CrimeLifecycle

Guidance for generating Design Against Crime ideas

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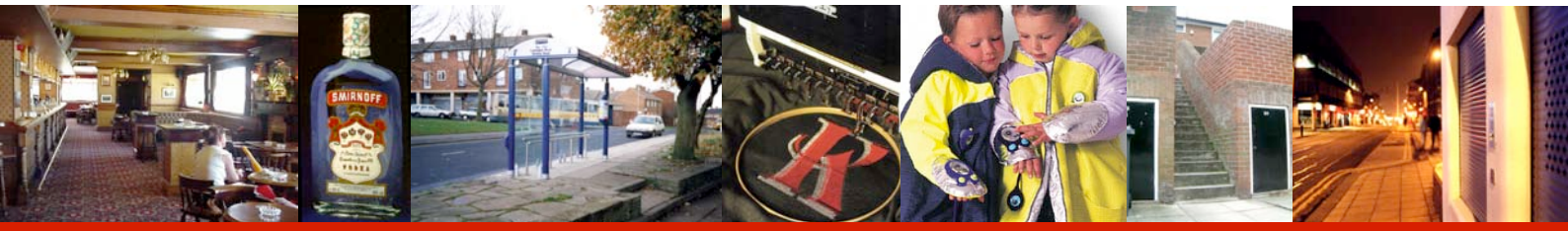
The University of Salford



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DESIGNAGAINSTCRIME

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Introduction

Models of criminal causality

A great deal has been written about the causes of crime by criminologists, and we have a fairly good understanding of the various *causal factors* that result in the occurrence of crime. In general, the causal factors for particular crimes are offender-focused and can be divided into two main areas:

- Those factors relating to the attributes of the offender that commits the crime
- Those factors relating to the attributes of the situation in which the crime happens

The aim of categorising the causal factors that underpin crime is to enable a better understanding of the influences and choices affecting offender behaviour in a crime situation.

This design resource is derived from one such causal framework, developed by Paul Ekblom at the UK Home Office (Ekblom, 2001). Ekblom's framework has been adapted and extended to create the DAC Crime Lifecycle Model, intended for use by designers during concept design development. Before describing the use of the crime lifecycle model, we will briefly explain the thinking that underpins it.

Active versus passive design

If crime is not effectively considered during the design of a product, place or environment then, from a crime prevention perspective, the design can be said to be *passive*. By this we mean that the finished design will be passively subject to the offender-related attributes and situation-related attributes that lead to crime, as illustrated in figure 1, below.

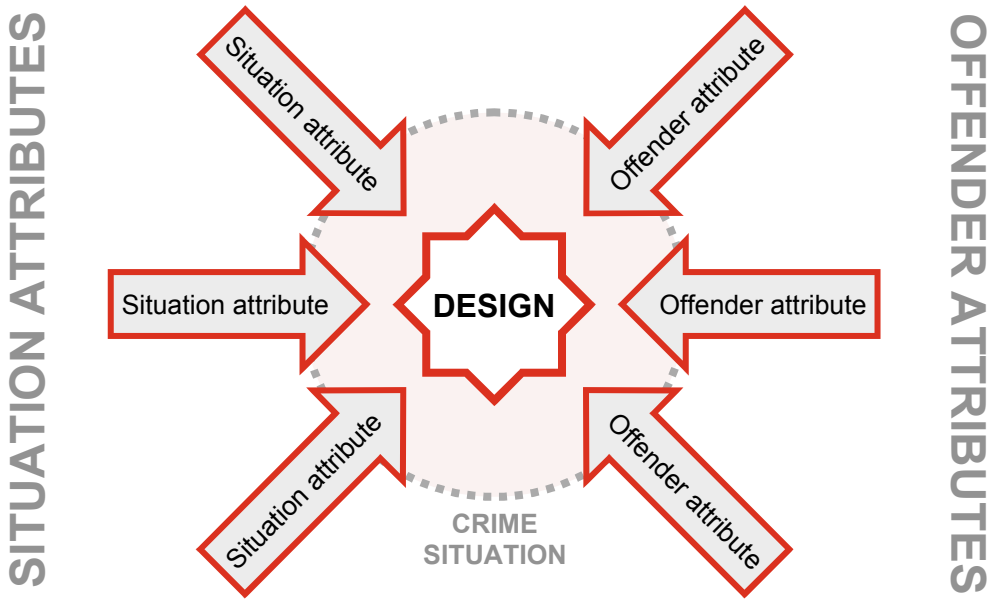


Figure 1 *Passive design*

Passive designs are more likely to require the *retrofitting* of security or crime prevention measures. This is often considerably more expensive than the cost of addressing crime during the design process.

Conversely, if designers consider crime effectively during development, then design attributes that counter or *block* offender- and situation-related attributes that lead to crime can be integrated within their design. From a crime prevention perspective, such designs can be considered *active* (as shown in figure 2), and are much less likely to require the expensive retrofitting of security or crime prevention measures.

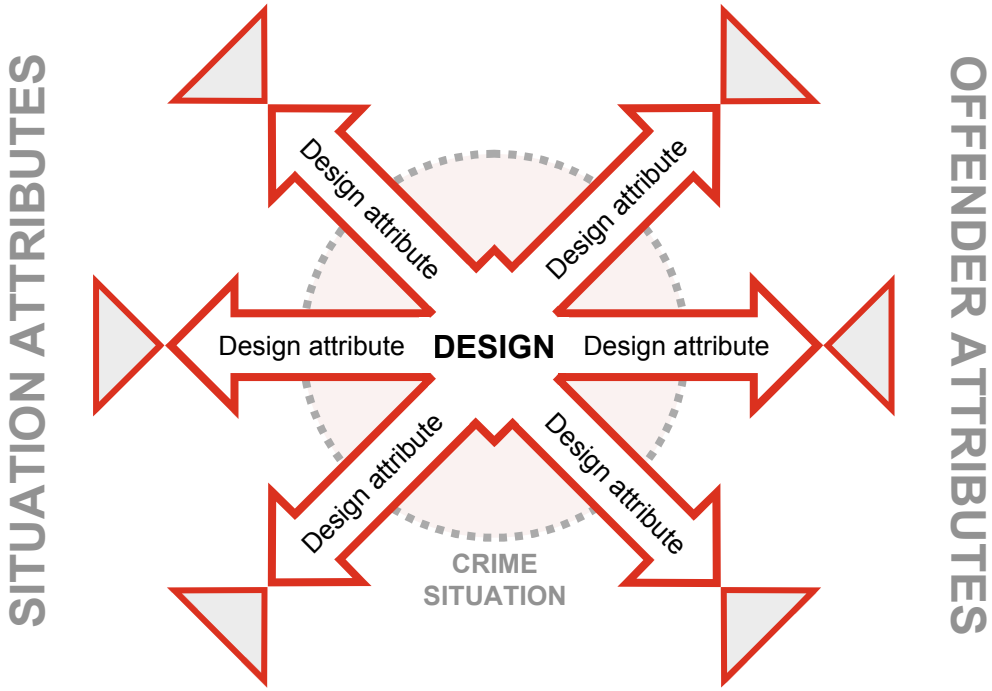


Figure 2 *Active design*

To summarise, designers should *design crime prevention in* and create active designs, rather than producing passive designs that require crime to be designed out at a later date.

Thinking beyond the crime event

Of course, not all crime can be prevented by design. Criminals are becoming ever more creative in the countermeasures they employ against crime prevention measures. So given that some crime will 'get through' any design-led prevention, it's sensible for designers to also embody measures within their designs that consider issues beyond the crime event, including:

- Helping identify, apprehend and prosecute offenders
- Mitigating against the short- and long-term effects of crime—both for the victim and the offender.

The Crime Lifecycle model

Based on the thinking outlined above, a *lifecycle* model for crime has been developed to help design professionals address crime issues during the development of design concepts (see figure 3)

The Crime Lifecycle Model embodies three key principles:

1. *Offending behaviour can breed further offending behaviour, so the real key to sustainable crime prevention is to break this cycle*

   The initial and final phases of the model are linked, as a basic 'readiness to offend' is fuelled largely by a potential offender's life circumstances and the extent to which they believe criminal behaviour to be acceptable and a valid option for them. The longer-term consequences of criminal activity will impact on an offender's readiness to offend. For example, the difficulties of finding employment experienced by those with a criminal record may encourage further criminal behaviour. In addition, being locked up with a large number of other criminals may provide an education in criminal skills, and access to resources for future activities.

2. *All 6 Pre-Crime Issues (Phases 1 to 6) are prerequisite to a crime event occurring*

   By *comprehensively* addressing any one of these issues, the crime event can effectively be prevented from occurring. Designers no not have to tackle all of the pre-crime issues, but can choose to concentrate on the ones that can be most effectively addressed.

3. *Post-Crime Issues should also be considered*

As already mentioned, it's unlikely that any crime prevention measure will be 100% effective. Therefore, it is important to consider how the product, service or environment might be designed to address issues that arise after the crime event. These are dealt with in Phases 7 to 10 of the lifecycle.

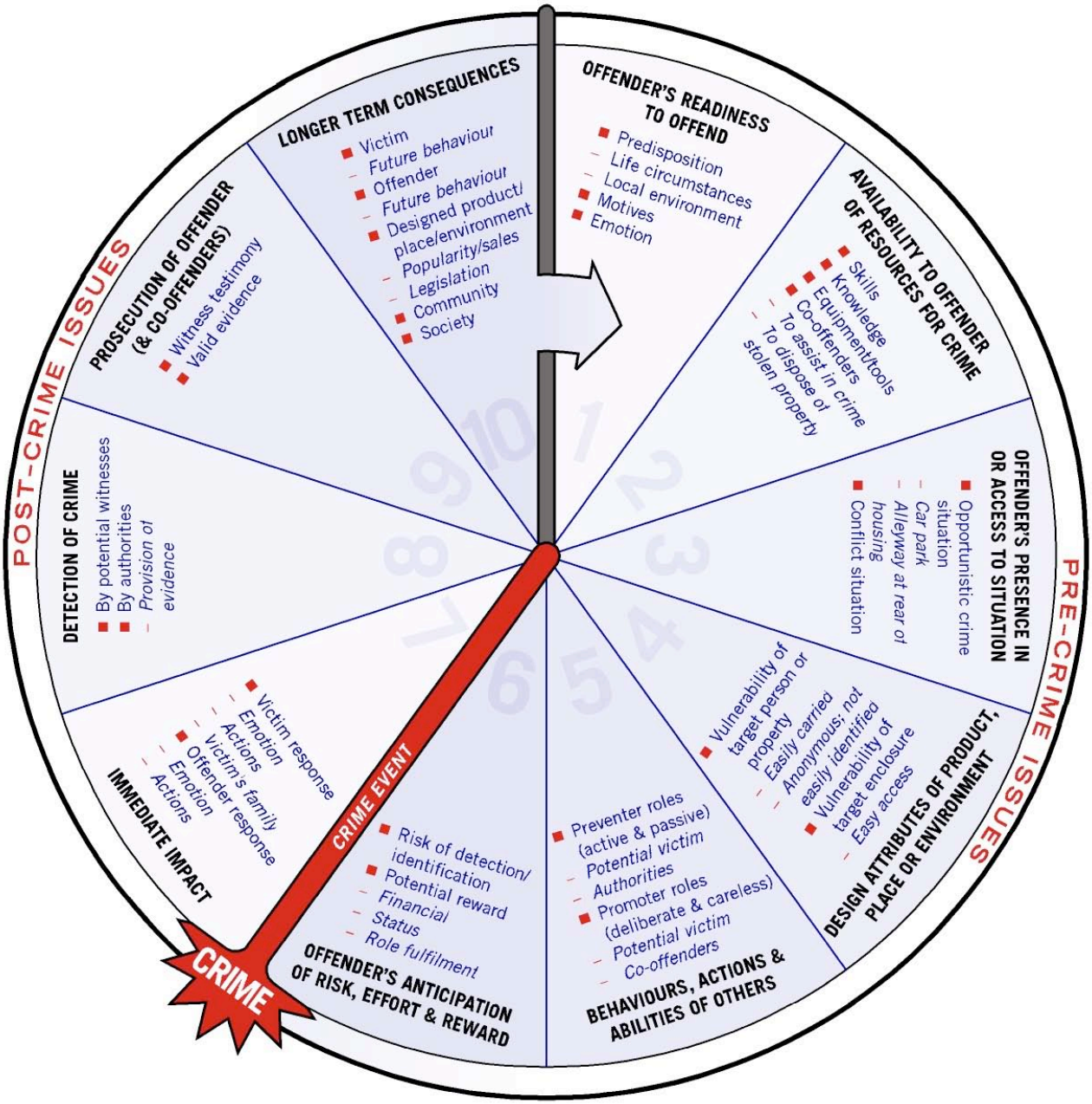


Figure 3 *The Crime Lifecycle Model*

Using the lifecycle model in the Design Against Crime process

The Design Against Crime process has four steps that follow the conventional course of designing a product, service or environment.

STEP 1 ***Consult***

Gain support for, and input into, the Design Against Crime process from stakeholders within and outside the organisation

STEP 2 *Develop*

Research the possible risks and crime problems associated with the product, service or environment being designed. This understanding should inform the development of an appropriate design solution

STEP 3 *Test*

Design solutions must be validated fully before being made available or put on the market, to ensure they address crimes identified in Step 2.

STEP 4 *Deliver*

The client/customer response to the Design Against Crime solution, as well as the response from offenders, should be evaluated. Such feedback will inform future design efforts.

The Crime Lifecycle Model is designed for use during Step 2, to aid in understanding how the design of the product, service or environment being developed might address pre-crime and post-crime issues.

More detail about the Design Against Crime process can be found in *'Think Thief: A designer's guide to designing out crime'* published by the Design Council (2003).

Types of Crime

Designers will need to be aware of the range of crimes that might affect a new product, service or environment they are developing. Notifiable offences as categorised by the UK Home Office are given in table 1, below.

OFFENCE GROUPS

1. Theft/handling stolen goods
   Including:
   – *Theft from vehicle*
   – *Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle*
   – *Vehicle crime*
   – *Other Theft*
   – *Theft from shop*
   – *Theft of pedal cycle*
   – *Theft from person*
   – *Handling Stolen Goods*
2. Burglary
   Including:
   – *Burglary in a dwelling*
   – *Burglary in other building*
3. Criminal damage
   Including:
   – *Arson*
   – *Other criminal damage*
4. Violence against person
   Including:
   – *Less serious offences*
   – *More serious offences*
5. Fraud and Forgery
6. Robbery
7. Other 'notifiable offences'
   Including:
   – *Trafficking in controlled drugs*
   – *Going equipped for stealing*
   – *Other offences*
8. Sexual offences
   Including:
   – *Rape*
   – *Indecent assault on a female*
   – *Other sexual offences*

Adapted from Home Office 1998, Criminal Statistics, England and Wales, London: HMSO

Table 1 *Notifiable offences recorded by the police*

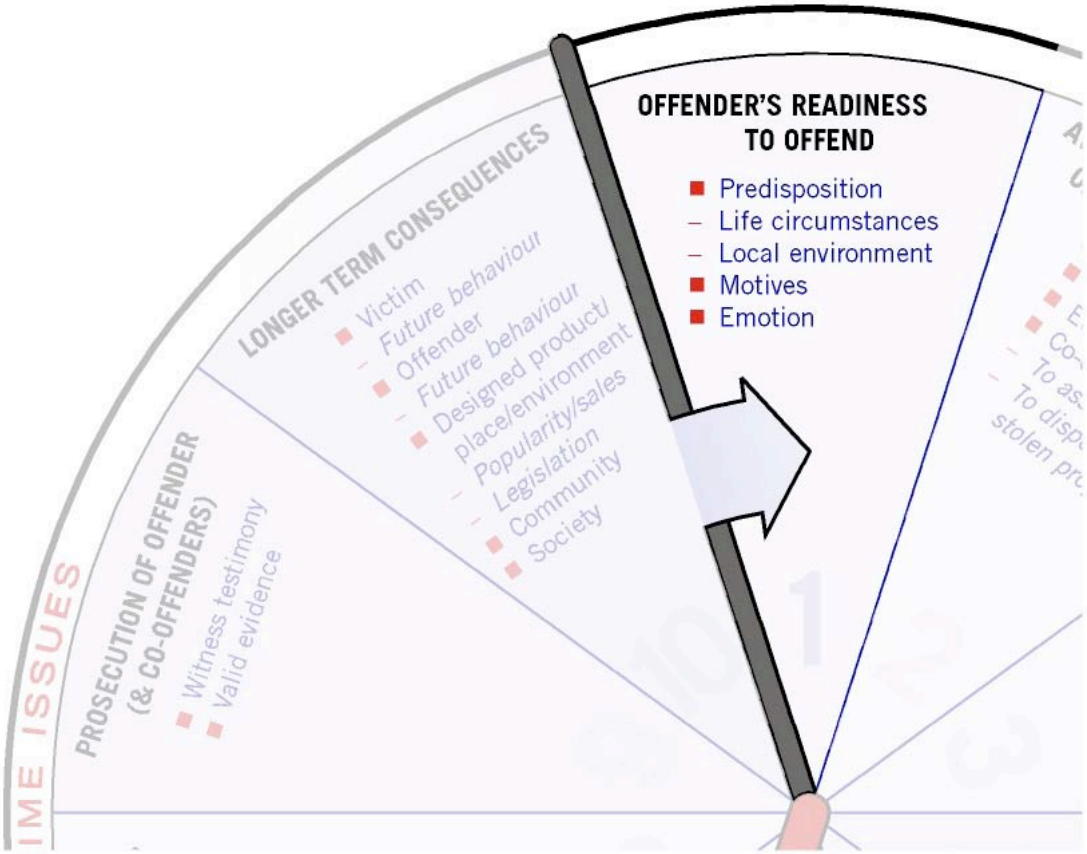
Design-led solutions can be applied to every kind of crime, not just to 'opportunistic' or acquisitive property offences. Design has successfully tackled more calculated or deeply-motivated crimes, as well as ones committed by hardened offenders (e.g. hijacking, homicide and sexual harassment).

How to use the lifecycle model to generate ideas

With your design solution in mind—as well as the types of crimes that might be directed at it—work through the following ten stages of the Crime Lifecycle Model answering the questions and jotting any ideas down in the space provided.

PRE-CRIME ISSUES

Issue 1: Offender's readiness to offend

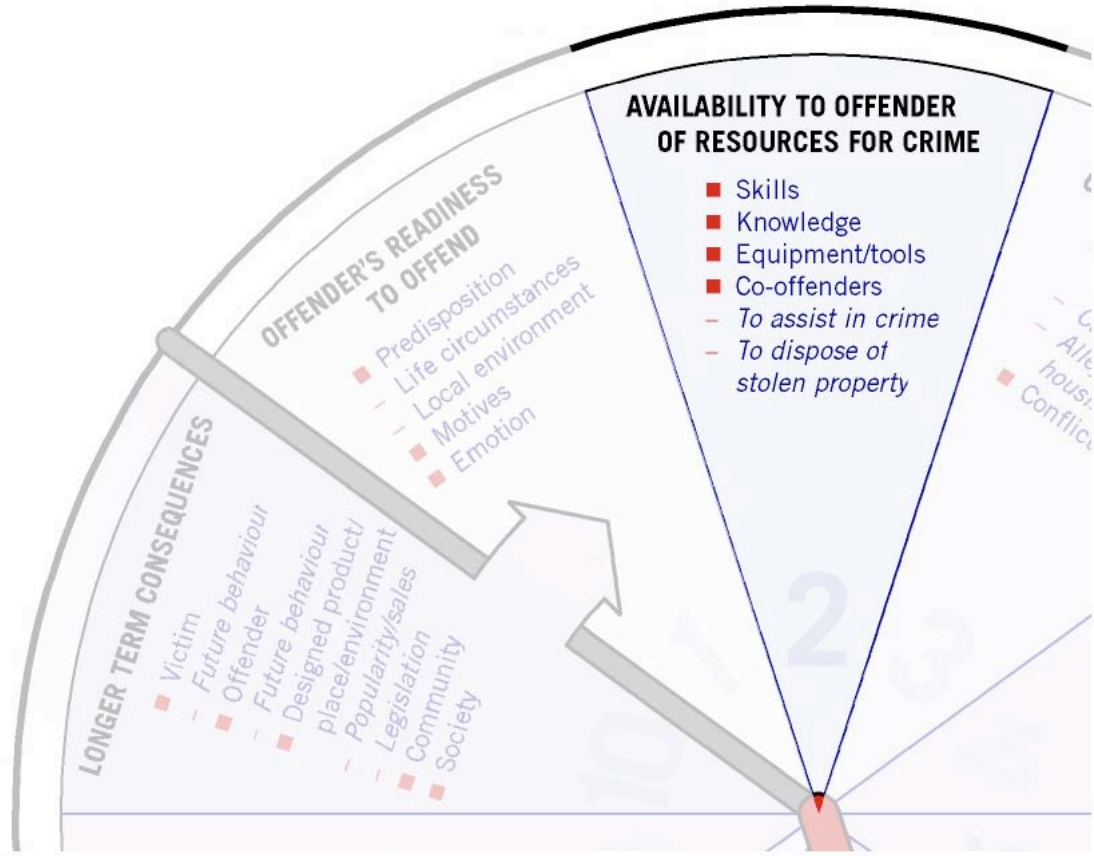


The likelihood of an individual turning to crime will be affected by their life history and circumstances, including their:

- Financial situation
- Educational background
- Employment
- Family situation
- Sense of 'belonging'

QUESTION: How might your design address these issues and reduce an offender's readiness to offend?

Issue 2: Availability to offender of resources for crime

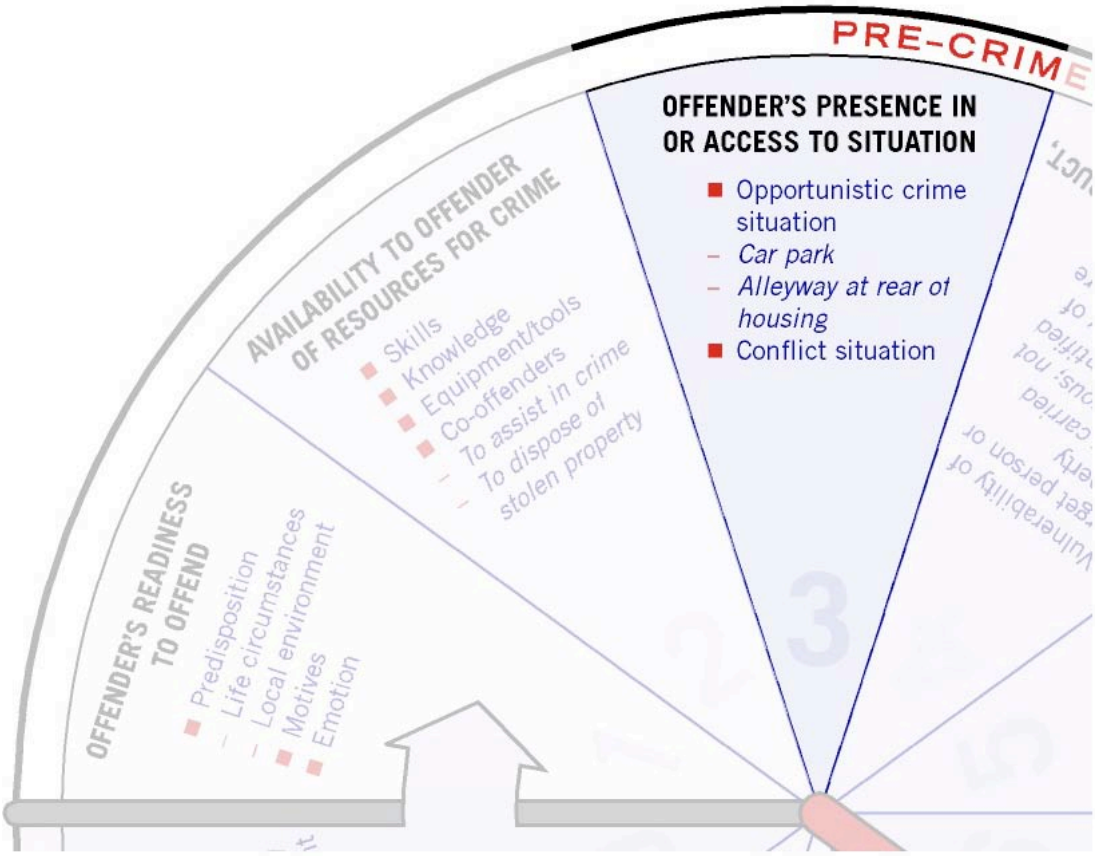


Offenders require resources to commit crime. Such resources can include:

- Tools and equipment (e.g. crowbar to open a window or a knife to threaten someone)
- Co-offenders during the crime (e.g. someone to keep a lookout)
- Co-offenders after the crime (e.g. someone to buy stolen goods)
- Knowledge and skills (e.g. a familiarity with the layout of an area and skills in picking locks)

QUESTION: Regarding your design, what are the resources that might be employed by a potential offender? How might your design reduce access to these resources?

Issue 3: Offender's presence in, or access to, situation where offending may occur

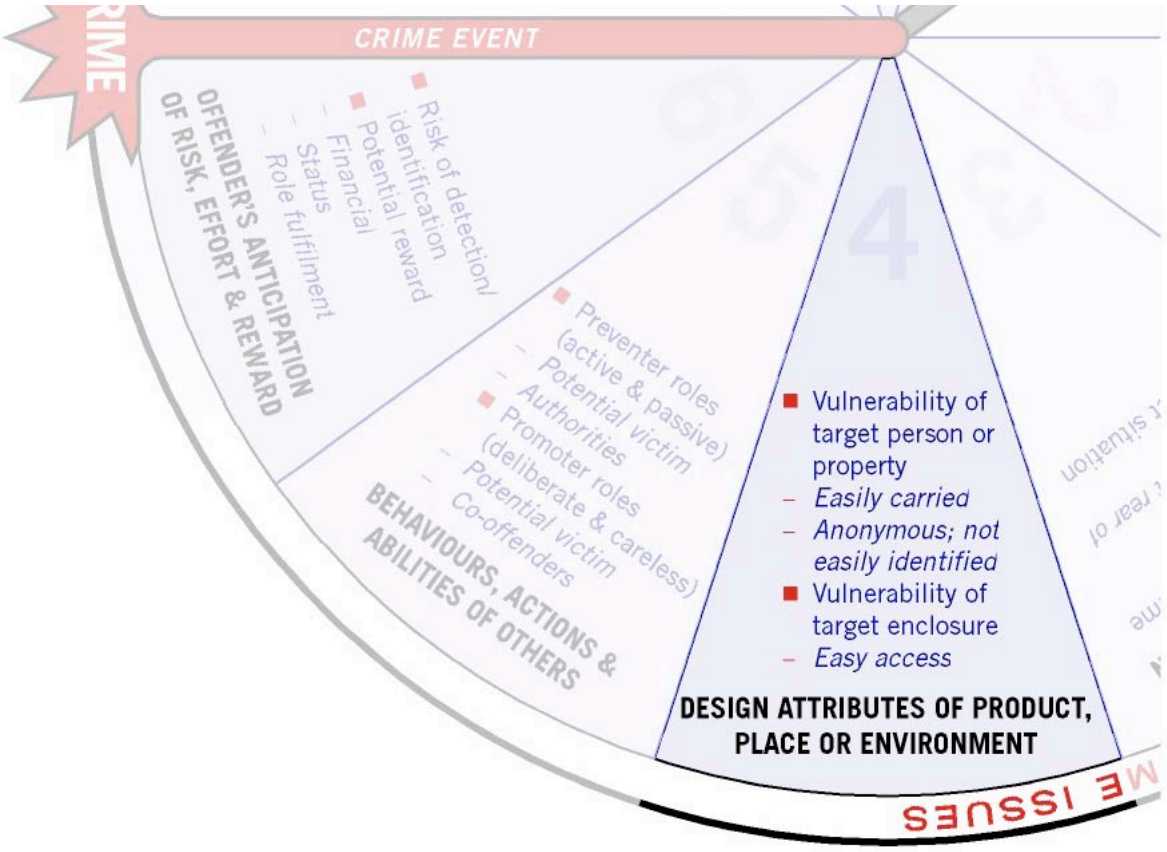


Crime or conflict situations require the presence of an offender. Such presence may be:

- Purposeful (e.g. presence in a bank for a planned robbery)
- Opportunistic (e.g. presence in a crowded bar where a fight occurs).

QUESTION: Regarding your design, what are the potential crime and conflict situations that may occur? How might your design reduce the likelihood of an offender being present in such situations?

Issue 4: Design attributes of product, place or environment



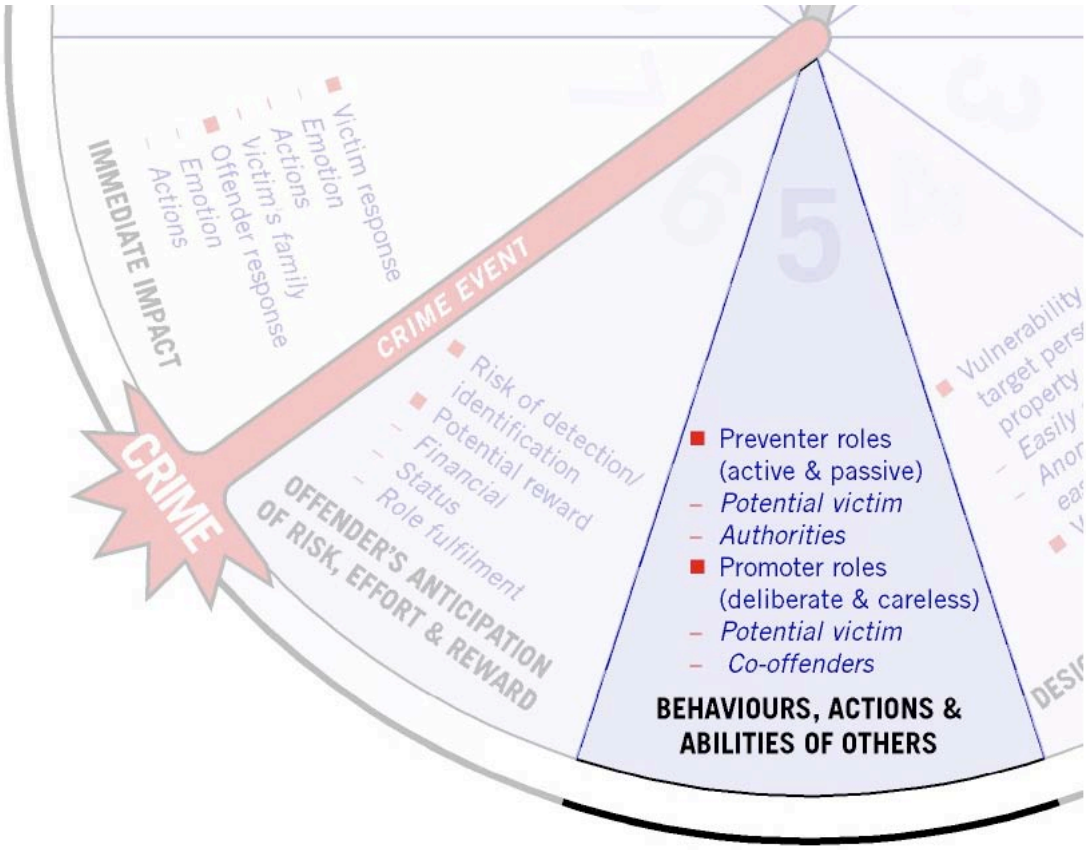
Products that are perceived by offenders as *valuable* and *easy to remove* are more likely to be targeted. Places that are *accessible*, free from *surveillance* and *easy to damage* are also vulnerable.

The acronym CRAVED can be used to identify at-risk products:

C – Concealable (easily hidden after theft)
R – Removable (easily taken, carried and transported)
A – Available (on display, not being watched over)
V – Valuable (of high monetary worth, or conveying status)
E – Enjoyable (fun to use/own, and therefore desirable)
D – Disposable (easily sold on or exchanged for cash, drugs, etc.)

QUESTION: What are the vulnerable features of your design?
How might your design reduce this vulnerability?

Issue 5: Behaviours, actions and abilities of others



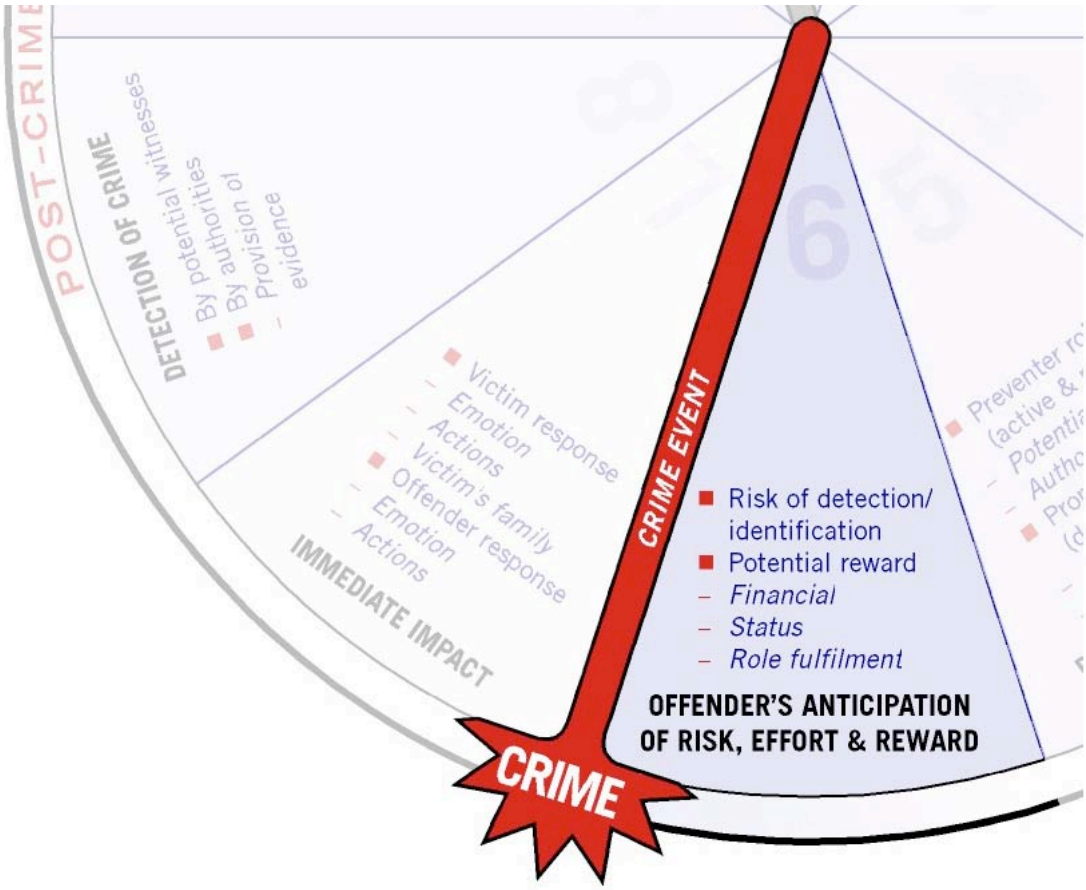
In a crime situation, individuals can act as preventers or promoters. These can be:

- Active preventers (for example, a police officer or a security guard)
- Passive preventers (in some cases, the mere presence of other people may deter offenders)
- Deliberate promoters (for example, an accomplice who keeps watch while their friend breaks into a house, or a buyer who knowingly purchases stolen goods)
- Careless promoters (for example, someone who forgets to lock their car).

Potential victims and authorities may fall into any of these categories.

QUESTION: Who are the potential preventers and promoters that might impact on your design? How might your design support the actions and abilities of these preventers, and reduce those of promoters?

Issue 6: Offender's anticipation of risk effort and reward



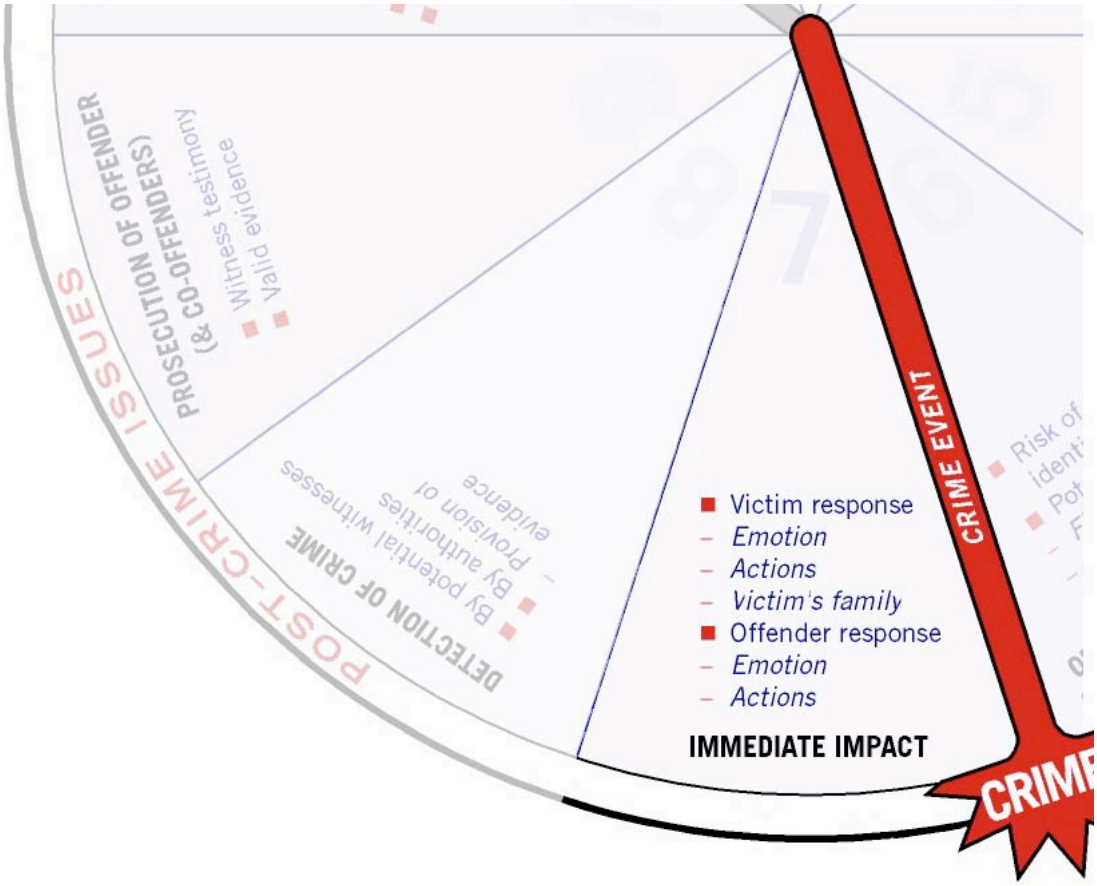
Increase the offender's perception of risk and effort, and reduce that of reward by:

- Increasing the perceived risk of detection
- Increasing the perceived risk of identification
- Increasing the amount of effort required by the offender to gain the reward
- Reducing the perceived reward the offence offers. This may be financial, but is likely to include other factors that motivate the offender (e.g. increased status in their peer group).

QUESTION: How might your design address these issues and reduce the offender's motivation to commit crime?

POST-CRIME ISSUES

Issue 7: Immediate impact of crime *(immediate response of victim/offender)*



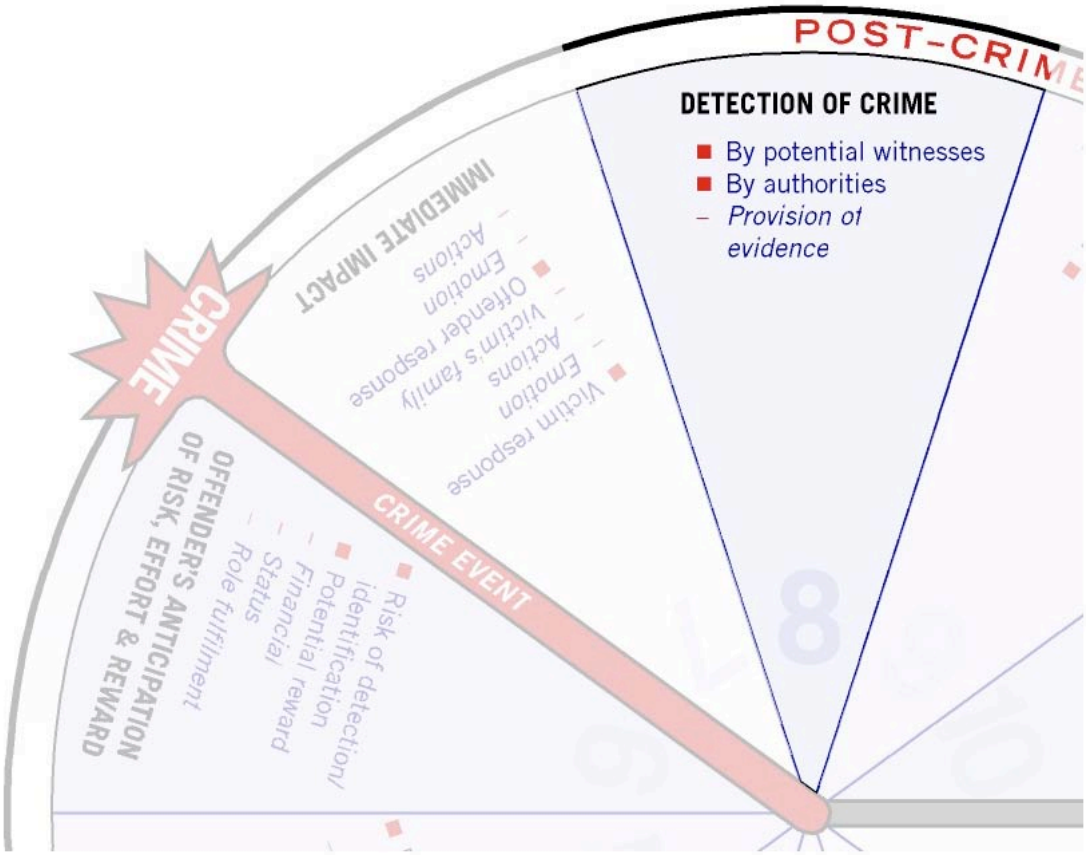
The immediate actions of a victim or offender in the minutes after a crime has been committed can effect:

- The potential for the crime to escalate
- The physical and emotional impact on the victim
- The likelihood of intervention by a third party
- The psychological impact on the offender
- The likelihood of the offender being identified and prosecuted

The potential negative results of design attributes meant to address pre-crime issues should be considered, to ensure that the immediate impact of a crime or offence for the victim is not inadvertently made worse.

QUESTION: What would be the *immediate* consequences of a crime on the offender and victim?
What might their responses be?
How might your design lessen any negative consequences of these responses?

Issue 8: Detection of crime

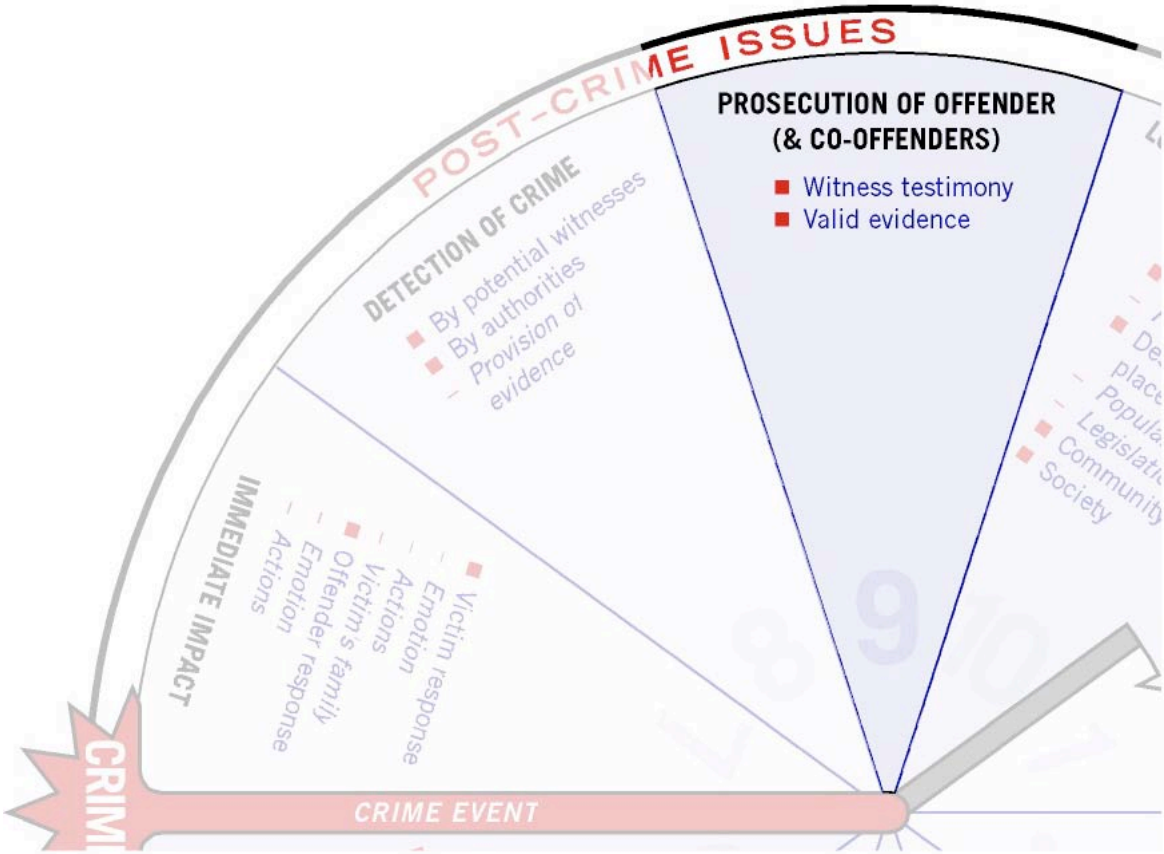


Offences may be detected during or after their occurrence by:

- Witnesses (e.g. residents, passers-by, police or security guards)
- Technological systems (e.g. alarms sounding, viewing on CCTV)
- The victim themselves (e.g. detecting the pickpocket, hearing the intruder)

QUESTION: How might your design enable the early detection of offences?
How might your design provide evidence that the offence has taken place?

Issue 9: Prosecution of offenders (and co-offenders)

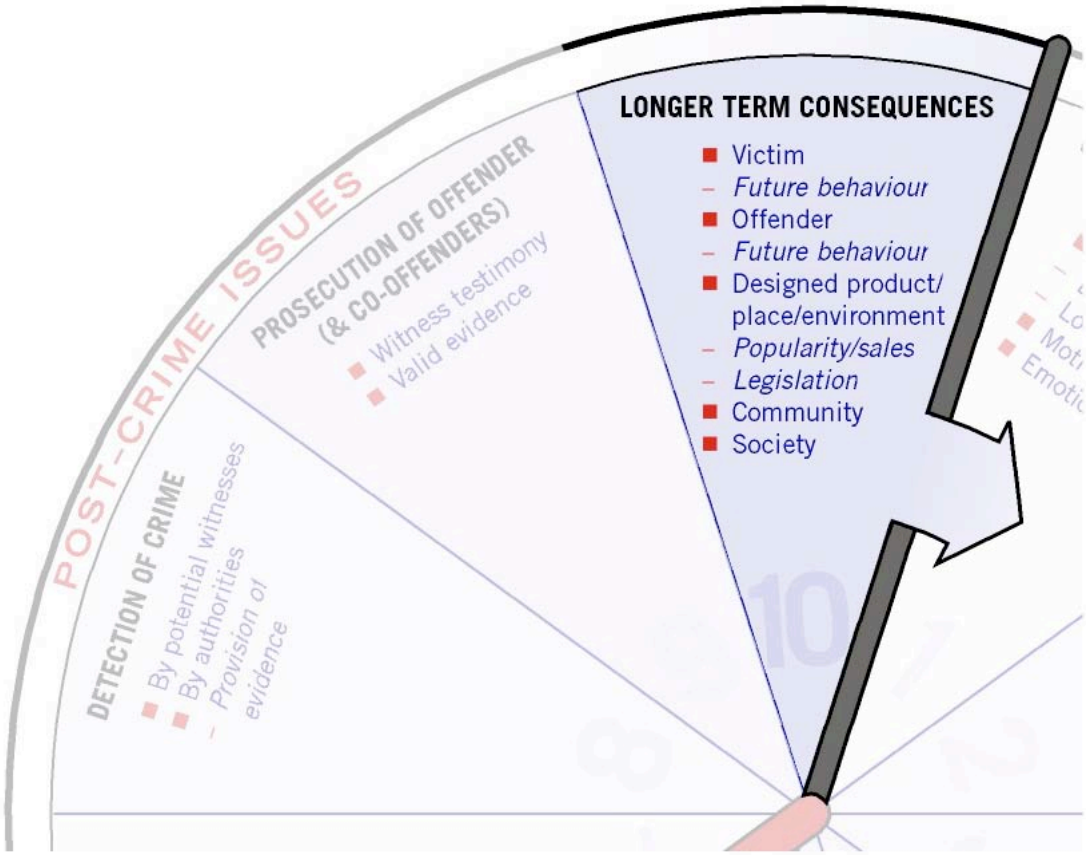


To successfully prosecute the offender, as well as any co-offenders, the authorities require:

- Robust witness testimony
- Valid physical evidence

QUESTION: How might your design support the provision of witness testimony and valid physical evidence?

Issue 10: Longer term consequences of offence



Crime has longer-term effects on:

- Victims and their families
- Offenders & co-offenders
- The designed product or place involved in the offence
- Communities
- Wider society

QUESTION: What are the longer-term consequences of crimes related to your design?
How might your design alleviate the negative effects of these?

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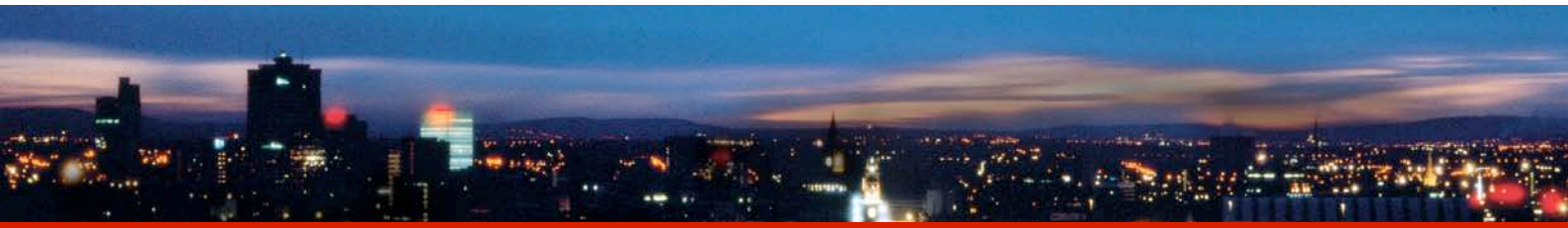
Design Against Crime is an international programme of research and policy initiatives that aims to embed crime prevention within design through education and professional practice. The programme is directed by the *Design Policy Partnership*—a multi-disciplinary team of researchers at the University of Salford, Sheffield Hallam University and Robert Gordon University.

Visit the Design Against Crime website at **http://www.designagainstcrime.net**



A great deal has been written about the causes of crime by criminologists, and we have a fairly good understanding of the various causal factors that result in the occurrence of crime.

This design resource adapts and extends thinking from criminology and crime prevention to create the Crime Lifecycle Model. The Crime Lifecycle is intended for use by designers during concept design development to generate ideas and test solutions.

This publication was developed as part of the ongoing, international research programme *Design Against Crime* at the University of Salford.

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