



To Peter
c/o Doddinghurst Neighbourhood Watch

These are the general 'safeguards' I give to residents who contact me asking my advice about having an alarm fitted. The 'safeguards', if followed, should enable you to identify a suitable alarm system and a company to fit it. If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to call me on the telephone number below.

- Make sure that the alarm company is affiliated to a regulatory body such as the **National Security Inspectorate (NSI) or SSAIB**. By contracting one of these companies, you can rely on the fact that they have chosen a company who have been independently inspected and therefore will have some comeback if the alarm or the company is not up to standard. (www.nsi.org.uk or www.ssaib.co.uk)
- **YOU** are the customer. You tell the alarm company what you want protected and how you want it protected. It is then for them to tell you how they are going to carry out your requirements effectively and to give you costings.
- As a general rule do not accept offers of security checks from companies using a random telephone sales system or calling door to door. Use Yellow Pages to identify local alarm companies and approach them yourself
- Never accept the first quote from a single company. You should get at least three quotes for the work from different companies so that you can make comparisons.
- Make sure the equipment they are fitting in your home conforms to the British Standard for the type of equipment they are using. This applies to both wire and wire free systems.
- Essex police officers only respond to activations from newly fitted alarms if they are 'confirmed' and monitored systems. If you require this service, make sure that you get (in writing) an assurance from the alarm company that the system is one that Essex Police will respond to under their policy
- In addition to the installation cost, the alarm company will need to set up a contract with you to cover the annual monitoring and maintenance costs. Make sure you find out what those costs are and compare the quotes
- If your alarm malfunctions once it is out of its guarantee period, the alarm company will charge for an engineer to attend. Find out the cost of the call and once again, compare quotes.
- If you do have to call an engineer out, find out what the length of time is stated in the company policy between the time you call them and the time an engineer will attend. For regulated companies this should normally be no more than four hours. This is another good reason for opting for a locally based alarm company.
- The fitting of a monitored alarm system will often entitle you to a reduction in your home insurance premium. Make sure you contact your insurance company *before* you agree to the alarm being fitted to ensure it is one that the insurance company approve of.

If I can be of any further assistance please give me a call.

Emma Clark

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making Essex safer**

www.essex.police.uk