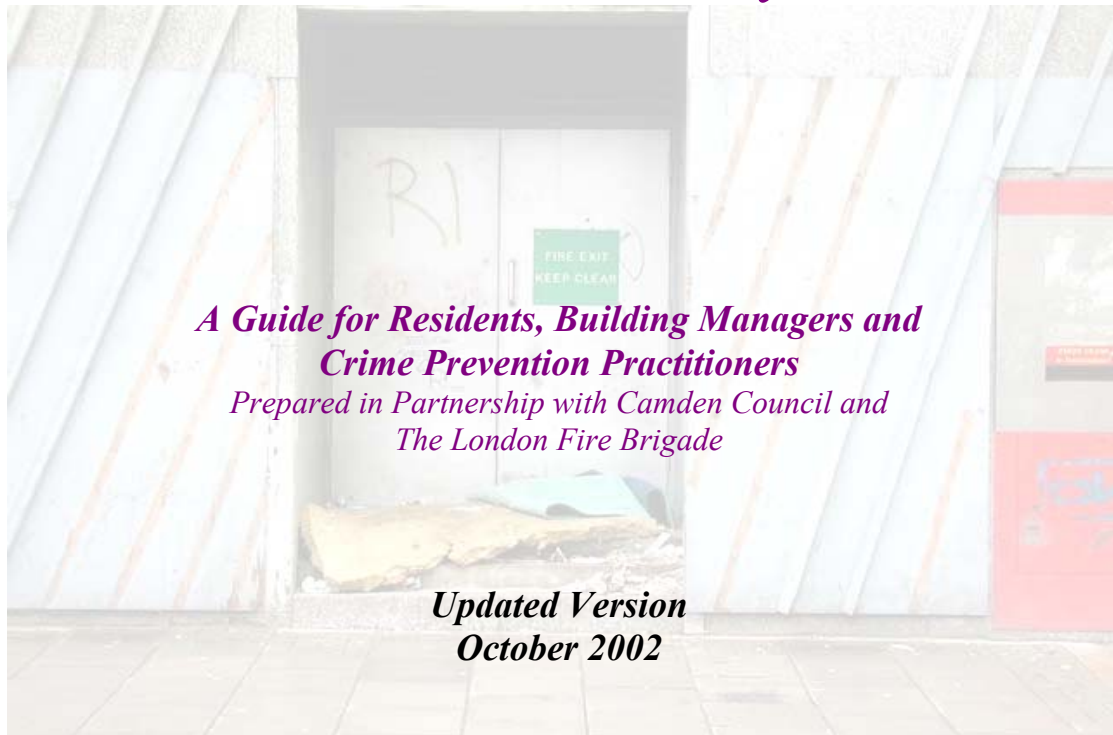


# **THE RECESSED PEST**

## *Reducing Crime Opportunity in Recessed Doorways*



*A Guide for Residents, Building Managers and  
Crime Prevention Practitioners*

*Prepared in Partnership with Camden Council and  
The London Fire Brigade*

*Updated Version  
October 2002*

*Prepared by the Crime Prevention Design Office  
Camden Police Borough HQ  
Holborn*

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## **About This Guide and Who Can Use It**

The information in this guide has been designed to help the crime prevention practitioner, the building manager and the resident. The guide describes the problems associated with recessed doors and sets out the regulation that has led to the door being recessed. Finally it suggests a number of ideas or 'Plans' that can be used to either remove the recess altogether or to make alterations to the doors in order to eliminate or reduce the problems associated with the recess.

## **CAUTION**

**Although this guide has been written with the assistance of Camden Council's Building Control, Highway and Planning Officers and the London Fire Brigade's Fire Safety Officer it is essentially a crime prevention guide written by the Metropolitan Police. The information in it does not imply or give any consent or permission for you to make alterations to your recessed door.**

The information in this guide is based upon current Building Regulation and Legislation for England and Wales. The interpretation of the regulations and legislation may differ slightly in your local authority area. Therefore, as alterations to emergency exit doors are 'material alterations' (in respect to The Building Regulations) you must seek authority from your *local* Building Control Officer at the Council before carrying out any work. In many circumstances planning permission may also be required. It is advisable to consult the Building Control and Planning Officers and the London Fire Brigade's Fire Safety Department at the earliest opportunity to discuss what you intend to do so that you do not waste time and money considering alterations that may not be permissible.

**The Metropolitan Police Service cannot guarantee that alterations to your recessed doors will result in less crime and anti-social behaviour.**

## **The Problems with Recessed Doors**

Over the years, the recessed door, be it an emergency exit or an entrance, has been the scene of just about every type of crime and disorder you could imagine. For most of us living and working in the inner cities our experience of them will also conjure up images of rough sleepers, street drinkers, drug users and prostitutes and a myriad of often quite disgusting deposits such as used hypodermic syringes and bodily wastes. Quite often they have become the resting-places for wind blown litter, which sometimes has provided the fuel for the arsonist. Occasionally, office workers arriving for work have had to step over the recumbent guest from the night before and residents have had to wait for a drug deal to be completed before they can get into their home.

Recessed doors also offer opportunities for the burglar who can hide in the recess while forcing open the door. Prostitutes and their clients use them in some areas leaving behind deposits that have to be cleaned away by others in the morning. In the main though they can generate fear simply because they are places that cannot be looked into. Most would agree that the pedestrian walking along a street at night should be able to clearly see the way ahead and recessed doorways and other such obstructions to vision, such as bus shelter advertising panels, can all add up to a *street that scares*.

Many would argue, including the author, that recessed doors actually *cause* crime and anti-social behaviour to occur and that their removal will remove this attendant opportunity. And remember, without opportunity you cannot have a crime.

*“There is no single cause of crime that is sufficient to guarantee its occurrence: yet opportunity above all others is necessary and therefore has as much or more claim to being a root cause.”* (Opportunity Makes the Thief - practical theory for crime prevention. Home Office Police Research Series Paper 98 by Marcus Felson & Ronald v. Clarke)

Having pointed out the obvious problems associated with recesses we should not lose sight of the fact that outward opening doors are difficult to force inwards and therefore can help to reduce opportunity for burglary. The difficulty is caused by the doorstops, which can be up to 25mm thick making forced entry extremely hard. The ideal solution then would be a non-recessed outward opening door and it is this ideal that this guide aims to achieve wherever possible.

## **Recessed Doors and Drug Users**

### **The Problems at their Worst**

If you are unfortunate enough to live or work in an area inhabited by drug users and dealers you will probably be seeing the very worst abuse of the recessed door. In 2001 a survey of 57 streets used by drug users in a part of the West End of London identified 163 drug user and rough sleeping sites. These ranged from insecure rear yards and car parks through to telephone boxes and alleyways. The most commonly used place however was the recessed door, accounting for more than 30% of the sites identified. (Reference: Lilac Project: Environment – Street Assessments and Tasks - Calvin Beckford 2000)

The preparation and taking of some drugs requires heat and light. The heat is usually provided by a cigarette lighter and it follows that when the weather is inclement, the drug user will seek shelter from the elements. Normally, a good level of light is required and this is particularly the case when the drug is to be injected. It is important to know this as increasing the light levels in a recess may actually make things worse not better.

Freedom from disturbance is important, because a degree of concentration is required by the user to ensure that the drug is prepared and administered correctly. Disturbance during preparation can lead to complications requiring urgent medical assistance. If the user is on their own and has found a place where people seldom go then an interruption at the critical moment could lead to serious illness or even death.

The drug litter left behind by some of the users has presented a very serious health hazard to the public at large and there have been cases of both adults and children getting pierced by needles. Blood, urine, excrement and, sometimes, used condoms are found in abused recessed doorways, all of which can spread disease to the general public.

### **Why are my doors recessed? - The Regulations**

In simple terms many of the doors in the building in which you live or work are used as a means of escape from a fire or for any other emergency when the building has to be evacuated. Most of these doors will open outwards in the direction of escape so that if someone should fall in front of the doors on the way out or a large number of people arrive at the doors at the same time the escaping people will not obstruct the way out. If the doors were to open inwards in these situations injury or loss of life could result.

There are a number of "door types" to be considered and these include emergency exit doors (sometimes incorrectly referred to as 'fire doors'), entrance doors, delivery doors, entrances to car parks and yard gates.

Emergency exit doors can be either single or double leaf, are often fitted with crash bars or pads, and normally open outwards. Entrance doors are usually included as an alternative means of escape from a building and in some cases open in both directions.

The numbers of emergency exit doors and their direction of opening (including the entrance door) are determined by the building type, its use and size and the number of persons expected to use the premises and the doors. Even some sliding and revolving doors can be designated as emergency exit doors and are sometimes designed to break open outwards if force is applied.

### **Floor Space Factor**

The precise number of emergency exit doors and their opening direction are governed by Building Regulations. The number of doors required is calculated using the 'Floor Space Factor', which is different depending on the use of the building. For example night clubs normally require a greater number of emergency exits than a standard office building because there are likely to be a greater number of people in the building in one place, some of which could be worse for drink. Ironically some of the worst abused recessed doors are those around night clubs and other licensed premises – buildings that tend to have more of them!

### **The Opening Direction of an Emergency Exit Door**

The opening direction of fire doors is governed by the DETR's publication *Approved Document B* of the Building Regulations 2000 (Now the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister [www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk)). Paragraph 6.14 *advises that where reasonably practical all doors SHOULD open in the direction of escape and SHOULD always do so if the number of persons that might be expected to use the door is more than 60, or where there is a very high risk of fire*. Implied in this advice is that if it is anticipated that 60 or less people are to use the door and there is not a very high risk of fire it *COULD* open inwards.

In respect to the anticipated number of users of an emergency exit door it is important to note that when there is more than one escape route the largest exit is usually discounted. Therefore, it is not just a matter of dividing the occupants of a building by the number of doorways. Paragraphs 4.19 and 5.11 of *Approved Document B* explain these matters in more detail.

### **Premises Licensed for Entertainment**

It is important to note that additional rules apply to premises that are licensed for entertainment, such as clubs, cinemas and theatres. This set of rules, known as the Technical Regulations, apply across London and insist on outward opening doors in all such licensed buildings regardless of their capacity. In effect, the Technical Regulations take the place of the Building Regulation requirements for doors in these types of buildings and you will therefore need the additional approval of the Licensing Section of the Council before making alterations to any door. The Building Control Officer should tell you about this.

At the time of writing a new national set of model regulations has been published but not yet formally adopted by all the country's Local Authorities

#### **Case Study**

*A small pub with a liquor licence has inward opening doors approved by the London Fire Brigade under the liquor licence. The owners apply for an entertainment licence and the Council Licensing Section makes them re-hang the all the doors so they can open outwards. The assumption is that the risk is greater in a building that has an entertainment licence.*

### **Private Forecourts**

In most instances the footway outside a building is owned and maintained by the local council's Highways Department. On occasion, and often found where a building is recessed

back from the general building line, the part of the footway immediately outside the building may be owned by the freeholders of the property. This is often referred to as the 'forecourt' and is normally marked by a change of footway surface material. Even though a door could open out onto this private forecourt, thus removing the recess, safety considerations normally result in these doors being recessed as well. Regulation 4, Requirement M2 of the Building Regulations deals with this scenario, which in effect acknowledges the problems faced by blind or partially sighted pedestrians who would not be able to differentiate between the private forecourt and the footway and could walk in front of the door opening.

### **The Highways Act**

The local council's Highways Authority has a duty to protect the public from injury whilst using the public highway and to prevent its obstruction. Indeed there is a specific Highways Act offence of opening any "door, gate or bar" onto the public highway. It is for these sound reasons why emergency exit doors (and some entrance doors) are recessed so that when opening outwards they do not open onto the public footway where they might cause obstruction or injury to pedestrians. In addition to this, because the doors are recessed, they will still be able to open even if an irresponsible driver has parked their vehicle on the footway and is obstructing the exit.

#### **Comment.**

*When you start reading through the plans below keep in mind the problem of vehicles obstructing emergency exit doors, which is especially troublesome where there is a private forecourt. The author suggests the use of clear signage at least and, if there is sufficient room on the private forecourt, some additional bollards to keep cars away from the exit. Speak to your Building Control or Highways Officer about what might be done to reduce the problem.*

### **Steps Outside the Exit Door**

If there is more than one step outside the emergency exit door or the step is greater than 150mm in height it may not be possible to move the doors forward. This is because the change of floor level might cause a trip hazard that could affect the means of escape. However, if the steps can be built outwards or replaced with a ramp or the footway raised to reduce the step height or create a level threshold the alteration may be possible.

### **The Council's Duty to Prevent Crime**

At the present time, the Building Regulations and the Highways Act do not take into account the need to prevent crime. This is not surprising, as these regulations and legislation were never intended to do so – crime prevention has never been regulated for. To some extent this has now changed and the change has been brought about by the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Section 17 – (1) of the Crime and Disorder Act says:

*“Without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.”*

What this means is that when, for example, a Planning Officer is dealing with a planning application for a new building, the officer must consider the implication for crime and disorder. This consideration will not just be for the building itself, but also for the effect of the development in the wider area. A similar position exists with an application to the Building Control Officer to ensure compliance with the building regulations, because the regulations that relate to emergency exit doors now have to be considered together with the crime risks associated with them.

It is, of course, accepted that the need to provide a safe means of exit from a building in an emergency will often outweigh the crime opportunities that these regulations may unwittingly create. However, this does not mean that alternative and acceptable compromises cannot be found. In a drug market scenario, a recessed outward opening door might be obstructed by a drug user sitting or sleeping in it or by bedding material left in the recess. What is important is that the crime opportunity has been considered and that the decision about where to position a door and its direction of opening has been considered in this light.

## ***The Building Manager's Responsibilities***

The owner of a building has a legal responsibility to keep fire exits free from obstruction when the building is occupied. By definition this responsibility includes the removal of persons sleeping or sitting in a recess in front of an emergency escape door as well as the removal of obstructions on the inside of the door. In addition to this, the owner must also take reasonable steps to prevent people from using any part of the premises to take drugs (Section 8, Misuse of Drugs Act 1971), and this includes a recess. Added to this burden will be Health and Safety Legislation and the Occupier's Liability Act 1984. Both would place responsibilities upon management to ensure that doors do not open in a manner that might cause injury to people in the immediate vicinity and that the building and the grounds upon which it stands are safe for all people to use.

It is indeed unfortunate that the understandable needs of safety regulation, which has caused the recessing of so many outward opening doors has unwittingly created the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour.

For those of you managing buildings in inner cities where crime and anti-social behaviour is often so much greater than elsewhere it would be understandable if you felt that you were in a 'no win' situation. This is why it is important to read and where necessary act upon the advice in this guide. Because by working in partnership with the police and local authority you can at least show that you have taken your responsibilities seriously and have done all that can be reasonably expected to be done within the restrictions of the present laws.

### ***Comment***

*In a drug market area of West London, where recessed doors are common, a manager of a Government building has taken his responsibilities very seriously indeed. Each of the emergency exits of this very large office building is covered by a CCTV camera. If a person is seen loitering in the recess the security staff take the immediate necessary action to remove the individual. Unfortunately these arrangements are probably the exception, as the majority of building managers in drug market areas have not taken these precautions and even if they did they would not have the security staff to respond.*

## ***What you can do about it – The Plans***

The following advice has been produced by the Crime Prevention Design Office, Metropolitan Police, Camden. **It is only advice and you must speak to the Local Authority and the Fire Service first before making any alterations to your doors. Failure to gain permission for the alterations could result in wasted time and money and possible legal proceedings against you.**

### ***Design Solutions to be considered.***

As you will see it is actually quite difficult to give advice for every eventuality. Experience in dealing with a large number of recessed door problems in the West End has shown us that very few doors are ever the same. The following advice is then in the form of plans or objectives, so that if you cannot achieve plan A then you move onto plan B and so on.

### ***Special note for Police Crime Prevention Practitioners***

*Success will largely depend upon an understanding between the local police, the Local Authority and the Fire Service. It is important that should the police initiate a programme of recess removal they should first meet with their partners to discuss and agree the content of this guide or make such changes as local circumstances might dictate.*

## **PLAN A**

### **Remove the recess by bringing the doors forward.**

This can normally be achieved in the following circumstances:

- 1. There are 60 or less users of the emergency exit doors, including the entrance door, allowing them to open inwards (This does not include places licensed for entertainment). Building Regulations Approved Document B 6.14 allows this in some circumstances.**

In some cases inward opening doors are not as secure as outward opening doors (because they can be kicked in). You must then ensure that the inward opening door and its locking provision will satisfy both security and fire safety needs. Reference to your insurers would also be wise. Go to [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com) for details of manufacturers who can supply security enhanced doors, which will also meet with the approval of Building Control for fire safety (British Standards Institute PAS024).

#### **Comment**

*A crime prevention assessment of a large number of streets in the West End of London found that there were some doors that were unnecessarily recessed (Lilac Project: Environment - Street Assessments. Calvin Beckford and Jim Howard 2000) The majority of these were entrance doors to dwellings above shops, but also included blocks of flats owned by the local authority. After consultation some of these have since been altered to open inwards. As rough sleepers and drug users used these recesses the alteration has removed the anti-social element as well as the obstruction in front of the emergency exit doors.*

- 2. There are 60 or less users of the doors, but there is a private forecourt immediately outside the recess allowing the doors to be brought forward and continue to open outwards onto the forecourt. See 3 below for further important guidance.**
- 3. There are more than 60 users of the doors and there is a private forecourt immediately outside of the recessed door allowing the door to be brought forward and continue to open outwards onto the forecourt.**

To ensure the safety of pedestrians it is necessary to place structures either side of the door opening arc. Examples of such structures include an area of small cobbles placed either side of the door, together with deflector rails on the walls. Planters, bollards and rails are also used to the same effect of diverting the pedestrian away from the opening arc. This matter is dealt with by regulation 4 Requirement M2 of the Building Regulations.

Although not a requirement under the Building Regulations it is advisable to include a glazed viewing panel in an outward opening door as this will allow the user to see if there is an obstruction (or a pedestrian) on the other side. Camden police advise the use of 7.5mm laminated glass with a small gauge grille fixed behind. These measures will help to prevent the manipulation of the crash bars or other emergency release mechanism by a burglar through the viewing panel. If the door needs to be of a fire and smoke resistant type Building Control will advise you.

- 4. There are more than 60 users of the doors, there is no private forecourt immediately outside of the recessed door, but the footway is very wide, possibly allowing outward opening of the door.**



The Highways Authority has a duty under the Highways Act to protect pedestrians from injury whilst using the footway. At the same time Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (see below) places a duty upon the local authorities to prevent crime and disorder.

In effect this means that Highways, Building Control and Planning Officers have to consider crime and the prevention of crime and disorder when carrying out their respective duties. Unfortunately, Building and Highway Regulations, which require some doors to be recessed, actually create the opportunities for crime to be committed. Bear in mind also that Section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 requires the building owner to take reasonable steps to prevent any part of a premises to be used to take controlled drugs. Until such times as the various regulations and laws are amended to take account of these anomalies council officers will do all they can to help within the law.

In consideration of the above the Highways Authority *may*, in circumstances where the crime problem is acute, allow a door to open over the highway providing the footway is very wide and the structures as described in 3 above are put in place to protect the pedestrian.

#### **Comment**

*If the recess you have removed forms the entrance into your building you might want to provide a little shelter from the elements by providing a small roof above the doorway. Before carrying out any work you are advised to contact your local planning department, as you may need planning permission.*

## **PLAN B**

### **Reduce the depth of the recess to a minimum.**

- 1. With reference to Building Control and the Highways Authority ensure that the recess is no deeper than 600mm**

The authorities may allow a slight protrusion over the highway on the basis that a particular set of doors will rarely be used anyway. Wall mounted deflectors or other structure may be required. Having achieved this alteration go to PLANS C & D for further advice.

- 2. With reference to Building Control and the Highways Authority ensure that the recess is no greater than that required for the opening of the door within the recess.**

This should be a straightforward alteration, but you will still have to contact the local authority if you move the doors. Having achieved this alteration go to PLANS C & D for further advice.

## **PLAN C**

### **Using Shutters and Gates**

It is important to note that emergency exit doors are only required when the building is occupied. This means that, in some circumstances, it will be possible to bring down shutters or pull across collapsible gates to remove the recess when the building is closed and all members of staff and visitors have left. This is subject to planning permission and building control and consultation with the fire authority. When using shutters or gates across emergency exit doors the fire authorities will want to know how the building manager will ensure that the shutters or gates are opened at the beginning of the day. Cinemas and theatres, which have traditionally chained and padlocked their emergency exit doors at the end of business, have overcome this

problem by locating a lock board in the manager's office. If all the padlocks and chains are on the board the manager knows that the doors have been unlocked.

Security shutters that automatically rise when the intruder alarm is turned off at the beginning of the day or that fail safe (open) when the fire alarm is activated are sometimes permissible. Each decision is site specific.

#### **Comment**

##### **'Cleargate™'**

*Cleargate™ is a motorised galvanised brick bond perforated steel grille linked to the mains security/fire alarm system, with a battery backup, with a fail-safe winding handle in case of complete power failure. When the fire alarm is activated the motorised grille will automatically rise.*

*The product can be used in conjunction with 'Clearscape™' (see below). The use of this product will allow protection of the recess whilst still permitting emergency evacuation. Whilst officers of the London Fire Brigade have approved the product, separate permission must be sought on each occasion it is used. Contact details for one of the companies who can supply this product can be found in the appendix.*

*ACPO CPI Ltd, who manage the police initiative "Secured by Design", recommend that the minimum standard for external doors and shutters is either British Standard Institute's PAS024 or the Loss Prevention Council's LPS1175 grade 2. You are invited to contact Jon Cole through the Secured by Design website for further information.*

## **PLAN D**

### **Maximise formal and informal surveillance of the recess.**

If you are unable to remove the recess by moving the doors forward or installing shutters or collapsible gates because the building is occupied throughout the night you can still make alterations that may reduce the misuse of the recess. This is achieved by increasing both formal and informal surveillance of the recess, but unlike the removal of a recess the police cannot offer any guarantees that anti-social behaviour will be reduced. In this context 'formal surveillance' means the visual supervision of the recess by staff and security officers either by patrolling the building and looking through the doors into the recess or watching a CCTV image of the recess. 'Informal surveillance' means looking into the recess by the passing public either from inside the building looking out or when passing by the recess along the street.

#### **Comment**

##### **The 'Clearscape™' Project**

*In 2000 a project took place in the West End of London known as 'Clearscape™', which involved replacing one emergency exit door in a cinema and a night club with specially made glazed doors. A CCTV camera was located behind each of these doors to monitor the use of the recess. The findings showed less anti-social activity in the monitored recesses when compared to those that had solid doors. The effect of the increased surveillance and the response to the CCTV images by the staff does seem to have increased the miscreant's fear of detection causing them to seek an alternative location.*

*Contact details for the companies involved in this project can be found in the appendix.*

### **Measures to be considered**

- Deep clean the recess and where necessary make repairs to the walls, ceiling and floor surfaces ensuring that any holes are filled and loose panels are fixed. Drug users often hide their various drug paraphernalia in any handy cavity.
- Paint the walls and ceiling with anti-graffiti paint. This will make it easier to remove any new graffiti and other surface deposits such as blood. Some people have used glazed tiles on the walls instead of paint, but these can be broken and may therefore require additional maintenance. If there is either formal surveillance of the

recess, such as CCTV, which will guarantee attendance by a member of staff, or there is a great deal of informal surveillance, such as lots of people walking by, maximise the 'clinical' effect by using a light coloured paint and a bright light.

- Consider replacing the emergency exit door with an all glazed or top half glazed door. It is recommended that the glazing be a thick laminated glass, which is well anchored into the frame. Further security can be achieved by installing a grille behind the glass. You must consult your insurers about this alteration to satisfy them that you have not increased your risk of burglary. Although you should consult Building Control when making alterations to an emergency exit door you should also note that recent changes to Part L of the Building Regulations (April 1<sup>st</sup> 2002) now require you to seek building control approval when installing a door which has more than 50% glazing. Alternatively, you can use the services of a 'FENSA' registered installer to carry out the work, which will negate the need to consult Building Control.
- When using a glazed emergency exit door install a closed circuit television camera behind the door positioned to look through the glass into the recess. Activity in the recess can then be monitored, recorded and acted upon by members of staff or security officers. The camera should be visible through the glass so that the person in the recess is aware that he or she is under surveillance. Reinforce this by placing a sign on one of the walls to inform the public that the recess is under surveillance by CCTV\* and that any misuse will be acted upon. Some people have additionally installed loudspeakers in the recess to tell miscreants to move on. For good quality, non-grainy images the recess should be well lit.
- When using a non-glazed emergency exit door consider installing a closed circuit television camera into one corner of the ceiling. The image may not be quite as good as the one from a camera looking directly through the glass, but the camera will at least detect activity, which can be acted upon. A sign should be placed on the wall to inform the public about the CCTV and a loudspeaker can be installed.
- It is a good idea to install a door viewer into a solid door so that the user can look out into the recess before opening the door.

#### **Comment**

*A business in West London used a novel method to reduce the problems in one of their recessed doorways. They installed 'splash plates' from the floor surface to the wall at an angle of about 45°. These plates did not obstruct the opening of the doors. Allegedly this measure reduced the available surface area for rough sleeping and caused urine to splash back onto the relieving reveller's shoes and trousers. Of course, splash plates made of stainless steel are likely to create noise in addition to wetting one's trousers – perhaps another deterrent!*

## **PLAN E**

### **The Future**

In January 2002 a planner, an engineer, a fire officer and two police officers sat round a table at an office in the West End to consider a completely new approach to the recessed door problem. Their objective was to design doors that could be positioned at the building line that would not open onto the footway, but would still be acceptable to the fire service as an acceptable means of escape.

As a result of these discussions the engineer designed a doorset that, when operated via the crash bars, opened to the side and back into the recess in a similar fashion to the side doors of a London bus. The paper designs were developed into a full size prototype, which was successfully tested at an informal demonstration to police and fire officers. Timing has meant that this document will have gone to print before this prototype door has been fire and security tested and further developed into a product acceptable to the building industry. Time will only tell if this new type of door will

succeed and readers of this document are invited to call the designer whose details can be found in the appendix.

*\* See appendix for details of website for further guidance on CCTV*

## **Other Recess Matters**

### **Entrances to Car Parks**

Some people reading this guide will straight away recognise the problems associated with the recessed entrances to private and public car parks in the inner city. These recessed entrances and often the car parks themselves often attract the same problems as the recessed doorways.

Ostensibly, car park entrances are recessed back from the footway so that the car does not stop across the footway or obstruct the highway while the driver opens the gate by whatever method that might be. In some circumstances, however, the local council will allow a car park entrance gate or shutter to be installed flush with the building line as long as they are capable of being automatically opened by the driver whilst sitting in the vehicle. This is a fairly straightforward matter for a residential car park where the car movements are limited and the technology required to open the gate can be installed into the car or given to the driver.

This does not mean that a similar system cannot be employed in a public car park and should you wish to pursue this idea you are advised to contact your local police and council. So far as security *in* the car park is concerned you can visit the Police Secured by Design website for information about the Secured Car Park Award Scheme (see appendix).

### **Porticoes**

These are structures consisting of a roof supported on columns, usually forming a porch to a building. In Central London many of these, particularly those attached to church buildings, would have had railings and gates between or in front of the columns to prevent access to the shelter at night. During the last century some of these railings were removed for scrap to assist the war effort and unfortunately have never been replaced.

In some inner city locations these places are now seeing the same misuse as the recessed doorway and it is hoped that the building owners will one day consider replacing the railings not only to prevent access to the shelter but also to restore the former grandeur of the portico.

### **A Final Word**

The reader should understand that the purpose of this guide is to advise the public about what they can do if their existing recessed door has problems. Most of the recessed doors that suffer the problems tend to be located in the inner cities close to pubs and clubs and in areas where there is illicit drug use or a generally high level of crime. In addition to this recessed doors in shops, factories and warehouses, no matter where they are located often become the point of access for the burglar because of the cover they provide. The author hopes that designers of new buildings in the cities will consider very carefully the local crime problems and do all they can to reduce the need for recessed doors. It is recommended that the designer contacts either the Crime Prevention Design Adviser or the Architectural Liaison Officer of the police service where the new building is to be located. The advice is given free of charge and it is better to seek this advice prior to any planning application being made.

Finally, it must be emphasised that the police service places great importance on fire safety and means of escape and that it is generally accepted that the majority of emergency exit doors will have to open outwards. Having said this the police service has an expectation that the various authorities involved in this matter will appreciate the associated crime risks with recesses and support the applicant as much as they can within the law.

## **APPENDIX**

### **NEW INFORMATION**

The author will be glad to include any new information about recessed doorways in this document. You can contact him by writing to:

Calvin Beckford  
Crime Prevention Design Adviser  
Camden Police Borough HQ  
10 Lamb's Conduit Street  
London  
WC1N 3NR

Or emailing at  
If above email not operating try

[calvin.beckford@met.police.uk](mailto:calvin.beckford@met.police.uk)  
[calvin.beckford2@met.police.uk](mailto:calvin.beckford2@met.police.uk)

### **PRODUCT INFORMATION**

For further information about the 'Clearscape™' doors please contact:

Ross St Quintin  
Everest Commercial  
Sackville Place  
Magdalen Street  
Norwich  
NR5 1JU  
Tel 01603 762999 Fax 01603 762998

Sue Naylor  
ADT Fire and Security plc  
Turnberry House  
100 Bunhill Row  
London  
EC1Y 8ND  
Tel 020 7941 8700 Fax 020 7941 8776

For further information about the 'Cleargate™' product please contact:

Sue Naylor  
ADT Fire and Security plc  
Turnberry House  
100 Bunhill Row  
London  
EC1Y 8ND  
Tel 020 7941 8700 Fax 020 7941 8776

The 'Clearscape™' Project was evaluated by the Metropolitan Police Service Consultancy Group. They can be contacted on 020 7230 5753.

For further information about the 'London Bus' type doors as described in Plan E please contact:

Guy Barnard  
Global Construction UK Ltd  
38 Claydown Way  
Slip End  
Luton Bedfordshire  
LU1 4DU Tel/Fax 01582 738 084

The 'London Bus' type doors are currently under test at the Building Research Establishment. This document will be further updated to include the results of these tests.

Please note that references to Cleargate™ Clearscape™ and the 'London Bus' type doors do not infer police approval of these products.

## OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

For further information about the Secure Car Park Scheme and Secured by Design go to [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)

For further information about CCTV and other crime prevention guidance go to [www.crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk)

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