

Community Regeneration

Safety

Design

User-led

Inclusion

Personal safety concerns of older people

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The Investigation

Objectives

- To identify the personal safety and fear of crime needs of older people in relation to a range of environmental settings.
- To develop and refine a package of recommendations and design guidelines to tackle the major areas of concern.
- To contribute to the academic literature on older people research.
- To provide a new focus in safety and crime research by emphasising active participation and user-driven methodologies.

Research plan

- Establishing social networks and links with local organisations, as well as identification of the target groups
- Individual interviews will ask respondents' to identify their common pedestrian routes in the community.
- Key representative routes for each community will be identified, mapped and filmed using the Virtual Reality Panorama Tool.
- These routes will be presented to focus groups where perceptions of personal safety will be explored.
- This discussion will lead to a framework of recommendations for environmental improvements
- A seminar to local decision makers will encourage implementation.



A focus group

Research Approach

The focus group participants are presented with a digital journey through their community and are asked how features of the environment may make them feel safe or unsafe. This enables the identification of important contextual details associated with feelings of personal safety; details which are often lost in crime surveys. This approach allows people to discuss their key concerns, followed by a discussion of appropriate recommendations that can improve safety in communities based on achievable and practical solutions.

Potential Benefits

For older people

Tangible benefits to older people in the form of improved environmental conditions will lead to safer communities and improved quality of life. This project is intended to provide the basis for practical actions based on user-led research.

For society

The benefits to society are to facilitate positive social change that results in safer communities; the findings will be applied to directly improve the lives of older people based on listening to their views and expressed needs and to make a contribution to promoting inclusive communities, increasing mobility, reducing fear in the community and improving the quality of life for older residents in deprived areas



Cwm Clydach



Rhondda Valley

Local context

Wales has the oldest population in the UK with 17 per cent of people over 65. Addressing the needs of older people is therefore an increasingly important concern, socially and politically. What is additionally significant in Wales, however, is the number of communities that have been found to be socially and economically deprived. The research will be carried out within the Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT), one of the most socially deprived regions in the UK. Two communities will be used as case studies, selected on the basis of their socio-economical deprivation.

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