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Roland Taylor gives a complete guide to crime prevention and what to do to minimise the damage if the burglars do call.

TWOC

(TAKEN WITHOUT OWNER'S CONSENT)

With police forces throughout the UK severely stretched, the chances of break-ins and theft are greatly increased, especially where there is insufficient protection of property and equipment. Many golf courses are situated in isolated areas with their machinery sheds sited a long way from the main complex. In addition to burglaries, those courses close to a conurbation are also likely to be targets for vandalism.

It is a fact that police resources have been badly eroded in rural areas and due to lack of manpower and the distances involved, response to a crime can give the criminal a head start in getting away. One answer to this problem is the formal or informal self-help crime prevention schemes. Courses located in rural areas might like to consider setting one of these up.

Insurance companies, when assessing a club and the level of premiums will expect an individual within the organisation to be responsible for the security. Part of this person's brief should be to make members aware of the importance of reporting any unusual activity both in the complex and out on the course. By making everyone vigilant, the risks of a crime being committed can be reduced. Neighbourhood Watch has proved this in the domestic sector. Your own "Club Watch" could be a good idea.

As far as course maintenance equipment is concerned, the question is how much and what type of security is required to be effective?

A theft prevention plan needs to be drawn up and should be reviewed on a regular basis. In preparing this it is necessary to take into account the following aspects:

- Stopping thieves gaining entry
- Make removal as difficult as possible
- If stolen goods are recovered you will have to be able to prove they were your property.

Gaining entry

There are three things that should be borne in mind at this stage - time, noise and lights. Thieves are going to think twice if a break-in is going to be a long process, plus the possibility of alarms and warning lights going off.

Fencing around the machinery compound is the first line of defence. This can be of the heavy chain-link type, close boarded or a special high security fence. All these should be securely attached to posts set in concrete. Barb or razor wire can be used on the top, but only where members of the public are not likely to come into contact with it. The gates need to be strongly constructed and mounted so that they cannot be removed from their hinges.

Anti theft security posts can also be used to secure the entry and exits from the storage area and in front of the entry doors. One manufacturer states that their range has been tested to an impact speed of 20mph. The posts bent from vertical to approximately 15 degrees at an estimated impact weight of 34 tonnes. These types of posts can be quickly placed in position or removed and are locked at the top. Anyone considering using posts should make sure they are buying anti-theft and not for anti-parking ones.

Perimeter lighting and alarm systems are another possibility. Clear an area of undergrowth around the outside of the compound so that any would-be intruder has no cover in which to work on gaining entry. It sounds like it is being suggested you build Stalag 17, but, unfortunately determined criminals will go to great lengths to gain access.

Buildings

Often as not, use has to be made of what already exists, but in situations where there is a choice, purpose-built storage units should be the first consideration. These come in a variety of shapes and sizes and can be specially manufactured to specific requirements.

A company specialising in these types of structures should be consulted. Heavy-duty steel container units with security locks are a popular choice.

Where traditional brick or timber buildings are used, they will require regular attention to ensure they are kept in good repair. Replace any rotted timber especially around windows and doors. Windows can be barred or covered internally with metal screening. The doors should be fitted with heavy-duty hinges and internal bolts and an alarm system needs to be installed.

Any locks (including padlocks) should always be to the highest security standards and quality available. Again, it is best to go to a company specialising in these.

Surveillance cameras

There are some situations where the cost of these is justified, or they could be part of a much larger system that monitors the hotel car parks and other sites around a complex. If one of these is being considered it is a good idea to make sure the machinery compound is included as this is where considerable amount of capital is tied up.

Signage

This is a relatively cheap form of deterrent. It may make the thief think breaking-in is too risky. The signs should tell a prospective intruder that the building has alarms, surveillance cameras and other security protection. These signs must look professional.

Equipment

Lets assume that potential thieves have gained entry to the building. For their operation to be successful they now have to remove the machinery. It is at this point that they are faced with the next line of defence - immobilisation.

A determined team of criminals will come equipped with the means of moving what they are after. This could include a low loader lorry with lifting gear and winches.

Pedestrian mowers and turfcare machinery can be chained to larger units or immovable objects such as wall or ground locks.

Tools, brushcutters, chainsaws and other small items are best stored in specially constructed units that are bolted down or cemented into the floor. There are units of this type also available for vehicles so that equipment can be made secure when being used out on the course.

When it comes to larger machinery, this can be immobilised using wheel clamps. Remove all ignition keys, set any alarms or manual electronic immobilisers. Trailers and other towed equipment can be chained in the same way as pedestrian mowers.

It would have taken thieves a considerable time and probably a lot of noise to overcome the obstacles outlined above - as a result there is every chance they will think twice before staging the robbery.

Recovery

So, you discover an empty storage area - it's at this point that the problems really start. Replacement equipment is urgently needed; there are the police and insurance companies to deal with - its hassle all the way from here on. In addition, to this costs start escalating and a lot of time is lost.

Detailed information on what has been stolen will be required. Whilst none of this can be avoided, there are some things that can be done to speed up the recovery.

Trackers

These systems are largely used on cars and large plant machinery. It may be worth considering installing one on the more expensive equipment. An electronic tracking device is fitted and once the item is moved a signal is emitted showing its location. This is picked up by a monitoring station and relayed to the police.

DON'T LET IT HAPPEN TO YOU

ID Tagging

Over the last few years this form of identification has become popular and today many manufacturers fit tags before the equipment leaves the factory. These consist of microchips that contain a code that relates to the product. The code together with make, model and serial numbers are fed into a mainframe computer. Once the machine has been sold, information regarding the new owner is added to the database. In the event of it being stolen the details of the police are who are involved are also recorded.

The tags size makes them virtually impossible to detect with the naked eye and a number can be applied to different parts of a unit. They can only be read using specialist equipment, which a large number of police forces throughout the country now have.

Multi-technology readers are now available that can read and write to a whole range of tags and this combined with a considerable reduction in costs will see increasing use of these identification systems in the future.

Your own ID

This can be stamped into metal parts of the machine, which are normally out of sight. It could be a series of numbers or letters. A record of what has been done and where, needs to be kept.

Computer records

Modern computer systems are ideal for keeping up-to-date information on equipment. This should include,

Suppliers details
All serial numbers including engine
Any modifications that have been made
Purchase price
Depreciation
Photographs can also be easily stored.

All this information can be accessed quickly with as little delay as possible. Where a machine is stolen, it is a good idea to inform the supplier or manufacturer. This is because there is

an outside chance the new owner might contact them or one of their dealers regarding parts or manuals.

Some publications also run a column listing stolen equipment in case one of their readers is approached with a bargain offer.

Staff

Theft can occur any time and anywhere and staff should be always vigilant, not just with their employer's equipment but also their own belongings, whether out on the course or in the staff room. It is a hot day, so a jacket containing a wallet is left on the grass or money is left in a lunch bag in the staff area. The majority of these types of theft are carried out on the spur of the moment. An opportunity presents itself and is taken. This kind of situation not only causes the victim loss and upset it can also lead to suspicion and lower staff moral.

Responsibility

Throughout this article we have talked about the different forms of security. You can have the best anti-theft protection available, but if doors are left open all day and machinery left out on the course unattended for long periods - then it is all worthless.

Each security system requires human input, either to switch it on or to lock something up. One member of the greenkeeping team should be responsible for carrying out the security procedures, otherwise there is the possibility that one person will think another has done it.

Sods Law is that the break-in will occur that night.

No security procedures or systems provide 100% protection. Determined thieves will find a way of getting what they want. At best you can secure premises and property to the degree at which they realise it is going to be a difficult operation and decide to give it a miss.

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8AM

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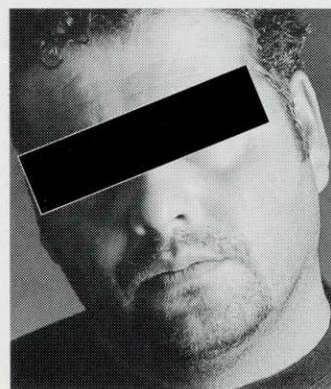


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It was all happening at Broadstone Golf Club when Scott MacCallum met up with Course Manager Adrian Archer just before Christmas...

As Broad

as it's long



Above: The old railway cutting which runs through the course

The staff were in the process of moving into a brand new maintenance facility and the painful task of finding suitable homes for the contents of large cardboard boxes was well under way. While this would ensure better conditions for the team, out on the golf course the quality of the conditions have never been in doubt. A point that was brought home with the club's continued success in the prestigious BIGGA Golf Environment Competition in which last year Broadstone was a Regional winner.

"Monday was moving day, but today,

with the course being closed due to the flooding, we are making a serious effort to get things sorted out," explained Adnan, as we sat in the bare room, but for a desk, two chairs and a bookcase, which was to be his office.

Although the sheds have been in their ideal location for some time now the nature of the course is that "getting about" has always been a problem.

"From here the course is three quarters of a mile that way and three quarters of a mile that way," he says, while pointing in two opposite directions.

The course covers 360 acres of which

100 acres in the middle is common ground. No hole run along side another and you only ever see other golfers fleetingly. This means that as every hole is separate it takes us longer to cut greens, tees etc than the average golf course. There is no green where you can just jump from one to the next - you almost have to go in order and we just waste 10% of our time just in travelling. There is no short cut. We have some walks of 200 metres from green to tee."

The course was originally designed by Dunn and consisted of nine heathland holes and nine parkland but the park-



Above: Members enjoy the winter practice of chipping into a circle
Right: Broadstone's unique snake pit... well away from the playing areas stresses Adi (left)



land nine were ploughed up in the war effort. After the war Colt was called on to design the back nine. Both architects must have been delighted with the undulating heathland that they were given to work with - it really is a dream site. The success of the design has led to many top amateur competitions being hosted at Broadstone.

The Poole/Bournemouth area is not one which would be near the top of many holidaying golfers lists but Broadstone enjoys a reputation of being at the forefront of a remarkably strong group of quality courses, including Parkstone, Isle of Purbeck and Brockenhurst.

"Very good golfers tend to know about us but we're not really in golfing country. When Jack McMillan visited he was

staggered by the beauty of the course's design and the fact that it wasn't well known. He saw the place as Sunningdale's southern twin," revealed Adi.

Adi is an advocate of traditional green-keeping methods and the team is looking to increase the average of 50% bent on his greens.

"We are getting there but it is hard work. A lot of aeration goes on because we've got problems with drainage on greens. They are traditional style and are built on what was here, either dug into a hill and into the clay or gravel subsoil.

"People think that as some are on gravel they will drain well but if you get on heathland gravel that has capped over with silt it becomes like concrete

and nothing can go through it. This makes drainage aeration difficult."

As a more drastic approach to solving the problem they have already drained one green, the 7th, and it has become the driest on the course.

The project was not without its complications

"We did in in the winter and used a herringbone drainage system and we'd planned to lift the turf with a turf cutter and do it by hand leaving an edge alongside the the drains so that when we put the soil back in we'd have a nice solid edge, a tip we got from Ed McCabe, at Brockenhurst.

"On paper and to begin with it didn't look to long a job. The front of the green wasn't too bad but when we reached the back even with pick axes



we could hardly break it down," he recalled..

A club member, a builder, provided the answer, or so it was thought, when he brought in a mini digger but such was the nature of the subsoil the digger was pulled forwards, off the boards and on to the green itself so that approach had to be abandoned.

"It actually vindicated our decision to do the green in the first place and the members, having played on a temporary green for a time while it knitted in, have welcomed it."

A programme of draining further greens will now be implemented following the success of the 7th green.

"We also have an on-going programme of draining around the greens. We aim to prevent surface water reach-

ing the greens from the surrounding hills by remodelling where possible. Water still flows across some of the greens from off the hills for up to an hour after it has stopped raining.

"Secondly we are installing a horse-shoe drain a metre deep around the greens set into the hills to prevent sub-surface water reaching the greens. If that is not successful then we will drain the greens still causing a problem."

"We started two years ago and now the club accepts that this is the way to go," said Adi, who trained as a horticulturist and worked for Bournemouth Parks Department, latterly on a municipal golf course before taking on the job at Broadstone.

The move to the well appointed and equipped facility with all the modern

conveniences is the culmination of many years up-grading of Broadstone's sheds.

Having originally been down close to the clubhouse, the two sheds were by a lake and every time it rained heavily the area flooded the sheds. Everything was stored there but for the rootzone, sand etc which was in the middle of the course.

"It was a logistical nightmare," said Adi.

The sheds were eventually moved to the present site in the middle of the course in 1978 and these have now been replaced by a modern facility.

When they were originally moved there was no electricity, water or telephone.

Fresh water was added when Adi dis-

covered an old irrigation pipe still intact running across the course passing close to the sheds. We brought in mains water from the road and then connected to the old irrigation pipe and then ran a spur to the sheds."

"Before that there had been a water tank around the back which froze in the winter and the boys used it to wash their hands as well as washing the machines with buckets from it," recalled Adi, who also expressed how fortunate he was to have such talented and hardworking group of staff and that many of them showed great loyalty to the club.

Mains electric arrived in the early 90s, courtesy of the irrigation system when the pump station was being wired.

Before the telephone was installed - Adi took advantage of a standard charge



This page: Some of the wonderful flora and fauna to be found on Broadstone with the 7th hole, much improved after the drainage work



for installation which meant £75 instead of over £1000 as the cable had to come from a quarter of a mile away - he had to make his way down to the clubhouse every time he wanted to order something or get someone to take a look at a machine.

"It was a mile round trip and when someone wasn't in you had to do it again," he explained.

The new facility marks the triumphant conclusion to a history, probably mirrored by many other clubs, which could also be said to reflect the development of the greenkeeping profession.

"We now have an office, a mess room, drying room, toilets and shower. Everything we could possibly need," he said.

Their recognition as Regional Winners in the recent BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, in association with Amazone, is not the first time they have achieved success in the competition and this is borne out of an environmental programme which has been developed since 1982.

"Back then we were talking about bracken overwhelming heather which was close to the edge of the fairway. When we cut this back the heather started to flourish and this continued when, not unlike Hankley Common, we started felling trees as the next stage in regenerating the heather. This is now part of the on-going maintenance regime in returning the course to heathland and is proving very successful. To date over 15 hectares have been clear felled.



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"Now we have dragon fly ponds, we go bat watching with the members, we've got deer, badgers and we've even got a snake pit.

"That started by accident in an area where we tipped our rubbish well away from the clubhouse, flower borders and playing areas. We tipped in a load of branches and then pampas grass and this attracted snakes. We got six foot grass snakes, adders and smooth snakes, all the British varieties basking in one place at the same time."

One of the staff, Terry Elborn, is an avid bird watcher often travelling around the world to watch unusual birds and he, along with Broadstone Deputy, Martin Coward, hit the national press a few years ago when a Great Bustard was apparently spotted flying over the

course attracting "twitchers" from all over the country and national press coverage.

Whether the sighting was genuine or not it takes nothing away from the wealth of wildlife at the Club which it nurtures through a strong and healthy relationship with English Nature.

Talking to Adi you become swept up in his enthusiasm for his job and his place of work.

"People ask why I haven't moved on but I love Bournemouth and the area so much. We have the New Forest, the beach and the weather. And, of course, this course. There is so much to do on it."

You get the feeling that Broadstone and Adrian Archer are a pretty good match.



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