CLAIMS

1. A protective housing for carrying a rigid vessel containing liquid, the protective housing comprising:

a casing having an external profile and comprising:

a peripheral wall;

a base; and

a top,

a handle disposed in a corner of the casing, and fixed within the external profile,

wherein the base and top are connected to the peripheral wall to define a volume for containing the vessel, the protective housing further comprising:

an impact absorber disposed, in use, between the vessel and casing to reduce transferral, to the vessel, of a force applied to the casing; and

an aperture in the casing, for accessing a closure section of the vessel while the vessel is in the protective housing;

wherein the aperture is in the top of the casing and the top is inset into the peripheral wall so that, in use, the closure section of the rigid vessel can protrude through the aperture while remaining within a profile of the peripheral wall.

2. A protective housing according to claim 1, wherein the impact absorber comprises a plurality of impact absorbing members, each of the peripheral wall, base and top being spaced, in use, from the vessel by a respective impact absorbing member.

3. A protective housing according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the casing comprises a window, the handle being secured across the window to thereby be accessible from outside the casing.

4. A protective housing according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the handle is spaced, in use, from the vessel.

5. A protective housing according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the casing has a polygonal cross-section.

6. A protective housing according to claim 5, wherein the handle is one of two handles, the two handles being disposed in opposite corners of the casing.

7. A protective housing according to any preceding claim, wherein the peripheral wall of the casing is formed from at least two identical wall sections, each identical wall section having two opposed sides adapted to be connected to a respective opposed side of another of the identical wall sections, thereby to form the peripheral wall.

8. A protective housing according to claim 7, wherein the peripheral wall has a polygonal cross-section, and each identical wall section comprises at least two panels, one of the at least two panels being wider than another of the at least two panels.

9. A protective housing according to claim 7 or 8, wherein at least one of the opposed sides of each identical wall section comprises countersunk holes for receiving the head of a fastener for securing the respective identical wall section to another of said identical wall sections.

10. A protective housing according to any preceding claim, further comprising a tie connector on the casing for receiving a tie that passes through a closure connected to the closure section of the vessel, thereby to indicate whether the closure has previously been removed from the vessel.

11. A protective housing according to any one of claims 1 to 10, wherein the peripheral wall has two opposite ends, with one or more protrusions at one of the opposite ends and at least one depression at another of the opposite ends, the at least one depression being arranged to receive one or more protrusions of another protective housing so that the protective housing can be stably stacked on top of an identical protective housing.

12. A protective housing according to any one of claims 1 to 11, wherein the handle is disposed in the peripheral wall.

13. A vessel assembly for carrying a liquid, comprising:

a rigid vessel having:

a body for containing the liquid; and

a closure section though which the liquid can be dispensed; and

a protective housing according to any one of claims 1 to 12, for carrying the rigid vessel.

14. A vessel assembly according to claim 13, wherein the vessel has a circular cross-section and the peripheral wall has a square cross-section having four sides of equal width, the vessel abutting the impact absorber at midpoints of the sides of the peripheral wall and being spaced from the peripheral wall at corners between said sides.

15. A vessel assembly according to claim 13 or 14, wherein the vessel comprises a closure for sealing the closure section, the closure having a plurality of tie connectors equidistantly disposed about a circumference of the closure, the tie connectors being odd in number so that no tie connector is diametrically opposite any other tie connector.

16. A vessel assembly according to any one of claims 13 to 15, wherein the closure section comprises, in use, a dispensing assembly for selectively dispensing the liquid.

17. A vessel assembly according to claim 16, wherein the dispensing assembly comprises a valve for selectively dispensing a predetermined volume of the liquid.