

YOU WOULDN'T choose to argue with Iain McCallister. A former light heavyweight boxer, he stands at about 6ft 3ins and weighs 17 stone.

Indeed you wouldn't need to argue with him because a nicer, more pleasant or reasonable man you would be hard-pressed to meet.

But Iain does talk tough when it comes to the security firm he set up 14 years ago, he's proud of its reputation and determined it will continue to provide a first class service.

Born in Northern Ireland, the son of a policeman, Iain came to Warwickshire as a child and it wasn't too long before he became involved in boxing, fighting at amateur level for almost 12 years.

It was while boxing that he began working for various security firms so it was no surprise when Iain and his dad decided to pool their knowledge and launch their own security business. Now managing director of MAN Commercial Protection Iain has 130 full and part time staff and covers just about every aspect of security possible.

He talks fondly of nights looking after local bands *UB40* and *Ocean Colour Scene*, describes the Gallagher brothers of *Oasis* as 'good as gold' and says former world heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson 'behaved like a real gentleman'.

Indeed his office walls are filled with pictures of famous people Iain has worked with – Paul Weller, Lennox Lewis, Atomic Kitten – the list goes on and on.

But Iain is far from star struck and insists that everyone, famous or not, gets the same treatment when he is looking after them.

He is also positive that the best thing to happen to the security business for many years was the introduction of licenses – the days of big, brawny and brainless are long gone he says, the modern security guard is much more likely to use his brain power rather than muscle power. In fact many of Iain's employees are women.

He explains: "When you are guarding a person or in charge of controlling crowds you have to be able to think quickly and handle situations calmly. Women are just as good as men at doing this – in fact in some ways they can be better.

"The last thing I want on my staff is the sort of security guard who likes to throw their weight about. They aren't good at their job and they aren't good for the security industry as a whole."

But, although he is still heavily involved in personal and events security, the part of the business that really seems to be growing is looking after private homes.

From a computer-packed room in the MAN offices in Shirley, Iain can keep an eye on properties throughout the area 24 hours a day and 365 days a year.



MAN Commercial offices in Shirley.



Backstage passes from events Iain has provided security for.

He is in constant touch with his people on patrol at private homes, offices or worksites.

"Some people live in big homes that are slightly off the beaten path. They know they could be a target for burglars and are aware that the police can't possibly keep a close eye on everyone's home, so they are starting to look to security firms like ours to

give them extra peace of mind.

"We are talking about people with big incomes who think it is worth spending some of their money on making sure their homes are secure. We offer a range of services right up to having guards outside the home – admittedly that isn't something that is called for on a regular basis but it is one of the services we are able to provide," Iain explains.

Married to Tracey, with four children 40-year-old Iain says he can understand the thinking behind the growing number of people looking for home security.

"What price peace of mind?" he asks, "I agree that some people do get a bit carried away about how dangerous and violent a place Britain is now, it's still a great place and, for the most part, a very safe one.

"However, if you can afford it and it helps you rest easy then why shouldn't you have that extra security we can provide? In a way we're a bit like the airbag in your car, you hope you'll never need to use it but you feel a lot safer because it's there." ■

For further details of MAN Commercial Protection visit www.mancommercialprotection.co.uk