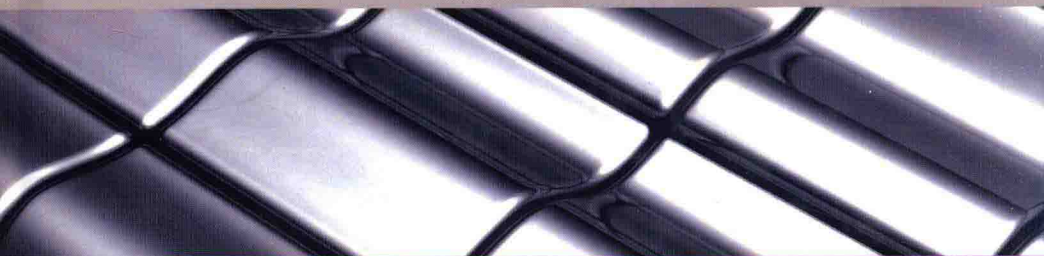


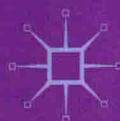
CRIME PREVENTION AND SECURITY MANAGEMENT



CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH HOUSING DESIGN

Policy and Practice

RACHEL ARMITAGE

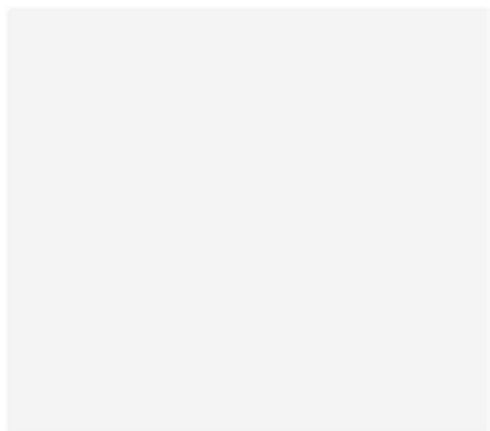


Crime Prevention through Housing Design

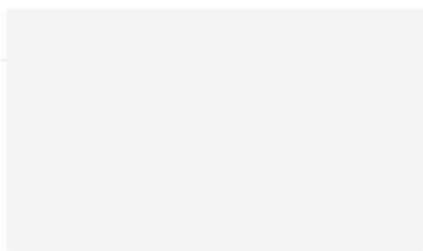
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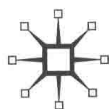
Rachel Armitage

Reader, Applied Criminology Centre, University of Huddersfield, UK



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Series Editor's Preface

To many independent observers it would seem a statement of the obvious that the design of the environment has an impact on crime. If you create lots of opportunities in terms of good places to hide and keep watch on potential targets, provide easy getaway routes (on foot or by vehicle), make covert entry and exit to estates and buildings possible, in short if you make it easy for offenders, then it seems obvious that it would be more risky to live and work at such locales. To put it a different way, Rachel Armitage summarises thus: 'When people feel safe in an area, they are less likely to choose to move out, more likely to use public transport, more likely to make use of public facilities and less likely to require the intervention of health professionals for issues such as stress and anxiety.' And, as she discusses, a sequence of studies that have examined the Secured by Design (SBD) schemes – by different authors in different places, including Rachel – have consistently found them to be successful in reducing crime and, for the most part, cost-effective too. Yet the value of designing out crime remains contested territory.

This book, however, is about more than just defending the theories and practices of designing out crime. Rachel engages with a range of critiques of the designing out crime approach generally and the SBD scheme specifically, and in so doing draws parallels with many of the problems encountered in making crime prevention and security measures work. For example, she explores some of the synergies and tensions between security and surveillance and security and sustainability; the concept of risk and how it underpins approaches (or should do); the history, politics (national and local), economics and environmental issues that have impacted on the acceptance and adoption of different strategies; and the importance and potential of localism. Via comparisons with Australia and the Netherlands she highlights some advantages and drawbacks of bedding this type of crime prevention in the legal process; and, by reference to practices in the UAE, she shows how culture and traditional attitudes can undermine commitment to an effective designing out crime approach. She discusses the crucial role played by the police, and how a business

model approach to SBD in one force offers potential for sustaining commitment while the marginalisation of the police in favour of private consultants raises questions of 'neutrality and quality' that have the potential to undermine its credibility.

Rachel has devoted her professional life to the subject of crime prevention through environmental design and this book is the culmination of that interest, which is reflected in the extensive review of a wide range of literature including different theories and practices. She sees the faults in designing out crime and SBD, including the alleged inflexibility, inconsistent delivery, confusion of principles and lack of scope, to name but a few. But on finding the evidence overwhelming she puts the case and in so doing expresses surprise that others are less convinced. It might be that the security and crime prevention worlds are just not used to success stories and a book that articulates one becomes an important contribution to the debate.

Martin Gill

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements have a tendency to sound predictable and, for some, they may feel like a necessary yet pointless section that comes between the Contents pages and the Introduction! However, for me, the people mentioned below are extremely important, inspirational and truly wonderful, so thank-you to you all.

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I would like to thank all members of the Applied Criminology Centre for their patience in the latter stages of this book. I would like to offer particular thanks to Grainne McMahon and Michelle Rogerson for juggling seminars to give me ‘head-space’. Thanks also to Paul Ekblom for proofreading, for keeping me on track and for Homeland distractions.

I would like to offer a special thank-you to Leanne Monchuk (very likely to be Dr Monchuk by the time this book is published) for her dedication to conducting fieldwork in the snow, her enthusiasm for designing out crime and for making me smile – birds of a feather!

And to my inspiration, mentor and friend Ken Pease, thank-you for believing in me, for throwing me in at the deep end and for watching me swim (not drown)! You are a very special person and I can honestly say that I would not have written this book without your encouragement.

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Finally, I would like to thank Martin Gill for commissioning this volume, and those at Palgrave Macmillan who waited patiently for me to add the final touches.

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Introduction

It's January 2013, and after many months of writing I am sitting down to conclude the final chapter of a book which represents approximately half of my life's work – the Introduction. I have left this until last because I want to be able to tell you what to expect and because, in my view, the Introduction represents the most difficult part of any book. I want to begin by saying a few words about designing out crime before outlining the content of this book. For me, designing out crime represents one of the most common-sense approaches to crime reduction. It may not have the same appeal as offender based interventions, but designing out crime represents both a long-term approach and one which requires the collaboration of partners as diverse as police, planners, architects, developers and community groups. This approach is often criticised as simplistic, as focusing upon quick wins and avoiding the root causes of crime. For me, there is little simplism about an approach which requires the collaboration of such diverse partners. There is little short-term about an approach which involves several years of planning and designing – even before a property is built. Suggesting that designing out crime fails to address the root causes of crime is to deny that opportunities play any part in offender decision-making; hopefully, after reading this book you will understand that opportunities do play a part. Properties, not unlike people, exist for many decades, and once they are built there is little that can be done, without great effort and expense, to alter their design. However, unlike people, houses can be planned, designed and created utilising evidence and expertise to maximise the likelihood of success – success being a property and community

in which people want to live and work for decades; a property which promotes community cohesion and a sense of well-being amongst residents, and creates an environment in which potential offenders feel conspicuous, uneasy and unable to commit an offence.

One of my first research projects involved assessing the environmental features of properties across West Yorkshire. This involved scrutinising over 2000 properties to assess access, surveillance, physical security and management and maintenance. One area I visited was a neighbourhood in Bradford which included a development of new properties built directly adjacent to an existing development, and where, contrary to the advice of the Police Architectural Liaison Officer (ALO), connectivity had been promoted to allow and encourage residents from the new development to walk through the existing development to access a main road, transport links, shops and leisure activities. There had been little consideration for the principles of designing out crime within this new development. Through movement was promoted with no additional measures to maximise defensible space or surveillance, and the existing development had become a through route for both legitimate and non-legitimate users of the space. In conducting my fieldwork I came across a lady who lived in and owned a property on the existing development. A property which bounded the walkway and was experiencing not only increased crimes such as burglary and theft of/from vehicles, but also antisocial behaviour from passers-by who regularly knocked on her window and rang the doorbell. Due to the increased levels of crime on this development, her property had plummeted in price and, if selling the property, she would have made huge losses due to negative equity. This lady was experiencing ill health, anxiety and depression and was frightened both inside and outside her house. She was a pensioner, thus most of her time was spent at this property. This lady told me how trapped she felt, how she did not want to live in this property yet could not afford to move. The lack of consideration for the impact of the new development upon the surrounding community had led to increased levels of crime, antisocial behaviour and, for many residents, increased levels of anxiety and ill health. Since meeting this resident, I have had many similar encounters with residents whose lives have been negatively affected by poor design decision-making. Without risking sentimentality, these stories should remind academics and practitioners alike that we are not simply working

with bricks and mortar; we are designing and building homes in which people invest financially and emotionally. If you have always held the view that designing out crime is simply about buildings, I hope this book will convince you otherwise. If you are already a convert, I hope you learn from the research which is presented and put it to good use.

And so to the content of this book. If the opening paragraphs sound as if I am blindly selling the concept of designing out crime, this is not the case. The book presents findings from my research which should be described as improvement-focused and designed to maximise the efficacy of designing out crime interventions through recommendations for policies, processes and practical implementation. The book is aimed at practitioners, students and academics working within the fields of urban planning, architecture, criminology and policing. It can be read as a whole – which should hopefully enhance the coherence of the ‘story’ – or dipped in and out of to inform specific areas of interest.

Chapter 1 explores the theoretical links between design and crime and the emergence of designing out crime as a practical intervention widely implemented by police forces and local authorities. This opening chapter outlines the new opportunity theories, routine activity theory, rational choice theory and pattern theory, and how they link to the practical applications of situational crime prevention (SCP) and crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). This chapter also outlines the major shift in the perception of how crime reduction (particularly in England and Wales) is to be achieved. The first facet of this change is the advance in SCP and the evidence that crime trends are more readily understood in terms of the supply of opportunities than the distribution of criminal propensity across the population. This in turn is reinforced by evidence that the regulation of crime opportunities can and will impact upon crime rates. The second facet of this change in thinking was the recognition that the control of crime is not the sole responsibility of the police, and that other agencies have a key role to play in its prevention and reduction.

Chapter 2 focuses upon the practical delivery of designing out crime from residential housing within England and Wales. This chapter introduces the key agencies involved in the process, in particular, the police ALO and Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) role. Whilst delivery of designing out crime from residential