

I am writing further to my letter of 10 May about your request under the Freedom of Information Act for information about the break in at Buckingham Palace by Michael Fagan and the inquiry conducted into it. I am sorry for the length of time it has taken to respond to you fully on this.

After thorough research of Home Office files I can confirm that the Home Office holds the following information relevant to your request.

Extract of a letter dated August 1982

“Thank you for your letter of 26th July ... about the distressing incident at Buckingham Palace on 9th July.

We are naturally most concerned about the implications of recent events related to the protection of Royalty and we are determined to ensure the future integrity of protection arrangements. The safety of the Sovereign must be paramount.

The Home Secretary made a full statement about all these matters in the House of Commons on 21st July and placed an account of the incident, which occurred on 9th July, in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament. I do not think I can do better than enclose copies of the Official Report of that statement and note which, together, give a comprehensive account of the events and the thorough and determined action which has been taken in the light of them.”

(Please Note: The Home Office does not hold copies of these enclosures.)

Extracts of Briefing Note dated 24 September 1982

“As the Home Secretary will be aware from press reports, Michael Fagan was acquitted yesterday of burglary at Buckingham Palace.”

“The jury’s verdict yesterday has highlighted the fact that it is not a criminal offence merely to enter and walk round Buckingham Palace, and is therefore likely to fuel pressure to amend the law of trespass.”

Extracts of Briefing Note dated 29 September 1982

“As I mentioned in my previous note, the fact that Fagan could wander round the Palace without, apparently, committing an offence clearly increases pressure to amend the law of trespass, which the Home Secretary already has under consideration.”

Extracts of briefing document dated 1983

“The security precautions taken for the protection of Her Majesty the Queen have, as the House knows, been greatly strengthened since Michael Fagan’s intrusion into the Palace. The police will be vigilant to prevent any further incidents of that kind.”

Extract of briefing on a report of 1994 on protection of the Royal Family,
October 1994

“This review is unusual in that most previous scrutinies of royal security have followed particular incidents:

- the Fagan intrusion at Buckingham Palace on 9 July 1982 led to the reorganisation of the management and monitoring arrangements for royalty protection and a further set of physical security enhancements;”