A new robotic home assistant is capable of autonomous launch, flight, picture-taking, redocking and can be accessed remotely for home security.

Drones are quickly deployable, discreet and autonomous, making them ideal for providing personal security, such as an ‘on-demand’ street light and as part of an external home security system, and now there’s a robot that can fly itself around the home to keep a lookout for users.

Aire, by Aevena, is not a traditional drone (in fact the developers are not keen on that description, preferring ‘personal robot’); there’s no quadcopter-style blades visible. It resembles a Chinese lantern, with a soft outer shell and a flight system powered by a hidden ‘ducted blade’ that runs far more quietly than traditional drones (registering in the ‘white noise’ frequencies). Aire is designed to be an innocuous addition to the home, targeted primarily at home security, capable of autonomous launch, flight and redocking on its charging base (that provides 8-minutes of continuous flight with a full charge). With an obstacle awareness capability that uses an array of visual and sonar sensors to receive 360 degree of information about its environment, Aire is fully capable of carrying out a full inspection of a house without human intervention, although there is also an app that lets users guide the robot around from anywhere using their smart device, so that they can take a look around the house while on holiday or use it to keep an eye on elderly relatives. Driven by the powerful NVIDIA TX1 processor, Aire is capable of learning landscape layouts and has the software architecture in place to use IFTTT functionality to integrate into home IoT networks — Aire already uses Amazon's Alexa system to receive and execute voice commands. As well as providing a source of home security, Aire also features enough vision processing power to position itself to take photos of

FLYING ROBOT CAN PATROL HOMES AUTONOMOUSLY WHILE USERS ARE AWAY

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people, a process which can be completed by voice command, with image and video capture all kept securely on a cloud platform.

Robotics is taking on many varied forms and functions, whether it’s the field of soft robotics being used in medicine or as dynamic jewellery — in what other unexpected ways could we see robots enter our lives?

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