

Institution: The University of Huddersfield
Unit of Assessment: 22 Social Work and Social Policy
Title of case study: Designing Out Crime: Building Safer Communities Through Shaping National and International Policy and Practice.
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Research undertaken by Armitage and Hirschfield and colleagues from the Applied Criminology Centre (ACC) has made a significant contribution to crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). Emerging from a wider programme of study in the field of environmental criminology, research completed at the University of Huddersfield since 2004 into 'designing out' crime has been incorporated into national and local planning policy and procedures and has influenced international urban planning. This research has underpinned the UK Association of Chief Police Officers' (ACPO) success in extending the designing out crime initiative, <i>Secured By Design</i> (SBD), to 350,000 homes, and in reducing burglary rates by more than half in housing designed to this standard.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The case study fits into the Institute for Research in Citizenship and Applied Human Sciences research area of Understanding and Responding to Crime (see REF5). It exemplifies impact derived from informing the development of complex interventions aimed at tackling difficult social, welfare and health problems, and providing policymakers with analyses which they use to drive policies (see REF3a).</p> <p>Research into burglary patterns and into the effectiveness of anti-burglary measures by the University of Huddersfield's Applied Criminology Centre (ACC) has informed efforts by the UK and other governments, local authorities and the police to reduce rates of residential burglary. In the 1990s, research led by Hirschfield, then at the University of Liverpool, broke new ground by applying crime hotspot mapping techniques to UK burglary data. Drawing on this work, he led a consortium including the University of Huddersfield which was awarded £1,100,000^a by the Home Office to evaluate their £25,000,000 Reducing Burglary Initiative. Hirschfield moved to the University of Huddersfield from Liverpool in 2004, bringing with him two research staff and three grants. This consortium secured a further £600,000^b to evaluate the crime strand of the New Deal for Communities. Since 2001, Armitage has undertaken a decade-long programme of influential research which culminated in the publication of her book on crime prevention through housing design in 2013^c. Research findings which have impacted upon policy and practice, include evidence of the crime reduction benefits of the SBD scheme, recommendations for improving the scheme, the production of a crime risk assessment mechanism specific to residential housing, and more recently, adapting these measures to allow for cultural and climatic differences. Over £200,000 for research on designing out crime has been obtained since 2001 from diverse sources, including local authorities, the Home Office^d, ACPO and Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council. Armitage led several projects which assessed the impact of residential design on crime and evaluated the effectiveness of ACPO's SBD scheme. Designing out crime involves changes to the design and layout of residential housing such as limiting access, maximising natural surveillance and ensuring that car parking is within the boundary of each property. Consideration for what may appear to be, from a non-criminological perspective, minor design changes, can reduce a property's vulnerability to crime. ACC research^e showed that properties located on through roads were targets for 93% more crime than those on a true cul-de-sac (without connecting footpaths). Maximising natural surveillance also limited crime, with properties overlooked at the rear experiencing 38% fewer crimes than those not overlooked.</p> <p>Assessments of the programme^e conducted by Armitage have found that homes built to the SBD standard were subject to 34% less crime and about 60% less burglaries than those not built to this standard, and that the additional costs are recouped by reduced crime in less than two years. This original, rigorous and extensive study analysed police recorded crime statistics, self-reported crime and feelings of safety for over 1000 homes across West Yorkshire, controlling for factors such as age of property, tenure and location. This research was the first to establish the benefits of such a scheme. A subsequent evaluation^f led by Armitage confirmed these findings, showing that a non-SBD property is almost four times more likely to experience a burglary than an SBD property. This follow-on study established the robustness of the research, and demonstrated that the identified</p>

crime reduction benefits had been sustained over a ten year period. In 2007, Armitage was commissioned by Greater Manchester Police to investigate the feasibility of embedding designing-out-crime within local authority planning and policing practices. In 2009, the Home Office and Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) commissioned a further project to explore the potential for designing out crime initiatives at national level in relation to the possibility of establishing a National Crime Prevention Service.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

^a Hirschfield, A. (PI and leader of Consortium of Universities of Huddersfield, Liverpool, Hull) *Evaluation of the Reducing Burglary Initiative in North of England*. Home Office, September 1999 - March 2002 (£1,155,500).

^b Hirschfield, A. (PI and leader of Consortium of Universities of Huddersfield, Liverpool, Hull) *Evaluation of New Deal for Communities: Crime Theme*. Office of Deputy Prime Minister. September 2001 - September 2005 (£595,500).

^c Armitage R. (2013) *Crime Prevention through Housing Design: Policy and Practice*. Palgrave Macmillan: Crime Prevention and Security Management Book Series.

^d Armitage, R. *Residential Crime and Design*. Home Office and CABE. October 2009 – June 2010 (£69,827).

^e Armitage, R. *Secured by Design Refined*. Home Office. April – September 2001 (£22,000).

^f Armitage, R., and Monchuk, L. (2011) Sustaining the Crime Reduction Impact of Secured by Design: 1999 to 2009. *Security Journal*. 24 (4), 320-343.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Conclusions drawn from studies into designing out burglary are detailed in a series of UK national policy documents which contain recommendations to build new homes to the SBD specification. Compliance with this standard has resulted in 350,000 SBD homes being developed in the UK and, consequently, a reduction in burglary rates of about 60% in homes designed and built to this standard. Our ACC research is referenced throughout the Home Office/DCLG's Planning Guidance document [Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention](#)¹, published in 2004 and guiding current practice. The nineteen references to the work undertaken by the ACC are used as evidence of the crime risk of individual or combined design features within residential housing, and support the recommendations contained within the guidance. A senior member of the Home Office Designing Out Crime Unit has indicated that Armitage's work shaped this guidance, which was cited as good practice in two of the UK government's subsequent Planning Policy Statements which local authorities are required to follow when building new homes. The testimonial² clearly outlines the beneficial impact of the ACC research: "*The work undertaken by Huddersfield was used to shape the guidance set out in Safer Places - which in turn was then referenced as a source of good practice in other documents. For example Safer Places was referenced as a source of government policy aimed at promoting better quality of place in the then Government's strategy on World Class Places (2009); and was referenced in Home Office evidence to the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee's evidence check on lighting (also 2009). In 2010 both Safer Places and Secured By Design (SBD) were referenced as sources of additional information on crime prevention in the DCLG publication: Guidance on information requirements and validation*". Both Safer Places and SBD were highlighted in 2010 as crime prevention measures in DCLG's [Guidance on Information Requirements and Validation for Local Authority Planning Departments](#). This document required local authorities to take SBD into account when submitting Design and Access Statements. The Home Office continues to act on Huddersfield's research into designing out crime. In 2010/11, they drew on ACC figures demonstrating lower burglary rates in SBD developments² as "*indicative data to use in modelling when shaping thinking about home security*". This testimony also emphasises the importance of the ongoing impact of the research: "*Last (but most certainly not least - we continue to work with both Design Council/CABE and with DCLG on how best to promulgate and promote your most recent research findings and case studies*".

The ACC research was presented as evidence by the Homes and Communities Agency to support the recommendation that all Housing Association properties should meet SBD standards. This evidence was first used in the Housing Corporation's standards specification, which remained active until April 2008. The research, similarly, informed the [Design and Quality Standards](#)³ that superseded it. These standards, again, contained a recommendation that homes should be built to

the SBD specification. The research was referenced in a currently active English Partnerships guidance document. It cites Armitage's findings (page 10) as evidence of the need for regeneration projects to follow SBD principles, and has been adopted as the building standard for developments where the Agency has a land interest. It was also referenced in Home Office evidence to the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee on street lighting safety². A [letter](#) published in *The Times* (23/10/13), written by Armitage and signed by 69 national and international experts, has challenged current Government proposals for relaxing SBD standards.

The ACC research demonstrating the effectiveness of SBD has been key to ACPO's drive to advance SBD nationally as an evidence-based policy. In 2010, ACPO released a [report](#) on using Design and Access Statements to reduce crime through SBD, citing our 2009 research, with a comment on page nine about the importance of the ACC work led by Armitage on Designing Out Crime). ACPO used Armitage's research as the evidence base for its Parliamentary Memorandum submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government in 2008, which argued successfully for SBD to remain within the [Code for Sustainable Homes](#). Subsequently, the Director and General Manager at ACPO commented⁴ that it "was rare not to make some reference – main or in passing – to the work by Dr Armitage" in his many presentations, interviews and publications on designing out crime. He also stated that "The results of the work by Rachel Armitage have been used in the practical application by crime prevention practitioners, builders, security industry manufacturers and planning officers for whom the day to day work denies the time to research the subject deeply. We are linked to around 300 police practitioners throughout the UK all of whom work from our material to promote CPTED and SBD and all have copies of the SBD research". This testimony acknowledges the key role of the ACC of first bringing SBD into the policy agenda and helping to drive forward eventual large-scale implementation: "When Rachel Armitage undertook her research into SBD in West Yorkshire this was the first truly independent test of the SBD theory and practice. The second piece of work with Leanne Monchuk took account of the technical developments in the project and reinforced the benefits. Following each piece of research Rachel was able to present the findings in a clear, detailed way which identified the range of benefits and answered logical questions about gentrification, displacement and crime switch. These points were not obvious in the original project. She and Leanne have presented to national police CPD training audiences and to regional and commercial events. The work has been quoted in many other reports and publications and has been taken as read in the rationale for publications such as Safer Places - the planning system and crime prevention." The Director of ACPO estimated, as mentioned in this testimony, that at least 350,000 houses have been built to SBD standards since 2007. The ACC research both provided the evidence which motivated implementation of this approach and shaped the detailed specification of its standards. Similarly, the National Policing Lead for Crime Prevention provided a letter⁵ in August 2013 stating that staff "working in the field of Designing Out Crime constantly use your [ACC] work to justify changes they make to developments, creating 'safer' places for our communities to live". He considered this contribution to housing and crime reduction policies to be particularly important in difficult economic times: "In times of recession, where governments and organisations are constantly striving to cut costs, it is comforting to know that evidence provided by you and your fellow academics makes a compelling case to continue using effective security to make our communities more socially sustainable".

The ACC research into the link between housing quality and crime has been used to revise the Building for Life housing award. The author of the standard has stated⁶ that the re-write reflected their learning from Armitage's research: "In practice, the research was used by Design Council [formerly CABE] to inform the revamp of Building for Life. Building for Life is the most widely used design quality tool for residential development in the planning system in England and has a user base of local planning authorities, design consultants and house builders".

As well as shaping national and international policy (see below) on designing out crime, the ACC research has had widespread impact on the practices of local authorities and police forces. For example, Thames Valley Police used Armitage's research to support its 2010 [Compendium of Crime Prevention and Reduction in The Planning System](#)⁷. Thames Valley Police have stated that Armitage's research was instrumental in providing the evidence which led to them increasing the

number of crime prevention design advisors in the force from four to ten in 2008, and that the Compendium remains at the forefront of the team's policies and procedures, with police and local authority planning departments frequently referring to these principles within their policy and practice. Similar testimonies have been received from other areas of the UK. Leeds City Council requires that all doors and windows meet the SBD standard, in *Designing for Community Safety: A Residential Design Guide* which remains their key policy document on planning for crime prevention. One of the authors has written to Armitage acknowledging the importance of Armitage's research in securing this policy requirement for housing in Leeds. The West Yorkshire Police's Architectural Liaison Officer for Leeds has stated that Armitage's research was quoted at "almost every meeting I attended both locally and nationally". In addition, West Yorkshire Police confirmed that ACC's research was instrumental in increasing the number of Architectural Liaison Officers across the police force. Armitage has continued to sustain strong engagement with policy-makers and practitioners, by disseminating briefing notes commissioned by ACPO, the Home Office and the Design Council, through media articles, and by means of the publication of a position paper for the Independent Commission for the Future of Policing (The Lord Stevens Commission) which has highlighted the risk to crime prevention of moves towards deregulation within the planning system. The ACC continue to contribute to the national debate on architectural design during a period of austerity and deregulation. For example, their work was cited in an [article](#)⁸ in *The Guardian* newspaper and in the online journal [Inside Housing](#). The *Guardian* article detailed some specific beneficial impact of the ACC research as follows: "Police and architects sometimes have different ideas about how to design out antisocial behaviour. Cul-de-sac has become a dirty word among architects, who fear that antisocial behaviour happens where it cannot be seen, while police insist - backed up by a 2010 report from the University of Huddersfield - that cul-de-sacs are less prone to crime because they offer fewer escape routes".

The international importance of this research is evidenced by the role of the ACC in developing Abu Dhabi's planning guidance to ensure that properties are designed to consider crime prevention. In 2011, Armitage was commissioned by the Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council to develop [planning guidance](#)⁹ specifications for crime prevention. The manual, informed by her research, outlines the design principles required for development within Abu Dhabi. The ACC received £19,000 to fund this [work](#), completed in 2011, from Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council. The international impact of ACC research into designing out crime is also highlighted by citation of Armitage's work as evidence in the Parliament of Victoria Inquiry into locally-based approaches to community safety and crime prevention. Armitage and co-workers are cited 43 times in this [report](#)¹⁰. The Executive Officer of the Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee of the Parliament of Victoria¹¹ has testified that: "One area of academic research that was constantly drawn on in undertaking the Inquiry and writing the Final Report was that of Dr Rachel Armitage at the University of Huddersfield".

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

¹ [Memorandum from Association of Chief Police Officers Crime Prevention Initiatives](#).

Memorandum 45, Commons Select Committee, 2008.

² Factual statement 1 by senior member of the Home Office Organised and Financial Crime Unit.

³ [Design and Access Statements: How to Use them to Prevent Crime](#). (ACPO Secured by Design, 2010).

⁴ Factual Statement 2 by the Director and General Manager of ACPO.

⁵ Factual Statement 3 by the National Lead for Crime Prevention.

⁶ Factual Statement 4 by author of Building for Life 12 housing award.

⁷ Thames Valley Police. [The Compendium of Crime Prevention and Reduction in The Planning System](#).

⁸ [Article](#) in *The Guardian* newspaper, 1/12/2011.

⁹ [Abu Dhabi Safety and Security Planning Manual](#) (2011).

¹⁰ Victoria, Parliament Of (2013) [Inquiry Into The Application Of Safer Design Principles And Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design](#).

¹¹ Factual Statement 5 by the Executive Officer of the Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee of the Parliament of Victoria