

Secure for the future?

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Most would agree that there has never been a time when security has been a cause for greater concern. Today's fencing systems are designed to offer a combination of demarcation, deterrence, delay, detection and discretion. Diverse threats from outside and, increasingly from within, are giving those responsible for protection more and more to contend with. The days when a fence did little more than mark the boundary are, in every sense, history.

A recent research report identified that the security concerns of many would be allayed considerably if fit-for-purpose fencing were erected. However, if concern is to be translated into use of the most appropriate and cost-effective perimeter systems, what should be considered, given differing needs and budgets available?

Choosing the right fence

Betafence, Europe's largest fencing manufacturer, commissioned independent research into safety and security. The research identified that fencing invariably comes low on the priority list for facilities' maintenance. It invariably means three things – that the wrong fencing system is used for a large proportion of projects, that its purchase is often determined by lowest tendered price, and that if so it usually results in far higher costs of maintenance. The findings, supported by life cycle costing studies concluded that, over design life, maintenance costs are typically five times those of initial purchase, where lowest tendered price was used. However, while 'whole life' costing may be the ideal, how can specifiers and clients convince themselves that they can find, specify or install a system that will provide best value?

Underwritten 10-year guarantees available

To promote the spirit and practice of partnering throughout the supply chain, an innovative fully underwritten 10-year guarantee for fencing installations is now available through Binns Fencing Limited. The standards set for the contractors involved in this scheme are therefore rigorous. In turn, however, this offers the availability to benefit from a 10-year, fully underwritten insurance-backed guarantee covering all costs of projects. In any sector this would be unusual, but in one such as fencing it is a totally new initiative; one that supports contractors that are felt to be the best in their profession.

Of the many benefits to purchasers that such a guarantee brings, two stand out. Firstly, it is free to the client, while secondly, formal



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customer feedback and independent assessment of workmanship are absolute requirements. The highest standard of installation, on time and budget, therefore, becomes an expectation rather than a hope. Maintenance costs are controlled and straightforward to forecast, without need for any significant budget contingency.

Understanding perimeter security

Understanding the components of a security perimeter involves consideration of many elements, and the benefits of an integrated approach add further value to an underwritten guarantee. These elements may include access control (card readers, entryphones, etc), entry control (gates, barriers and occasionally turnstiles), fencing, and even planting.

The knowledge, therefore, that if, once a fencing installation is complete, if there are any concerns whatsoever regarding the integrity or installation, the fencing contractor will return, without question; throughout its design life. This is surely what any specifier or client would strive to achieve. Such peace of mind and the absolute removal of potentially time-consuming, costly disputes in a non-adversarial environment is the essence of partnering, now the established means of procurement. The advent of partnerships in the fencing sector is relatively new, however it must be the way forward.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND THE COMPANY

Mike Cooke is Managing Director of Binns Fencing Limited and is an Associate Member of The Security Institute.

Binns have been established in the fencing industry for more than 60 years and have specialised in high security for more than half of that period. They are the leading installer of security fencing for H.M Prison Service and have also carried out contracts for numerous Government Departments, Local Authorities, Utilities, Leading Contractors and Industrial Firms throughout the United Kingdom.

The company can survey, advise on design, develop, manufacture and install a fence, gate or barrier solution for any type and size of site and for any level of security. In October 1984 Binns became Founder Members of the BSI Registered Firms Scheme for the Supply and Erection of Fences to BS.5750 Part 2, which was revised in 1987 to accord with ISO.9002. Binns have also been actively participating members of the Fencing Contractors Association for many years.

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