



1 WHAT IS CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN ("CPTED") ?

The design of buildings and the arrangement of streets, parks and other outdoor spaces can influence the opportunity for crime and the level of fear of crime.

Careful environmental design can help make places less susceptible to crime and enable people to feel more comfortable outdoors.

Crime statistics indicate to individuals that there is no significant risk of becoming victims of crime. However, these figures bear no resemblance to the level of fear individuals may have at the possibility of becoming a victim. It is this fear of crime, particularly of attacks associated with theft or sexual motives, which inhibits the mobility of community members. Women and the elderly, for example, suffer disproportionately from the fear of crime.

An improvement in the quality of life, by reducing crime and the fear of crime, is essential and a basic right for everyone. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design ("CPTED") is one important strategy for achieving this.

How can environmental design help prevent crime?

Careful environmental design can help to prevent crimes like personal assault and vandalism. The major principle of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design is:

- **Natural surveillance – “see and be seen”**

People are usually less likely to commit crime if they are (or think they may be) being watched. Conversely people are likely to feel safer if they think someone is ‘looking out for them.’

Crime prevention can be achieved by security cameras and the presence of security personnel. However it can also be achieved by natural means such as:

1. Designing buildings to overlook streets and public spaces

Ways to design buildings which offer passive surveillance include:

- Locating windows and doorways to overlook the street and other public spaces
- Siting activities such as shops and offices at the front of buildings



- Siting kitchens and living rooms at the street fronts of houses

- Using low or see through fences between private buildings and public space



2. Ensuring that there are clear sightlines along routes by:

- Avoiding sudden corners or blind bends along pedestrian or cyclist routes



- Ensuring that planting does not grow to obscure the view or provide hiding places for offenders



Carefully consider the design and location of fire exits in buildings. Avoid dark recesses or concealed corners adjacent to pedestrian routes if possible.



3. Providing good standards of lighting by:

- Choosing lighting that illuminates pedestrian areas as well as roads





- Providing consistently placed, high quality lighting which will not conflict with planting or create large areas of shadow



4. Ensuring that there is plenty of activity by:

- Designing pedestrian/cycling routes to ensure that they will be well used to prevent them becoming isolated and unsafe



- Designing pedestrian routes so that they run alongside vehicular routes and are highly visible



- Locating and designing parks so that they are overlooked by roads and houses



- Encouraging a mix of uses so that space is used throughout the day and the evening e.g. a mix of offices, residential and restaurants



Other important components of CPTED

People will feel vulnerable in situations where they could be trapped in a space with a potential attacker. These sorts of spaces include: pedestrian/cycling routes which run through underpasses, tunnels or cuttings alongside limited access roads; or between properties with high sided walls where there is no means of escape.



5. Avoiding potential entrapment situations by:

- Providing alternative pedestrian/cycling routes so people do not have to take unsafe routes
- Clear signage can be used to warn people of potential entrapment spots



6. Keeping up a good appearance

Places which are run down and neglected tend to feel less safe. Regular maintenance of buildings and garden areas along with the removal of graffiti and litter all help to make people feel more comfortable in outdoor spaces.



7. Clear Ownership

People have a proprietary interest in their own property. Where there is no clear ownership of space, offenders can be indistinguishable from legitimate users. Damage to property is less likely if it is clear who owns it, therefore communal or “left over spaces” which no-one assumes ownership of are best avoided.

8. Not everywhere can be safe

It would be impossible to make everywhere feel safe and the experience of our environment would likely be poorer if we did. Some areas will be “off limits” particularly at night. People who do not feel safe in these areas should be able to choose not to go there and have access to an alternative safe route.

This is the first in a series of leaflets giving guidance to designers, property owners and decision makers about how to reduce the fear of crime in our environment.

Other leaflets in this series are:

2. How Can Residents Help To Make Their Neighbourhood Feel Safer?
3. How Can We Make Our Parks, Reserves And Waterways Feel Safer?
4. How Can We Make Our Streets And Car Parks Feel Safer?

Future leaflets are intended to cover:

- How Can Designers And Developers Make New Subdivisions Feel Safer?
- How Can Designers And Developers Of Buildings Help To Make Our Environment Feel Safer?
- How Can We Make Our Main Streets And Local Shops Feel Safer?
- How Can Designers, Developers And Managers Make New Shopping Malls Feel Safer?
- How Can We Make Our Central City Feel Safer?
- How Can We Make Our Business And Industrial Areas Feel Safer?
- Safety Audits