



# The Doors of Perception

With due deference to William Blake and Aldous Huxley, where doors are concerned achieving the right balance between security and means of escape has historically often been a marriage of heaven and hell. But are we about to enter a brave new world?

On a more prosaic level to quote directly from the Building Regulations (England and Wales) Approved Document B (2006) – Volume 1 Dwellinghouses:

“The need for easy and rapid evacuation of a building in case of fire may conflict with the control of entry and exit in the interest of security”. It also states “Potential conflicts should be identified and resolved at the design stage and not left until after the completion of the work”.

Failing to find the best solution to this conflict can have hellish consequences bearing in mind that there are people behind the following statistics.

The 2009/10 Fire Statistics from the Department of Communities and Local Government show that there were 39,000 accidental fires in U.K. dwellings with a 328 fatalities and a further 9,200 non fatal casualties.



The British Crime Survey statistics for the same year, 2009/10, show that there were 659,000 reported domestic burglaries.

Obviously the hardware fitted to the door plays a vital role in achieving the best possible balance between these conflicting interests.

The need to keep the locking style of the door flush with the frame to achieve a consistent weatherseal coupled with the need for enhanced security has over the years led to the increased popularity of multi-point locks.

These have, in the main, been based on those designed for the mainland European markets like Germany and Austria, although these days they are frequently manufactured further afield.

Consequently the specific and particular requirements of the U.K. market have often had to be met with cobbled together compromises. For example to meet the requirement for keyless egress thumb turn cylinders are sometimes seen as the solution. Thumb turn cylinders can be a clear compromise to the security of the dwelling in that burglars gaining entry by another means can use the door to exit the property, generally unchallenged, carrying out with them what ever they wish to steal.

To overcome this issue some lock manufacturers have bolted on a second cylinder position so that the lock can be deadlocked off from the outside when property is unoccupied. While this may be a functional solution, some may argue, in engineering and design terms it is hardly the most elegant or cost effective.

In the U.K. the clearest guidance on achieving the correct balance between egress and security in a variety of types of dwellings comes unsurprisingly from the joint police and fire service agreement on ‘Means of Escape’ and is clearly laid out in both the Secured by Design “New Homes 2010” brochure and the National House Building Council, NHBC, guidance on “Secure Escape”.

Secured by Design states that doorsets must be certified to BS 6375 1-3 :2009 and front doorsets should meet the minimum requirements of the latest version of PAS 24 for enhanced security.

The NHBC guidance on main entrance doors for all types of dwellings says that “Locking devices fitted to entrance doors should permit emergency egress without the use of a key when the dwelling is occupied”. The Building Standards in Scotland have very similar requirements for keyless egress when the building is occupied.

On dwellings with an alternative means of escape, these are typically houses with a front and rear door, the guidance states that external handles on multi point locks should be split spindle to avoid operating the latch and prevent possible follow-in crime. And “Enhanced security can also be achieved by providing the facility to deadlock the internal handle when leaving the dwelling unoccupied” (NHBC).

For dwellings without an alternative means of escape opening onto a communal access, typically flats accessed off a communal stairway, the recommendation is that “occupants must be afforded the opportunity

to unlock the door from the inner face without the use of a key, investigate the cause of a fire or other emergency and return to raise the alarm without any use of a key – the only function that a key has is to lock and unlock the door from the fully secure position from the outer face of the door when leaving an empty dwelling or returning to a secure dwelling” (SBD).



These are the basic requirements demanded of any multi point lock. The other hardware and fittings naturally have an impact. For example there are crime risks associated with letterplates which need addressing. Door chains and viewers, cylinders and handles all have a part to play in keeping the occupant safe and the dwelling secure. But it is the multi-point lock which in essence has to blend the two elements of safety and security.

Many multi-point lock suppliers claim to be able to meet the particular demands of the U.K. Few of them provide solutions specifically designed for the U.K. Even fewer actually manufacture their locks in the U.K.. No one is closer to their market than Securistyle who manufacture the uniquely versatile Defender Doorlock in Cheltenham. A multi-point lock designed for the 21st century.

We have indeed entered a brave new world with this multi-point lock. It is durable, endurance tested beyond the basic requirements of BS 6373-2. It is corrosion resistance tested beyond the top level of BS 1670, we are, afterall, an island nation with one of the longest coastline in Europe. It is strong beyond the requirements of PAS24. It is adaptable and versatile enough to elegantly meet, in one multi-point lock, all of the demands of the U.K. market. The Defender Doorlock is a genuine solution which marries the needs of escape, strength and security.

**For further information or advice please contact the Securistyle Specification Department on 01242 221200 or by email at [info@securistyle.co.uk](mailto:info@securistyle.co.uk)**