

PRESS RELEASE

13th July 2004

SECURITY BEGINS WITH A SOLID HOME

The Traditional Housing Bureau is calling for greater consideration to be given to the construction method of homes when thinking about security issues. The call comes in light of criticism made by Secured by Design (SBD) the Police's flagship initiative on buildings security of a prefabricated development Raines Court in Stoke Newington, London.

The development, which has just been nominated for the Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award, was cited as one of the worst case of security deficiencies that Graham Chapman, crime prevention design adviser at Hackney Borough Police, the division local to Raines Court, had ever seen.

Barry Holmes, executive director of the THB warned: "Although this incident referred mainly to issues relating to doors, windows and lighting it highlights the potential increased security risk that lightweight prefabricated and modular structures pose. Commonly manufactured from simple frames and plasterboard, the walls and ceilings used in these structures can pose a greater risk for burglary than solid masonry constructed dividing walls and upper floors."

The issue of increased security and how this relates to the construction method of dwellings is a topic of considerable concern. Andrew Stunnell MP is in the process of proposing a Private Members Bill - 'Sustainable and Secure Buildings Bill' - which seeks to improve the crime resistance and security of buildings, where there are at present no statutory requirements to comply with police advice.

Barry Holmes again: "It is a natural truth that people demand to feel safe and secure within the haven of their homes. Research by MORI has proved that the public feels these are best met by housing constructed by brick and block methods. Very often people are unaware that the homes they believe to be solid and durable are little more than flimsy panels that can easily be broken through. The use of masonry dividing walls and concrete floors, particularly between multiple occupancy dwelling is essential for peace of mind."

-ENDS-

For further information please contact Corinne Barwood or Emma Marsh at CIB
Public Relations on Tel: 01372 371800 Fax: 01372 371801