

# Increased security risks in winter: how CCTV is evolving to protect commercial property

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Owners of commercial premises are being warned of increased security risks in winter now that the nights are closing in and storms arriving.

Winter has long been associated with an increased risk of weather damage, especially in an era when climate change is resulting in a higher number of serious storms and an increase in heavy flooding.

But it is also a time when security issues become more challenging, especially when darkness falls or when sites are empty.

Many businesses are turning to high-tech CCTV systems to mitigate those risks, with advances in technology providing new opportunities for effective remote monitoring.

Here are the top six reasons to install CCTV in winter, according to Paul Goossens Operations Manager of [SafeSite Security Solutions](#), a nationwide expert in protecting commercial premises and vacant property:

1. Increased risk of theft when there are longer hours of darkness

An estimated 26% (409,000) of all business premises, in England and Wales, were a victim of crime during the previous 12 months, according to figures from the Home Office released in September 2024.<sup>[\[1\]](#)</sup>

The most prevalent offence type experienced was theft (14%), followed by burglary (including attempts)

(8%) and vandalism (8%).

Thieves, burglars and vandals have more opportunity to commit crime unseen in winter when the evenings are darker earlier and few people are outdoors.

New CCTV cameras with thermal imaging are helping solve that problem, making intruders more visible at night or in poor weather conditions such as rain and snow. They are also much cheaper than having security guards on site.

It's important to remember that crimes committed at a vacant property can also have a negative impact on neighbours and the local community, due to noise and anti-social behaviour.

Having adequate alarms and security patrols, as well as CCTV, could be appropriate in some cases.

## 2. Increased risk due to economic downturn

It is well documented that crime increases when the economy is struggling, leading to a rise in public disorder and hooliganism. Recent unrest in the UK has highlighted this in 2024 – and commercial premises, including shops, are often a target. CCTV towers, which can be fitted with alarms, are highly visible and act as a deterrent.

## 3. A rise in health and safety issues on site in winter

Commercial premises, building sites and empty buildings are dangerous places for intruders, who are often children looking for a thrill. So, CCTV is not only about security – it plays a health and safety role. Property owners and guardians need to be aware when intruders and trespassers are on site, putting themselves in danger. Not having CCTV and adequate signage in place can lead to an increased risk of litigation.

New technology allows for remote monitoring and 360-degree coverage, as well as a response protocol for service providers and keyholders. Modern cameras are also able to tell the difference between human and animal intruders – meaning fewer callouts.

## 4. A growing number of sites that are closing, but still require monitoring

At the last count there were more than 165,000 empty commercial premises in the UK, including in High Streets where 2,300 shops closed in the first half of 2024. <sup>[2]</sup> Empty properties are prime targets for vandals, squatters and thieves if not protected. Remotely monitored CCTV is the perfect solution when nobody is on site.

## 5. Sites that are open less frequently in winter are at risk

A range of commercial premises, including sports clubs with a summer calendar, are either closed or used less frequently in winter, but still require monitoring. CCTV allows property and club owners to monitor premises remotely, including accessing images and alerts on an app.

## 6. Office blocks can be targeted when closed over Christmas

An increasing number of businesses and offices shut down over the Christmas period, many of them closing their doors between Christmas Day and New Year.

So, it isn't only vacant sites that can benefit from CCTV solutions.

The bottom line is that security should be a consideration all year round for commercial property owners and custodians. But winter is the perfect time to think about how to mitigate risks, deter intruders and prevent time.

For more information go to: <https://www.safesitesecuritysolutions.co.uk/>