

Community Regeneration

Safety

Design

User-led

Inclusion

Personal safety concerns of older people

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Research Objectives and Methodology

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.

The methodology developed as follows:

An identified need for the research

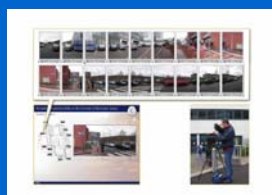
- Older people often experience a high fear of crime
- But there is often a discrepancy between fear and actual crime levels

Failure of quantitative methodologies

- Crime statistics – ‘dark figure of crime’
- Crime surveys reduce perceptions to narrow responses
- Techniques do not provide insight into social or physical contexts of crime and fear of crime

A different research approach needed

- A qualitative approach provides revealing insights into how the design and maintenance of communities impact on personal safety
- Virtual Reality Panorama Tool – 360° digital panoramas are knitted together using QuickTime. This is repeated to produce a 2-D representation of the route - see picture
- Focus groups provide a forum for in-depth discussion of user concerns



VR panorama tool

Previous projects

- Local railways – see photos below
- Campus safety project



View of train station in South Wales before and after environmental improvements

Potential Benefits & Research Plan

Benefits to older people and society

- Improved environmental conditions
- Safer & more inclusive communities
- Increased mobility
- Reduced fear in the community
- Improved quality of life in deprived areas



Cwm Clydach



Rhondda Valley

Local context

The research will be carried out within the Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT), one of the most socially deprived regions in Wales.

Plan of investigation

- Liaising with local organisations and target groups
- Interviews with older people to identify common routes in the community
- ‘Virtual-Reality Panorama Tool’ to film routes
- Focus groups – analysis of key themes in discussion
- Framework of recommendations
- Seminar to local decision makers

References

- Pain, R.H., 1997. Old Age and Ageism in Urban Research: The Case of Fear of Crime. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 21 (1), 117-128.
- Maguire, M., 2002. Crime Statistics: The Data Explosion and its Implications. In: M. Maguire, R. Morgan and R. Reiner, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 322-375.

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