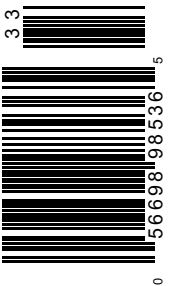


# Cabinet

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## ARTIST PROJECT / CONTROL ORDER HOUSE

EDMUND CLARK

"Be sure he stays inside and that you go straight in. He'll be in breach of his conditions if he steps outside the front door. And be careful what you ask him. Remember, the house is almost certainly bugged." That was my introduction to the life of a man known only as CE, when his lawyer allowed me to visit him to discuss a project on living under a so-called control order. A form of house arrest or detention without trial introduced in the UK in 2005, control orders give the government the power to constrain men suspected of involvement with terrorism, including relocating them to live in a house anywhere in the country.

In December 2011, I had received permission from the British government to become the first artist to work and stay in a house where a "controlled" person had been placed. I had worked in prisons and institutions for young offenders, at Guantanamo Bay, and in the homes of individuals previously detained there, but never in a place where the justice system was so explicitly present in a domestic environment.

Between the introduction of control orders in 2005 and the end of 2011, fifty-two men had been held in houses like these for periods ranging from two months to four-and-a-half years. Under the terms of the control order, they were required to submit to a variety of constraints: a curfew of up to sixteen hours a day, reduced from eighteen after a court ruled that this was tantamount to depriving someone of their liberty; wearing an electronic tag; reporting to a police station daily; phoning a monitoring company to notify it of their initial departure from and final return to their home each day; and not straying beyond a predetermined boundary, which might enclose a few square miles or a whole county.

Many, including CE, had been relocated in a process that critics have condemned as "internal exile." They were permitted to visit a designated place of worship, but not airports or ports, internet cafés, travel agencies, or money transfer bureaus. Social gatherings required prior permission, and each controlled person was given a list of people they were not allowed to contact. They were not allowed internet access at home and only the use of a government-issued cell phone for calls. The control exercised over their lives extended even to the smallest details of their tenant's agreements—putting a nail in the wall of the house, for example, could result in prosecution for breaking control conditions.

CE had been held for eight months when I first met him in the three-bedroom, semidetached house to which he had been confined, a nondescript property on an unremarkable street. I must not reveal his identity or his location. To do so would be an offense, in breach of a High Court-imposed anonymity order. Likewise, any equipment I brought with me had to be registered in advance and all materials I produced for the project had to be screened by the Home Office.

Confronted with the limits on what I was permitted to show, I chose to represent the nature of control using photographs, written material, floor plans, and architectural elevations—familiar forms related to the choice and control of any living space.

I worked through the house from top to bottom, measuring systematically and photographing quickly. The resulting five-hundred-plus unedited photographs evoke both surveillance and claustrophobia. CE is invisible, per the terms of his detention, but he haunts the images like a ghost: floral flip-flops in one picture, a child's mislaid plastic dinosaur in another. The only living presence in the images is his cat, which had the freedom to come and go as it pleased through an upstairs back window.

In the handwritten diary I asked CE to keep, he describes the monotony of time spent almost entirely on the ground floor of his house, where he slept on the sofa to have the company of the television rather than feeling isolated in a bedroom upstairs. His family came to visit on weekends, his children sleeping on mattresses in the front room. As a guest, I slept in the front bedroom.

In January 2012, control orders were superseded by Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (TPIMs). These are arguably less onerous in the restrictions they place on the individual and more rigorous in the evidential test: they require "reasonable belief" rather than just "reasonable suspicion" of involvement with terrorist-related activity, though there is still no obligation to present proof of guilt and their imposition can still hinge on secret evidence. Nine men had their control orders replaced by TPIMs in January 2012. CE is now living under TPIM conditions in a house closer to his family; his future is uncertain.

There are arguments for and against the necessity, effectiveness, and fairness of control orders and TPIMs. Rather than seeking to persuade the reader one way or another, my project gives visual substance to a form of opaque state control over an anonymous young man and his family behind a suburban façade.

*This project is adapted from Clark's book Control Order House, published this year by Here Press.*

**Living in a Home Office provided residence**

The property in which you are required to reside under the [REDACTED] notice is managed on behalf of the Home Office by our accommodation representative [REDACTED].

**Occupancy Rules**

Under the Overnight Residence Measure 1.4:

- (a) You must keep the property in a good condition.
- (b) You must keep any outside area or garden in reasonable order.
- (c) You must not damage, remove or interfere with the fixtures or furniture provided in the property.
- (d) You must repair any damage that you have done deliberately or that was caused by neglect or carelessness.
- (e) You must inform the Home Office of any damage to the structure, the outside of the property or any shared areas.
- (f) You must not alter or add anything to the property (e.g. attach satellite dishes to the walls of the property, change locks or carry out any alterations/decorations) unless the Home Office has given you permission to do so.
- (g) You must not hang pictures/posters on the walls or drill holes or use adhesives on walls.
- (h) You must not keep animals and/or pets within the property.
- (i) Whenever you leave the property unattended you must lock all doors and windows and put on the burglar alarm (if there is one).
- (j) You must not do anything that may cause annoyance to neighbours.
- (k) You must not do anything to that may break the conditions of any insurance policy covering the property or cause the premiums to increase.
- (l) You must not play loud music that can be heard outside the property between 2300 and 0730.
- (m) At end of any occupancy, you must leave the property in a good condition and free of rubbish.

**Property standards and complaints**

The property provided to you by the Home Office must meet strict standards to ensure that the property is:

- of good quality, safe and appropriate for your needs, and that all repairs and maintenance are carried out promptly;
- conforms to Health and Safety regulations;
- adequately heated and has a safe and adequate supply of electricity, water (including hot water) and other utilities;
- fully furnished, including cooker and refrigerator, cookware and cutlery and bed linen; and
- provided clean, tidy and decorated to a reasonable standard and that all floor coverings and surfaces in the bathroom and kitchen are hygienic.





