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What Works in Reducing Burglary: A Review of Secured by Design

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# ***Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) and Secured by Design (SBD): What Works?***

Professor Rachel Armitage  
Director: Secure Societies Institute

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# Today's presentation

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- What Works review of Secured by Design (SBD) led by UCL (Aiden Sidebottom) – March/April.
- Focus today on my research:
  - Impact of CPTED on police recorded crime.
  - Impact of CPTED on offender decision making.
  - Effectiveness of SBD.
  - Some discussion of challenges of evaluating what works.

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# *Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)*

What is it?

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*A method of reducing crime through the  
design and manipulation of the built  
environment (planning stage)*

**Houses**

Schools

Hospitals

Commercial

Railway stations

# Creating Defensible Space

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Use of design to create **symbolic barriers** that portray the message that an area is private.





# Limiting through movement

Less opportunities to **notice** the house.

Less **access/escape** routes.





# Maximising surveillance

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Offenders are more likely to be **observed** (or feel like that are being observed) by neighbours and/or passers by.





# Management and maintenance

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The area is well maintained giving the impression that **people care** and would challenge the offender if observed.





# Standards of physical security

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The house is **difficult to get into**. Doing so would take time and would be likely to raise suspicion.





# Secured by Design: Standards based on principles of CPTED

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Secured by Design – Gold

Movem



Secured by  
Design – Silver

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– LAYOUT &  
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Official Police Security Initiative

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# *Implementing CPTED/SBD in the UK*

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# How is CPTED delivered in the UK

## Crime Prevention Design Advisors & Police Architectural Liaison Officers

To find your nearest crime prevention design advisor, click on the map below or chose from the drop-down menu.



- Each police force has ALO/CPDA/DOCOs.
- Traditionally warranted police, but move towards civilian role (GMP)
- Police station/local authority planning dept.
- Review planning applications, advice on crime risk, deliver SBD, influence planning policy/strategy.
- Jan 2009 – 347
- Nov 2014 - 125

# ***CPTED/SBD – Individual elements of Design What works?***

## Police recorded crime

# Which design features influence crime?

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## Design Features Checklist

Development:	31 design features specific to the property	
Date:		
Time:		
19 design features specific to the wider development		
1. Does the development have a youth centre?	No	
2. Does the street layout make it easy to find your way around?	2193 houses	
Layout		
3. Are there gates or barriers to the development?	12 developments	
4. If there are footpaths within the development, do the footpaths lead to:	Open land	
	Across 3 police forces	
	area	
	Maze or Footpaths	
5. If there are footpaths, are they adequately lit?	Police recorded crime data for 3 years	adequate

# Through movement

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Compared to a true cul-de-sac, through roads experienced 93% more crime.




Compared to a true cul-de-sac, leaky culs-de-sac experienced 110% more crime.



# Road layout

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Being located on a corner plot increased risk of crime by 18%.

# Surveillance

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Properties overlooked by 3 or more other properties experienced 38% less crime








[European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research](#)

..... March 2011, Volume 17, [Issue 1](#), pp 29–54

# It Looks Good, but What is it Like to Live There? Exploring the Impact of Innovative Housing Design on Crime

Authors

[Authors and affiliations](#)

Rachel Armitage , Leanne Monchuk, Michelle Rogerson

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# ***CPTED/SBD – Individual elements of Design What works?***

## Offender decision making

# What works...in the words of the offender?

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- 22 adult prolific burglars currently serving a prison sentence (Whealston, Armley, Newhall).
- 16 photographs:

*“From what you can see from the photo,  
can you describe what would **attract** you to this property when selecting a  
target for burglary”*

*“From what you can see from the photo,  
can you describe what would **deter** you (put you off) from selecting this  
property as a target for burglary”*

# The principles of CPTED

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## Surveillance

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# Secured by Design Homes

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*“For the majority of housing developments, it will be desirable for dwelling frontages to be open to view, so walls, fences and hedges will need to be kept low”*

*“Planting should not impede the opportunity for natural surveillance”.*

*“Dwellings should be positioned facing each other to allow neighbours to easily view their surroundings”.*

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# Surveillance – don't like clear visibility

*This is a burglar's dream house!  
The hedge is high and blocks the  
view from the road. The gate is so  
high, no-one can see you and the  
busy road masks any noise that I  
make.*

*Open fences  
would put me off.*

*This would be a perfect target.  
Passers by can't see in so  
they wouldn't notice you  
breaking in. The high gate and  
hedges block the view so no-  
one can see what is going on  
inside.*

*I'd feel more  
exposed  
if the walls and  
fences  
were lower.*



# Surveillance – don't like the true cul-de-sac

*I wouldn't target houses on a cul-de-sac because you feel trapped and it's difficult if someone challenges you. They might say 'what are you doing?' and you say you are lost and then you have to walk back out the way you came in and they are looking at you.*

*If it's a cul-de-sac then it's usually one way in, one way out. You'd be stupid to do a cul-de-sac.*



# The principles of CPTED

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## Physical security

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## *Physical security – Part 2 of SBD*



# Physical security – don't like good quality locks

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*Yes, I can tell by looking at the lock that it would be easy to snap.*

*Having mole grips is like having the key to the door!*

*The hinges are on the outside of that door for God's sake, it's a 3 minute job. It's a cheap arse door that one!*

*This lock can easily be mole-gripped. You can tell because it's thin. The new ones are chunkier.*

*If manufacturers know that we can mole grip a lock, why don't they change that lock to make it harder to break in?*


*I would snap the cylinder on the side door – it's a really poor design is that door.*

# Physical security – not deterred by burglar alarms

*Good alarms like \*\*\* don't  
stop when you pull them off  
the wall.*

*The cheap ones do!*

# Physical security – attracted to excessive security



*The security grille  
makes me think  
there's something  
worth taking.*

# The principles of CPTED

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## Through movement

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# Secured by Design Homes

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*“Whilst it is accepted that through routes will be included within development layouts, the designer must ensure that the security of the development is not compromised by excessive permeability.”*

*“Footpaths linking culs-de- sac to one another can be particularly problematic, and in such cases the layout may need to be re-considered.”*

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# Through movement - gives them legitimacy

*Yes, this is perfect! Easy pickings. I would first walk up and down this footpath. No-one would give me a second glance. Even if I was a tramp walking up and down I wouldn't look out of place – it's a footpath, no-one can question you.*

*If I was in there and the police came I would be boxed in and wouldn't have an excuse for being in there. I couldn't say 'I'm just walking home Officer'*

# Through movement – allows them to evade police

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*The appeal of a footpath is that you know how you are getting in and how you escape*

*Those ginnels and footpaths are more or less an escape route.*

*Having ginnels on an estate is great, cos you know the area better than the police, you'll easily lose them. You know the routes!*

*Burglars like footpaths, it makes it easy as the police can't get there easily*

# Through movement - don't have to retrace their steps

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*On a cul-de-sac,  
you have to walk  
back out the way  
you came in.*

*If it's a cul-de-sac  
it's usually one way  
in, one way out.  
You'd be stupid to  
do a cul-de-sac.*

*I wouldn't go further into the  
cul-de-sac. There is no reason  
to be on a cul-de-sac unless  
you live there. You aren't going  
anywhere so you are a  
stranger. If it's a through road  
you can just keep walking  
through.*

# The principles of CPTED

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## Defensible space

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*“Where it is desirable to limit access/use to residents and their legitimate visitors, features such as rumble strips, change of road surface (by colour or texture), pillars, brick piers or narrowing of the carriageway may be used”.*



# Defensible space – don't like feeling that everyone knows each other

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*If a burglar had anything about them they'd know that all the people that live in those houses know each other and would be chatting to each other.*

*I wouldn't go up this street it's far too open.*

*People living here will have a bee in their bonnet. This is a private road for private people. I would feel awkward here. It's all about the bluff and I couldn't pull it off here.*

*Everyone that lives there will be focused on the entrance and what goes on. They'll all know each other, keep an eye out for each other, give the key to the coal man – that sort of thing.*

But.....

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- 1) Implementation of Defensible Space
- 2) The concept of Management/Maintenance

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# Defensible space – 'private road'

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*The 'private road' just means they have something to protect, so something to steal.*

*'Private Road' tells me they've bought their house – it's not council.*

*The word 'private' makes me think it's an exclusive area and they have more money. That would attract me.*

*'Private road' suggests this isn't council housing so won't be on benefits.*

*I'd think 'private road' means they've got coin.*

*It's a 'Private Road', this tells me they've bought houses, no council ones.*

*'Private Road' means they all bought their houses. You don't get rented properties on a Private Road do you.*



# Management and maintenance

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*No, it doesn't look worth breaking into as there would be nothing to take.*

*No, it's too scruffy there is nothing worth taking.*

*No, I wouldn't burgle this house. I would try and offer them help! Phone the council and get them some support!*

*They are scruffy b@stards they aren't going to have owt. Look at the state of that garden.*

*No – I wouldn't be in that area burgling. I'd go in with nothing and come out with nothing.*

*Those gardens are dirty and horrible, that'd put me off – you want a nice tidy garden, if you mow your lawn, you care for your house and will have nice things.*

*No, they would have nothing to steal.*

*They look methed out. I wouldn't go there.*

*If the house is well looked after, it tells me they've got money!*





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## “Why my house?” – Exploring the influence of residential housing design on burglar decision making.

Armitage, Rachel and Joyce, Chris (2016) “Why my house?” – Exploring the influence of residential housing design on burglar decision making. In: Re-building Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). Routledge, Oxford, UK. (In Press)



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# *Evaluating the effectiveness of SBD*

## Does it work?

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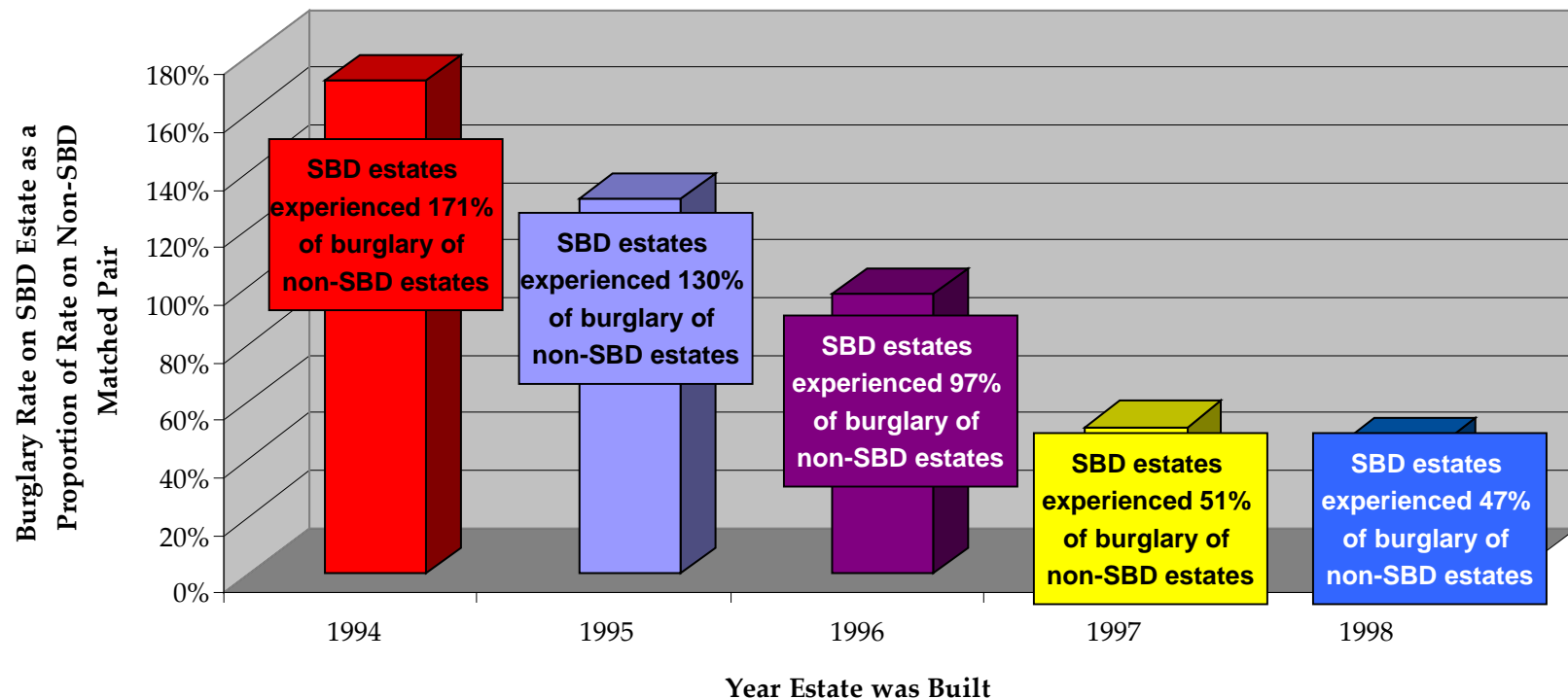
# Evaluating Secured by Design (as a scheme)

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Evaluation	Key findings	Issue/problem
Armitage 2000	-55% reduction in crime (refurbs) -Burglary 71% higher NSBD -Total crime 34% higher NSBD -Self reported burglary 8.4% (NSBD), 2.9% (SBD)	Sample built 1994-1998
Pascoe 1999	Burglary 31% higher NSBD	Sample built pre-1999
Brown 1999	SBD 40% fewer burglaries/vehicle crime	Sample built pre-1999
Teedon and Reid 2009	SBD total housebreaking fell 61% NSBD fell 21%	Just Part 2 (windows and doors)

# What's the problem?

SBD as an Evolving Standard

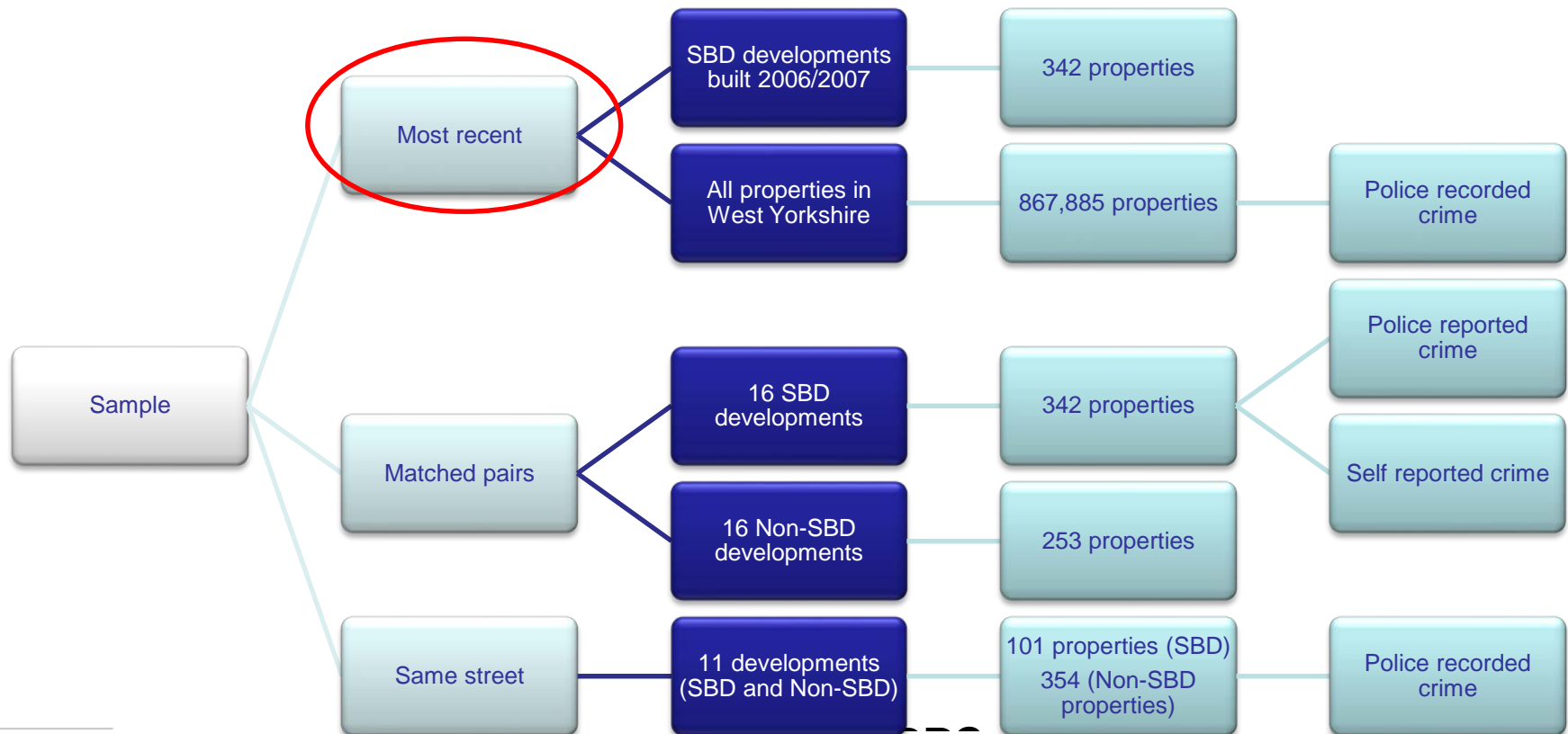


# Evaluation of Secured by Design in West Yorkshire

Armitage and Monchuk (2009)

# Secured by Design in West Yorkshire (2009)

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# Secured by Design in West Yorkshire (2009)

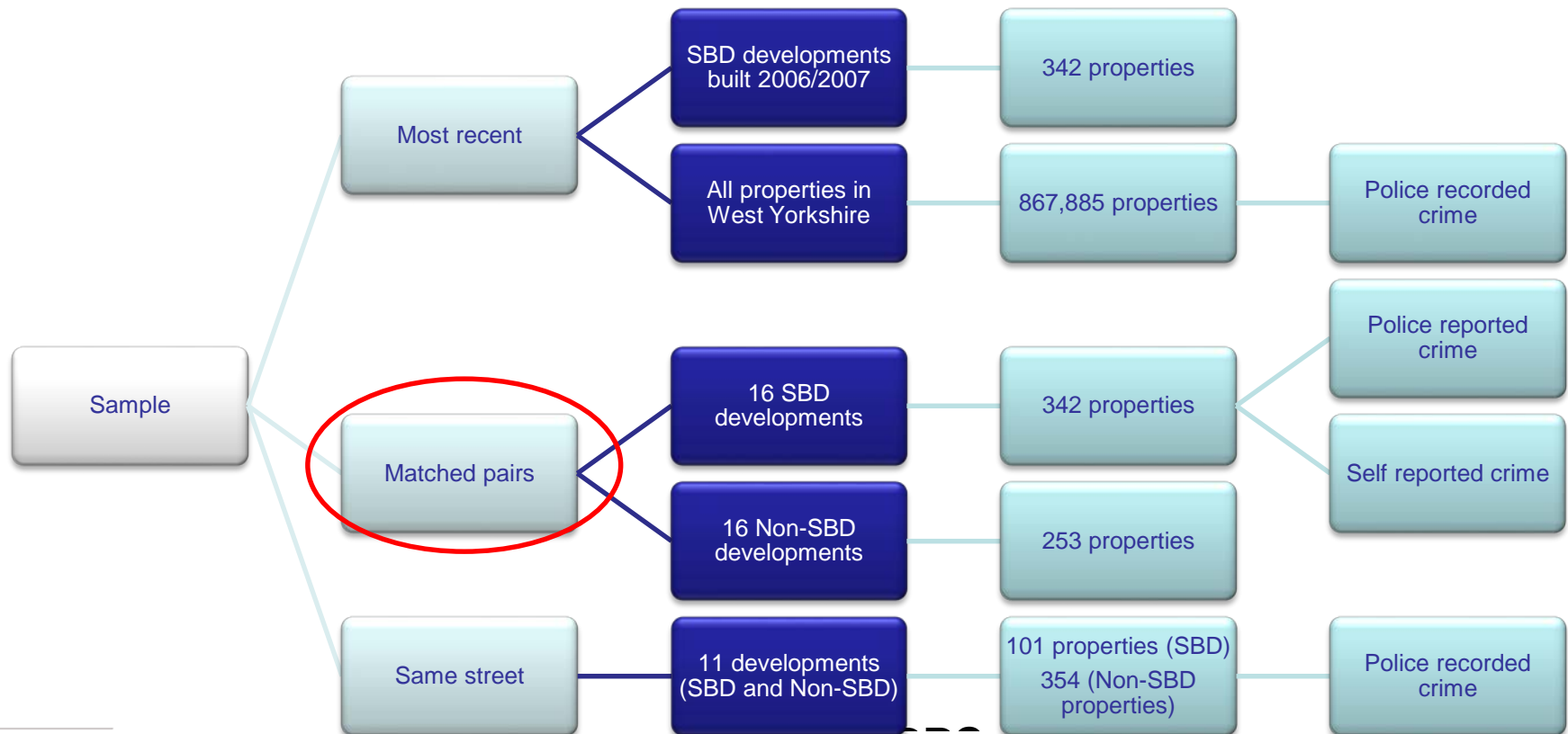
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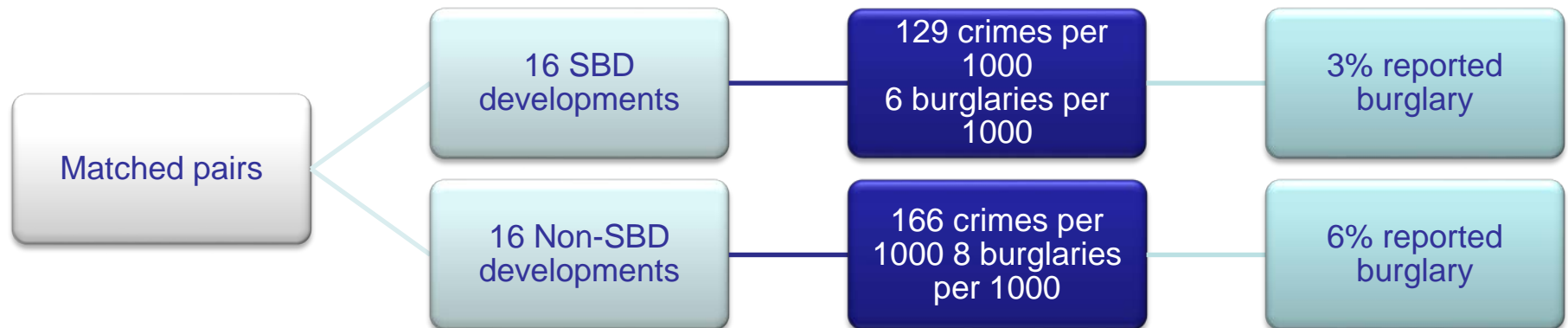
# Secured by Design in West Yorkshire (2009)

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Security Journal

October 2011, Volume 24, Issue 4, pp 320–343

# Sustaining the crime reduction impact of designing out crime: Re-evaluating the Secured by Design scheme 10 years on

Authors

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Rachel Armitage , Leanne Monchuk



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# Issues/problems to consider

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## Evaluation:

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2. SE
3. Re

*It's not sexy. You don't go there on a blue light.*

*It's not going to get you a promotion between Inspector and Chief Inspector so they are not interested in it.*

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3. **Commitment from senior management...**

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