

Institution: University of Huddersfield		
Unit of Assessment: UoA 20 – Social work and social policy		
Title of case study: Designing out Crime: Improving police and planning policy and practice to reduce crime and create safer communities		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: January 2000–January 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Professor Rachel Armitage	Professor of Criminology	1998–present
Dr Leanne Monchuk	Senior Lecturer in Criminology and Policing	2006–present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: August 2013–November 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
1. Summary of the impact		
<p>Designing out crime, sometimes referred to as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is an approach that aims to create (design, build and maintain) places and spaces (in this case the focus is housing developments) that are less vulnerable to crime. Research at the University of Huddersfield influenced police and planning policy and practice in the UK and the United Arab Emirates. It confirmed that housing built to Secured by Design (SBD) standards (based on designing out crime principles) experienced 55% less burglary than housing that does not meet these standards. Government planning guidance was updated to include the standards at a time when austerity measures were favouring a reduction in 'red tape'. Building regulations at the national and local level were updated to stipulate that housing must be built to these specifications. This increased the number of secure homes (44% of new homes built between 2013 and 2017 were SBD) and reduced crime and increased feelings of safety. Police training relies on the research findings.</p>		
2. Underpinning research		
<p>Secured by Design (SBD), the official police security initiative, began in 1989 in the South East of England, as a response to an increase in burglary rates attributed to poor physical security and weaknesses in the design of residential housing (thus incorporating the principles of designing out crime/CPTED). Conceived and created by a group of police officers, it was a series of recommended design features that their experience suggested would lead to a reduction in residential crime. The scheme was considered among police to make intuitive sense, but its growth, and acceptance by key external agencies, was hampered due to a lack of independent evidence that the interventions were effective. Understanding this was of fundamental importance to planning and policing policy and practice. Once built, housing lasts for decades, and there is little that can be done to correct vulnerabilities without great expense.</p> <p>The research underpinning this case study was carried out at the University of Huddersfield (UoH) by Dr Rachel Armitage (Professor of Criminology at UoH since 1998) and Dr Leanne Monchuk (Senior Lecturer in Criminology and Policing at UoH since 2006).</p>		
Identification of the features of housing design that reduce vulnerability to burglary and measuring the effectiveness of SBD as a crime reduction measure		
<p>Two research projects funded by West Yorkshire Police and the Home Office [F1,2] (2001 and 2009) investigated whether SBD was an effective crime reduction measure. Each focused on the extent to which the combined design requirements of the SBD scheme impacted upon i) levels of crime, ii) residents' feelings of safety, and iii) whether any benefits had been sustained over a ten-</p>		

year period. Police crime records were analysed and residents' feelings of safety were investigated using questionnaires. The findings confirmed that i) houses built to the SBD standard experience 55% less crime than comparators, ii) residents living in SBD properties feel safer, iii) the additional costs of building to this standard are recouped in crimes avoided in less than two years, and iv) the crime reduction benefits of SBD are sustained over a ten-year period. [R1]

Further research built on these findings between 2009 and 2020 and examined the effect of housing design on crime. Two projects, [R2 and R3], used different methodologies to identify the risk factors. The first [R2] studied the impact of 50 individual housing design features on crimes experienced at over 6,000 properties across the Greater Manchester, West Midlands and Kent police force areas. Interviews (with planners and architects) and site surveys enabled the research team to identify which design features enhanced or reduced crime. For example, being located on a corner plot increases crime risk by 18%, being located on a through road as opposed to a cul-de-sac increases crime risk by 93%. The second [R3] conducted in-depth interviews with 22 incarcerated burglars to identify the design features that attracted and deterred them when selecting their burglary targets. The study confirmed the findings of [R2] – housing design impacts the likelihood of burglary victimisation and specific risky features should be designed out. Examples include avoiding high fences, which provide intruders with cover; avoiding footpaths that run behind properties, which can help an intruder legitimise their presence; and building true (as opposed to leaky) cul-de-sacs which force intruders to leave by the same route they entered.

Assessing the extent to which consideration for crime prevention has been embedded into police and planning systems

Research has been commissioned by national and international authorities [F4, 5, 6] to assess and improve the recognition of crime prevention within planning processes and policies. The research included a comprehensive study [R6] that involved assessing crime data, consulting with residents and businesses and reviewing over fifty international planning policy documents to design the Safety and Security Planning manual for Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council.

Research to assess the behaviour of police Designing out Crime Officers (DOCOs) [F4, 5] (2009–18), considered the extent to which they effectively predicted crime risk, interpreted policy and balanced contradictory planning requirements. A study for the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Home Office utilised 43 focus groups and a national survey of 257 DOCOs to assess the extent to which designing out crime/CPTED was incorporated within police and planning systems.

Interviews were conducted with 28 DOCOs across 18 UK police forces to explore the application and delivery of CPTED and examine the accuracy of their predictions of risky crime locations [R4, 5]. The findings highlighted that CPTED was applied inconsistently and called for an improvement in the design and delivery of training and continued professional development. Key areas of interest were i) the ability to make planning decisions informed by evidence, and ii) the extent to which police planning recommendations are proportionate to the actual risk of crime on housing developments. Consequently, in 2018, Police Crime Prevention Initiatives (PCPI) Ltd. commissioned UoH to conduct a national training needs analysis survey of 167 DOCOs. The findings called for the DOCO role to be professionalised through a dedicated suite of accredited qualifications.

3. References to the research

1. Armitage, R., and Monchuk, L. (2011). Sustaining the crime reduction impact of designing out crime: Re-evaluating the Secured by Design scheme 10 years on. *Security Journal*, 24(4), 320–343. <https://doi.org/10.1057/sj.2010.6>
2. Armitage, R., Rogerson, M., and Pease, K. (2012). What is Good about Good Design? Exploring the link between Housing Quality and Crime. *Special Edition Volume of Built Environment Journal*, 39(1), 140–161. <https://doi.org/10.2148/benv.39.1.140>
3. Armitage, R. (2018). Burglars' Take on Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED): Reconsidering the Relevance from an Offender Perspective. *Security Journal*, 31(1), 285–304. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-017-0101-6>

4. Monchuk, L., Pease, K., and Armitage, R. (2018). Is It Just a Guessing Game? The Application of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) to Predict Burglary. *Planning Practice and Research*, 33(4), 426–440. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2018.1510276>
5. Armitage, R. and Monchuk, L. (2018). What is CPTED? Reconnecting Theory with Application in the Words of Users and abusers. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, 13(3), 312-330. <https://doi.org/10.1093/police/pax004>
6. Ekblom, P., Armitage, R., Monchuk, L., and Castell, B. (2013). Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design in the United Arab Emirates: A Suitable Case for Reorientation? *Built Environment*, 39(1), 92–113. <https://doi.org/10.2148/benv.39.1.92>

Items 2. and 6. can be supplied on request

Funding

F1) Home Office (HO) in 2001 (£22,000)

F2) West Yorkshire Police (WYP) in 2009 (£12,524)

F3) Home Office and Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment in 2009 (£82,611)

F4) Association of Chief Police Officers in 2009 (£33,500)

F5) Association of Chief Police Officers in 2008 (£28,323)

F6) Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council in 2011 (£19,000)

4. Details of the impact

The research described in this case study has impacted **police** and **planning policy** and **practice**, **prevented residential burglary** and **reduced** the **economic** and **social costs of crime** in the UK and the United Emirates, by ensuring that new dwellings are designed using features that reduce the likelihood of crime.

The impacts are in three areas:

1. Influencing planning policy and building regulations
2. Helping residents reduce the likelihood of burglary
3. Influencing police training and delivery

Influencing planning policy and building regulations

The research findings [R1] confirmed SBD, the official police security initiative that aims to design out crime, is an effective crime prevention measure. They also played a key role in influencing UK building regulations to include SBD, or other enhanced security standards. Half a million homes (44% of those built) were built to the SBD standard between 2013 and 2017. Since these homes experience 55% less crime than non-SBD, this has led to a significant reduction in crimes experienced in the UK.

Over the years, the future of SBD has been threatened by prevailing government policy. The 2012 Taylor Review of Housing Standards encouraged a UK government drive to reduce regulation within the planning system. In response Armitage coordinated a letter, published in *The Times*, (Oct 2013) that was signed by 69 leading national and international academics, each supporting the link between deregulation and increased future crime rates.

Comments in the House of Lords, debating the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill (Oct 2013), [T2] raised and reiterated these concerns, citing UoH research. Following prolonged debate, the government announced that the proposed deregulation would not be implemented, and that building regulations in England and Wales would, in fact, include security standards for the first time.

The link between the research [R1, 2] and the introduction of the new building regulations is made clear by the PCPI Senior Technical Officer [T3], who noted that UoH is cited in official government planning documents: *“In both [Approved Document Q for England and Wales] SBD is explicitly referenced...such declarations would not be possible had it not been for the direct efforts of [UoH]... Without doubt, our negotiating position was stronger as a consequence of our ability to make use of [the] research findings”.*

Similarly the PCPI Chief Operating Officer stated: *“The Housing Standards Review (England)..was particularly challenging. The government of the time had set itself a ‘Red Tape Challenge’ to reduce government regulation [..]; Secured by Design was caught up in the process (all Social Housing in England at that time had to meet parts of SBD guidance). Our advantage however was that we had access to your independent evaluation of SBD and we used it to present a compelling case [..]. In March 2015, the only new Building Regulation to emerge from the HSR was Part Q: Security – Dwellings. This was an unprecedented move by the government of the time...and there should be no doubt that your research formed a major part of our submission”* [T1].

England and Wales introduced ‘security’ into building regulations in 2015 and 2018 respectively. Scottish building regulations go further, specifically referencing SBD *“as a proven means of meeting the requirements of the regulation”*. With reference to Wales, we read: *“...once again the academic research that you [Armitage] have done [..] formed the basis of our report. In May 2018 Part Q: Security – Dwellings (Wales) was published”*. The influence on Scottish building regulations is as crucial: *“Again, the research [..] was a pivotal piece of the evidence considered by the Scottish Government”* [T1].

The research [R1, 2, 3] has also influenced national and local planning policy. The existence of independent research that demonstrated the crime reduction benefits of SBD and associated design principles strengthened the case for its inclusion in planning policies and thus increased the number of homes built to this standard [T1]. It also influenced police crime prevention policy. The National Police Chief’s Council Lead for Crime Prevention stated: *“Research conducted by the UoH has been influential in shaping the design of crime prevention policy and practice across the UK”* [T4].

The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner cited UoH research in their formal response to City of Wolverhampton Council’s Area Action Plan [T6] stipulating that any new development must be built to the SBD standard [R1]. Other examples include Birmingham Council which requires all housing stock (Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust) to be built to the SBD standard, where it is specified in not only its ‘House Types Catalogue’ (2018), but also in client specifications for anyone tendering for development. Birmingham City Council’s Senior Service Manager [T5] confirmed the importance of UoH’s research in informing their decision to require new homes to be built to SBD standards: *“We rely on feedback from both tenants and owners, but also the role of academia, for example the research conducted by the University of Huddersfield”*.

The research [R1] has been referenced in SBD’s ‘New Homes’ standard in every iteration since 2013 as evidence of the effectiveness of the scheme. As the Senior Technical Officer for Police Crime prevention highlighted: *“We produce a range of designing out crime guides, SBD Homes being in highest demand. We include specific reference to [the] 2009 SBD research...Our [..] 2019 guide carries an acknowledgement to Professor Armitage”* [T3].

The reputation of the UoH team resulted in the Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council funding research [R6] to help them introduce an integrated development process and assist with the production of its first crime prevention planning guide – the Abu Dhabi Safety and Security Planning Manual (SSPM). Since 2013 the SSPM has ensured that all new buildings constructed have adhered to CPTED principles.

Helping residents reduce the likelihood of burglary

The research [R1, 2] has formed the basis of resident-focused leaflets that provide guidance on how to avoid burglary victimisation, or repeat victimisation (for those who have been burgled). Research conducted with West Yorkshire Police [R3] formed the basis of the PCPI ‘Crime Prevention Handbook’, in particular the section: ‘How do Burglars Choose a Home?’ The handbook is distributed to all UK police forces. The National Police Chiefs’ Council lead for Crime Prevention [T4] states: *“Your research, which has contributed to key content in the ‘Yellow Book’ – a crime prevention guide which is produced by PCPI and is currently widely distributed across the UK, shows how your contribution in this area assists me in embedding the National Crime Prevention Strategy”*.

The content of the Victim Support 'How to Protect Your Property' handbook which is given out on a daily basis to victims of burglary across the UK was informed by the research [R3]. The Operations Manager for Victim Support stated: "*When it came to information for our 'How to Protect Your Property' leaflet, we wanted to ensure that [it included] information gained from research carried out with offenders*". The UoH findings meant Victim Support were able to include direct quotes from offenders on how to mitigate risk. She added: "*The leaflet was very easy to understand, but very impactful*" [T7].

Influencing police training and delivery

The research [R4, 5] influenced the development of the new Police Crime Prevention Training Academy (2017). The head of the Academy stated that it influenced the decision to establish the organisation, which formalised qualifications and increased police credibility within the designing out crime sector: "*DOCOs are in frequent contact with highly qualified professionals such as planners and architects. [The] research highlighted the need for qualifications rather than traditional police training.*" Research on training needs allowed the content of the new qualifications to be tailored and formed the basis of much of it. "*The research [...] was essential evidence that we used to support the material that we were teaching*" [T8].

West Yorkshire Police used the research [R4, 5] to inform training packages for police (Special Constables, PCSOs, Constables and Sergeants) and key partners (Fire and Rescue, Local Authority Housing Officers). The Force Crime Prevention Officer for West Yorkshire Police stated: "*Problem solving masterclasses alone have reached an audience of approximately 1000-1200 Officers. Every West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue crew have also received an input on crime prevention [...], the foundation of which was the burglary research. This training was delivered to approximately 60 crews, equating to around 900 Officers*" [T9].

The research [R1, 2, 3] directly informed the allocation of the Home Office Safer Streets Fund (£25 million) to police forces across England and Wales and influenced the interventions toolkit used to evaluate funding allocations. Over 90% of the successful bids opted to implement designing out crime/CPTED based interventions. As the Home Office Neighbourhood Crime Unit highlighted: "*[The] research has played an invaluable role in both the development and delivery of the Safer Streets Fund...Following initial conversations at the Burglary Taskforce, Professor Armitage was invited to sit on the Safer Streets expert group which oversaw the development of a crime prevention toolkit to help provide Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) with evidence and information on effective interventions. [The] research heavily featured in this toolkit [...] this resource was well-used by PCCs and directly supported them in the bidding process*" [T10].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

1. Testimonial from Chief Operating Officer – Police Crime Prevention Initiatives.
2. Comment in House of Lords Reading for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill, columns 18-21 - <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/131202-0001.htm#13120241000039>
3. Testimonial from Police Crime Prevention Initiatives Senior Technical Officer – Police Crime Prevention Initiatives.
4. Testimonial from National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Crime Prevention.
5. Testimonial from Senior Service Manager, Housing Development Team, Birmingham City Council.
6. Formal response to City of Wolverhampton Council's Area Action Plan <https://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s15365/4.%20Tyler%20Parkes%20for%20PCCWM.pdf> See p9, para 36
7. Victim Support Crime Prevention Handbook and Testimonial from Operations Manager, Victim Support https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/sites/default/files/protectyourproperty_100120.pdf
8. Testimonial from Head of Police Crime Prevention Academy.
9. Testimonial from West Yorkshire Police, Force Crime Prevention Officer.
10. Testimonial from Home Office Neighbourhood Crime Unit.