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Crime Prevention – International Experience

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State Community Safety and Crime Prevention Strategy Renewl Forum, Perth, November 2008

Design Against Crime Research Centre

DESIGN AGAINST CRIME Research Centre

JDI

Arts & Humanities Research Council

The Grippa research programme, mainly funded by AHRC, is a collaboration between the Design Against Crime Research Centre, Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design, University of the Arts London, and the UCL Jill Dando Institute of Security and Crime Science. Papers and other materials from the programme are at www.grippaclip.com and wider practical and research material on preventing bag theft at www.inthebag.org.uk

What's coming up

- Crime prevention – past, future and present
- The challenge of crime prevention and how to cope with it

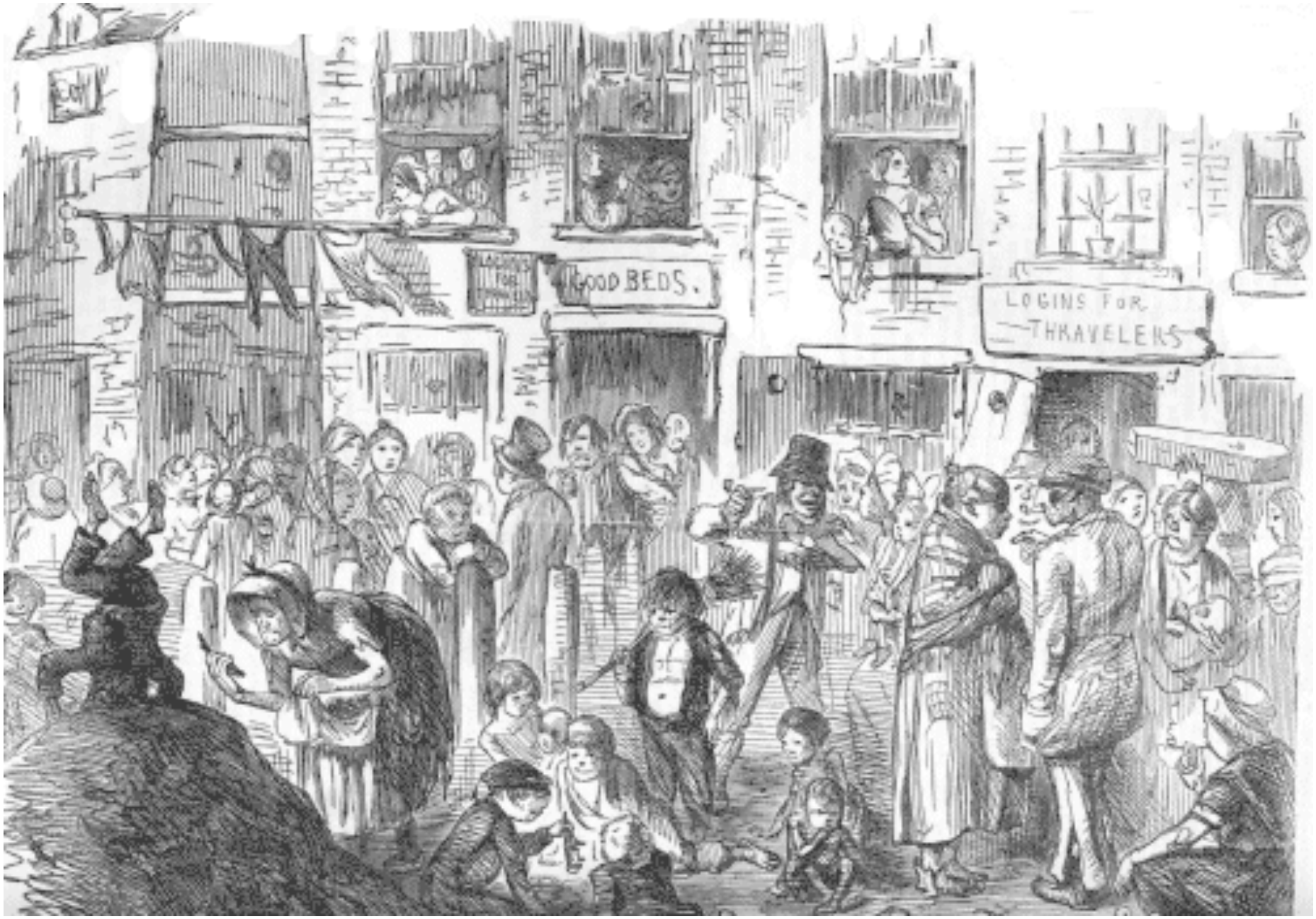
Crime prevention has a past

Maiden Castle – Iron Age

Irish round tower – Dark Ages

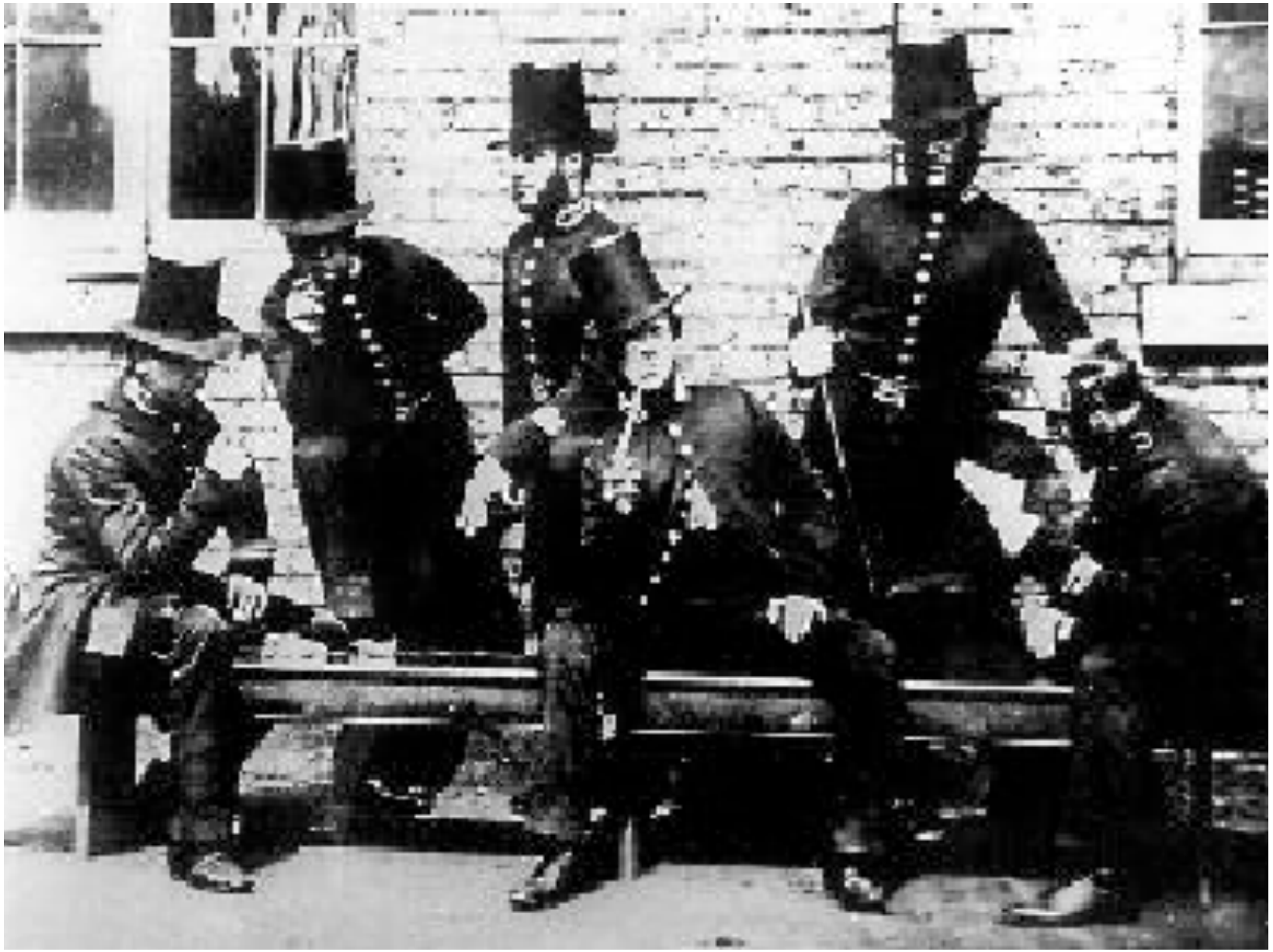
Pocket watch – target softening – 19th century

Demolition of Rookeries – 19th Century

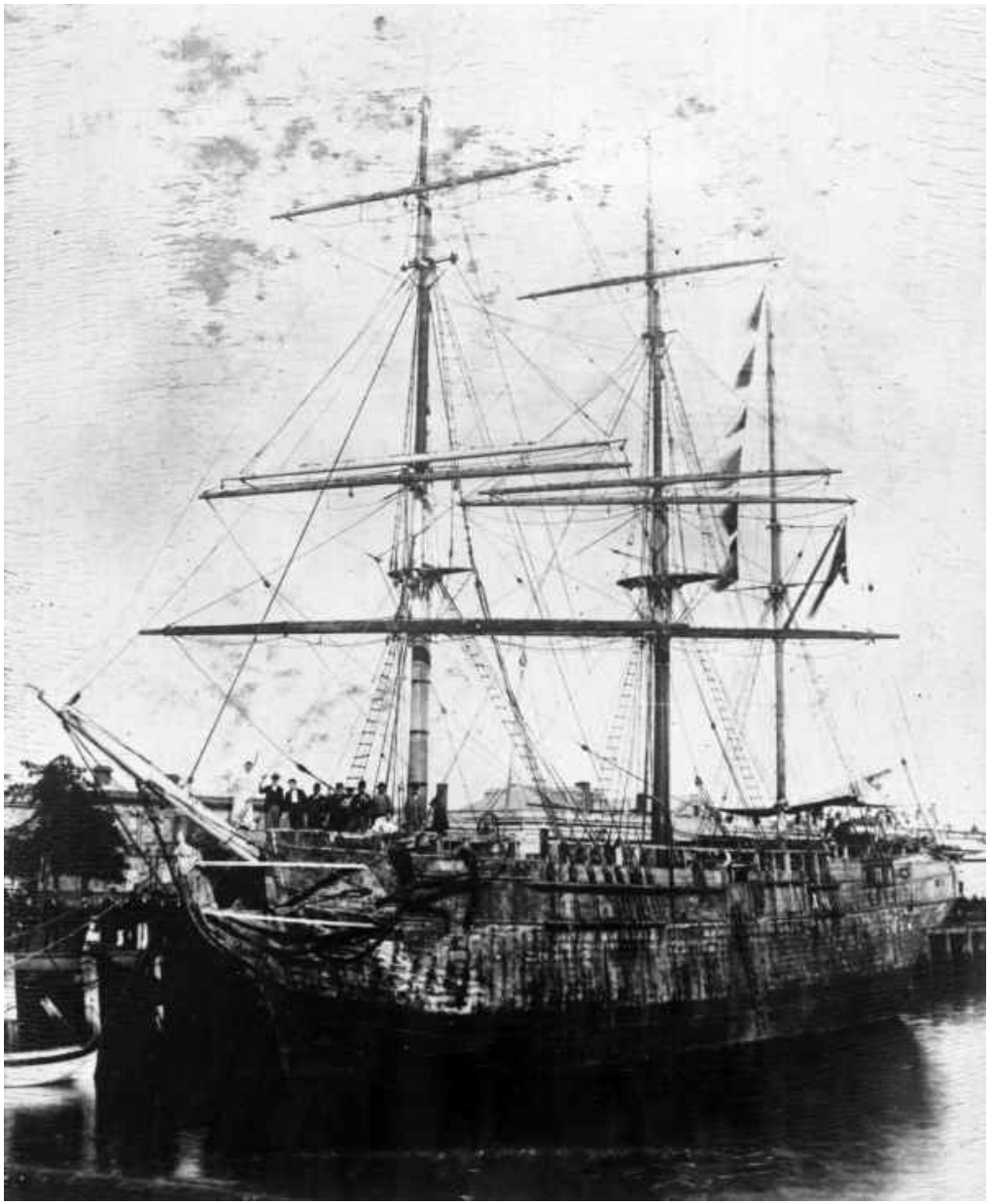


Prison reform 19th Century

Police – 19th Century



And… Transportation – 19th Century

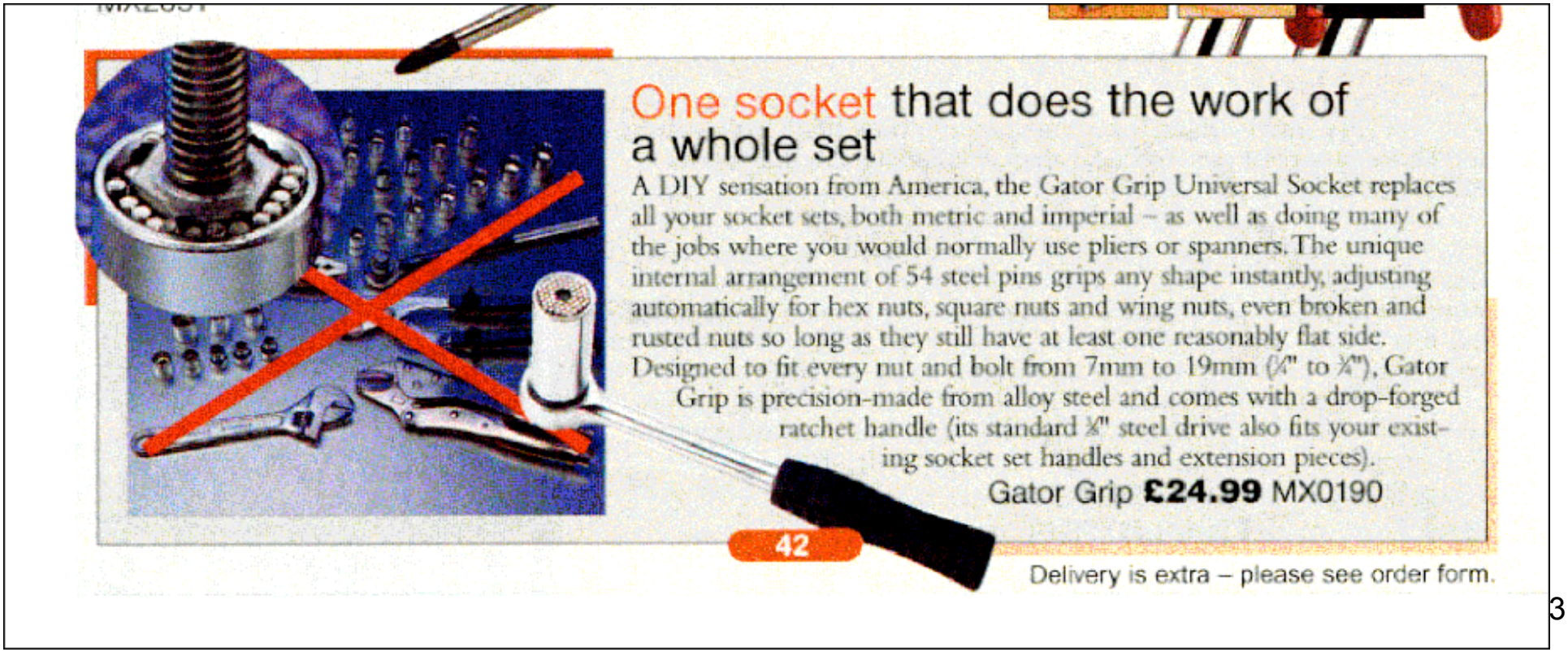


Crime prevention has a future

Futures: Changing crime

Obsolescence – knowledge of what works is a 'wasting asset'

- Adaptive offenders' countermoves
- Changing social conditions
- New tools/ skills for crime



One socket that does the work of a whole set

A DIY sensation from America, the Gator Grip Universal Socket replaces all your socket sets, both metric and imperial – as well as doing many of the jobs where you would normally use pliers or spanners. The unique internal arrangement of 54 steel pins grips any shape instantly, adjusting automatically for hex nuts, square nuts and wing nuts, even broken and rusted nuts so long as they still have at least one reasonably flat side. Designed to fit every nut and bolt from 7mm to 19mm (¼" to ¾"), Gator Grip is precision-made from alloy steel and comes with a drop-forged ratchet handle (its standard ½" steel drive also fits your existing socket set handles and extension pieces).

Gator Grip **£24.99** MX0190

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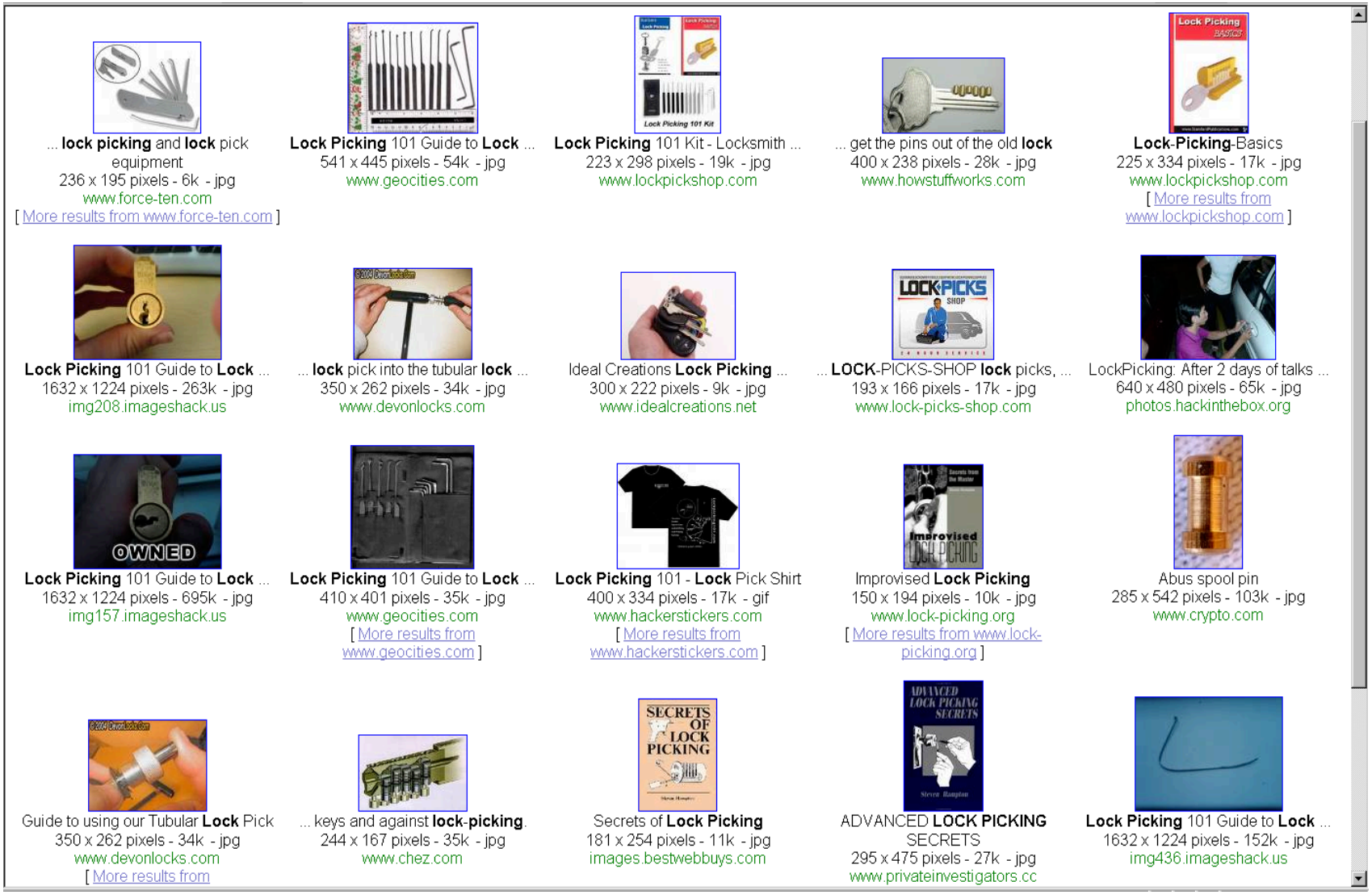
Delivery is extra – please see order form.

Arms Race –
Safes and Safecrackers

Faster spread of criminal know-how – from pubs & prisons to the Internet



... **lock picking** and **lock** pick equipment
236 x 195 pixels - 6k - jpg
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Lock Picking 101 - **Lock** Pick Shirt
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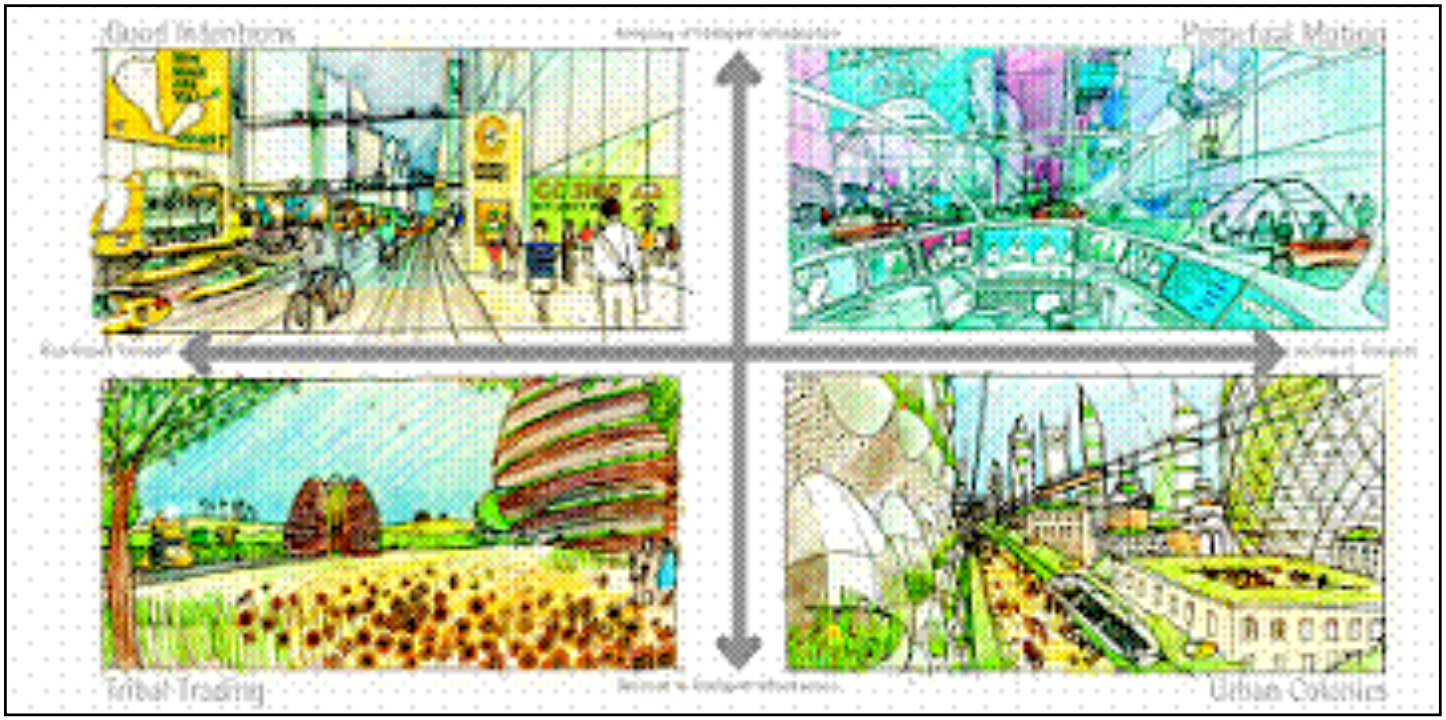
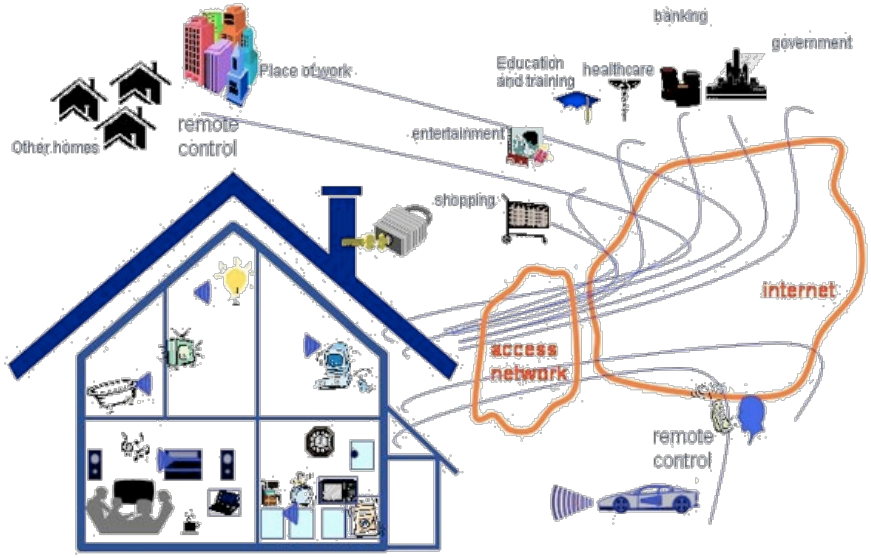
Changing societal priorities



- Sustainability
- Low energy
- Resilience to climate shift, terrorism
- Privacy/freedom v security

Changing context on all scales

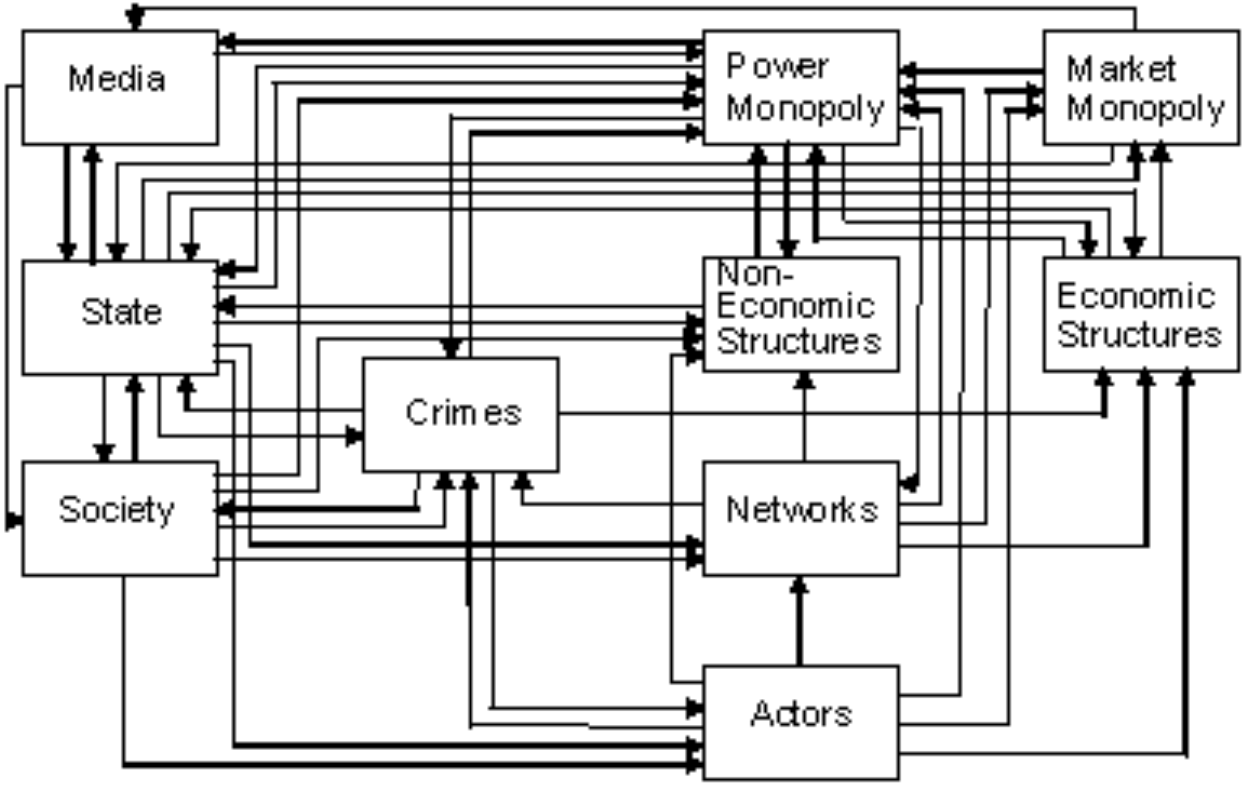
- Crime threats, CP opportunities
  - New land uses – sources of conflict?
  - Mass migration
  - Carbon trading – fraud?
  - IUU fishing
  - Blur between products, places, systems
  - Intelligent homes linked to internet
  - Automobiles v public transport
  - Camphones – new ‘eyes on street’
  - New building materials – sensitive, resilient, anti-graffiti?



Crime prevention in the present ranges from…

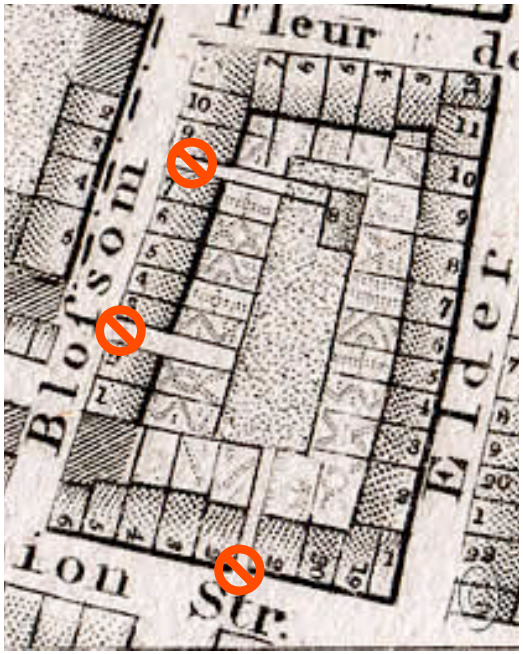
Complex…

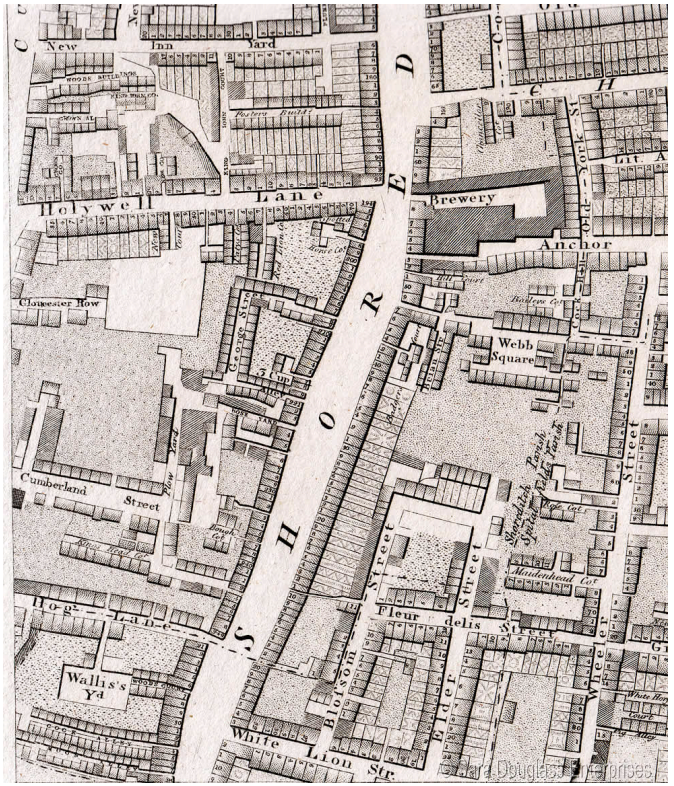
Organised crime



…to simple

Different Scales

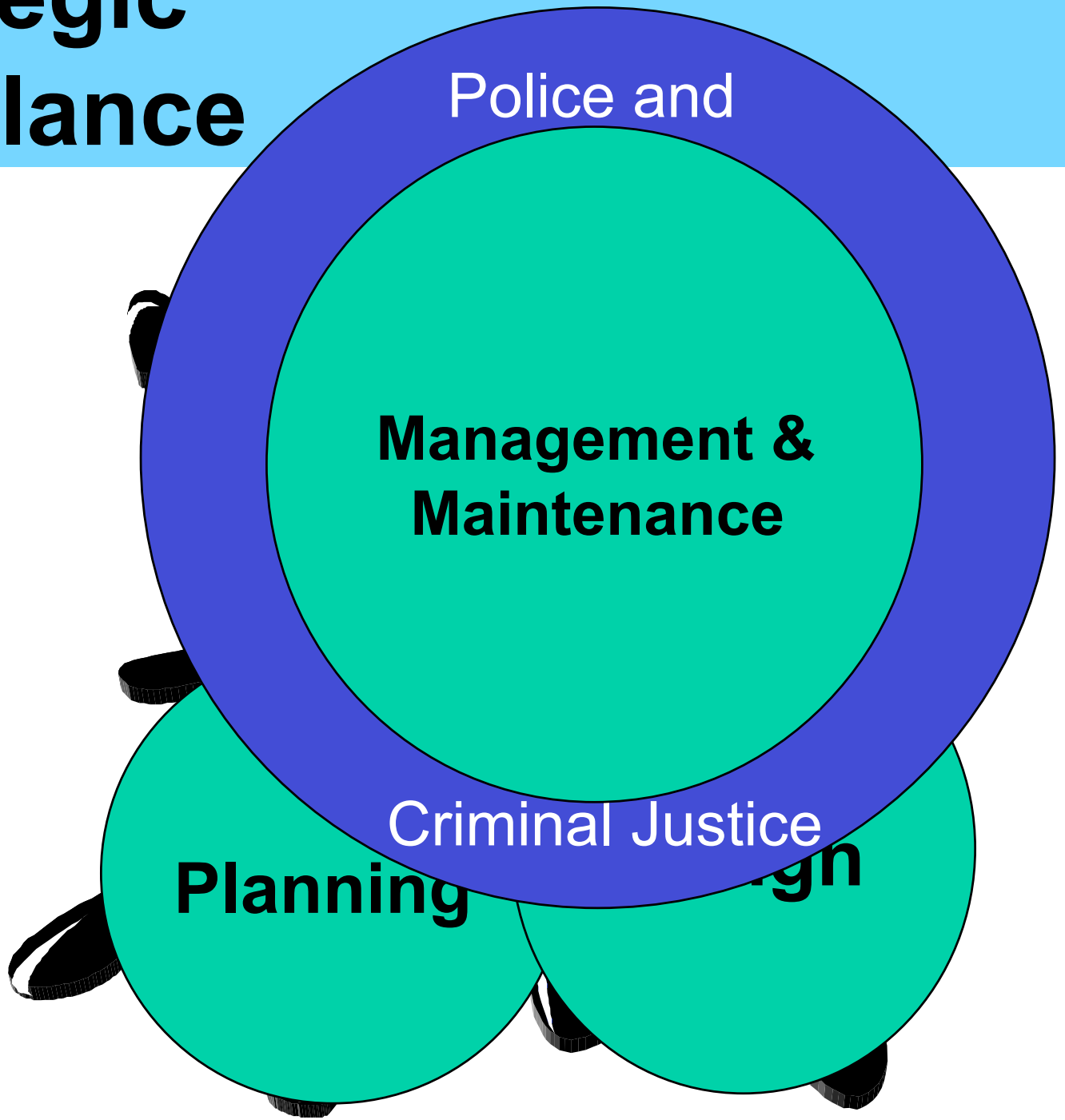




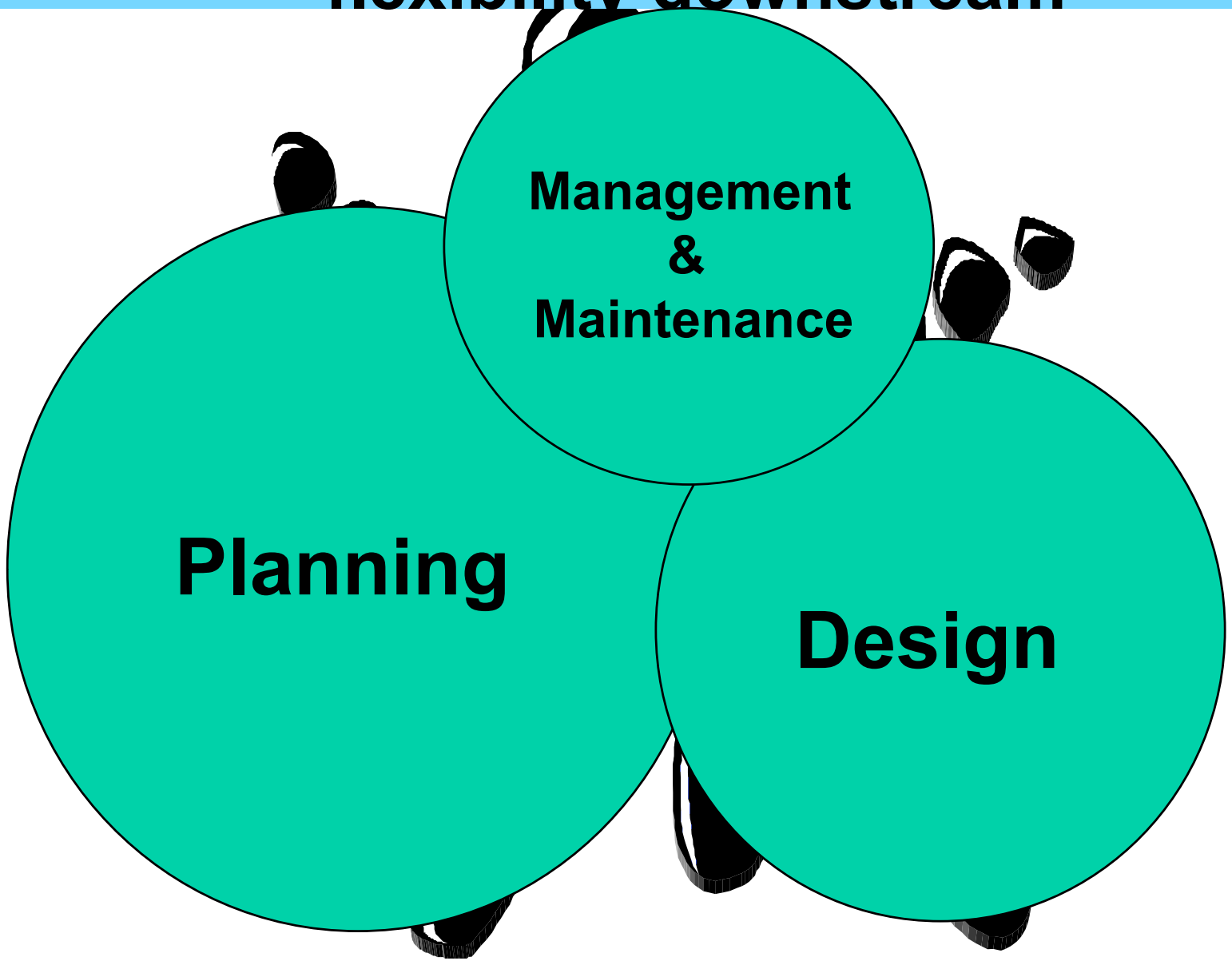
Different timeframes

- In **Early** or **Remedial** intervention with young people
- In **CPTED** - intervening upstream or downstream of design

Strategic imbalance



Strategic balance – Put in most effort upstream – but leave human & physical flexibility downstream

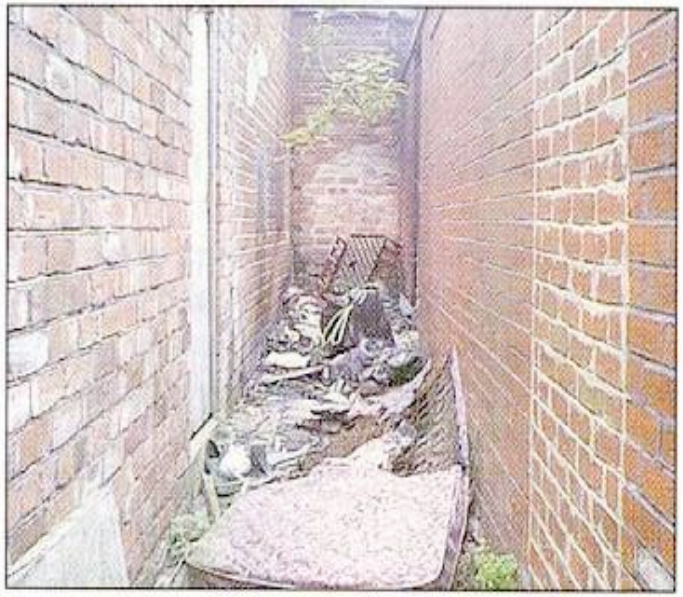


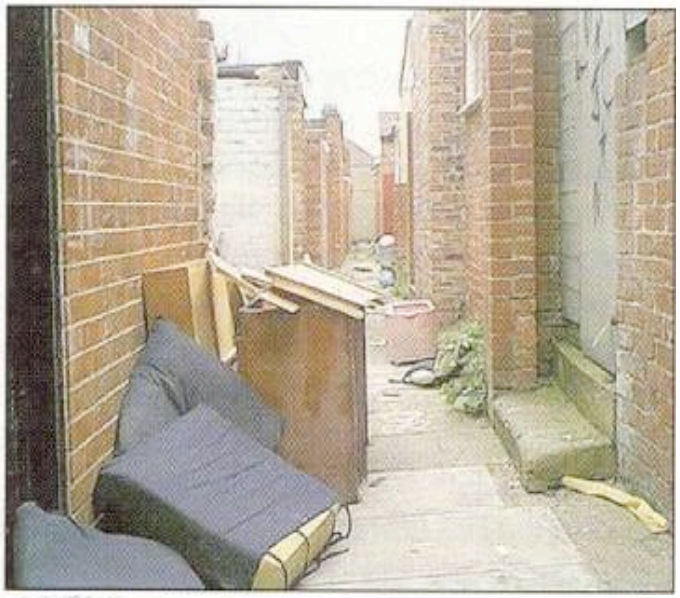
Different cultures

Out of context?

In-context

Ugly ‘Engineering’ solutions



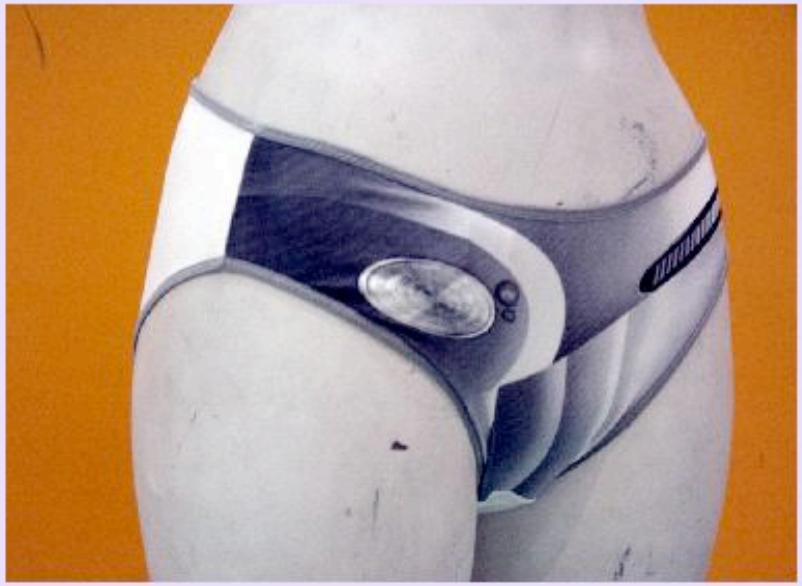


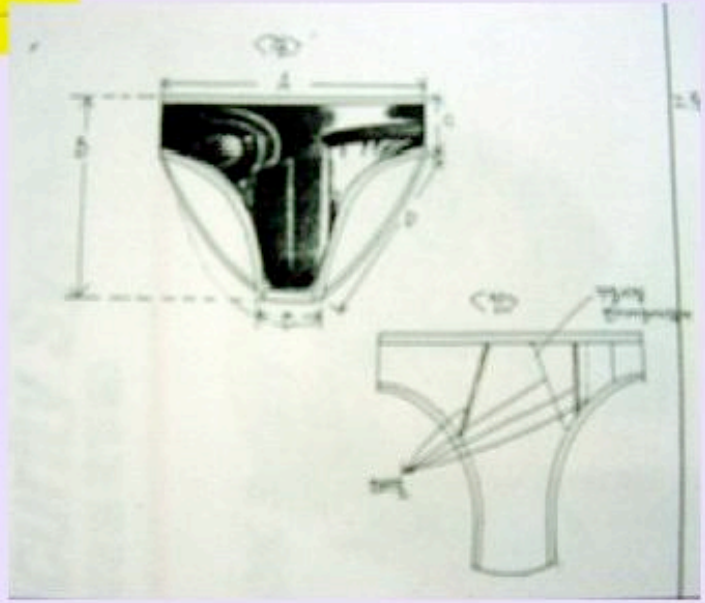
More aesthetic solution

Traditional solution

- With backup

Paranoia?





Fun

The Variety of Preventive Action

- Posters intended to warn victims and deter pickpockets
- Neighbourhood watch (farm watch, shop watch, fish watch)
- Design of 'safe' shopping centre
- Chip on credit card
- Electronic point-of-sale stock control
- A crime prevention bus driven round a city
- Morality-play puppet shows
- Street lighting programmes
- Parenting support classes
- Community development to halt the 'spiral of decline'

The challenge for crime prevention

The challenge for crime prevention

- How can we…
  - Draw this variety together coherently to ensure good targeting and good performance
  - Generate preventive actions that are
    - Effective and do no harm
    - Proportionate & balanced relative to other values
    - Durable
    - Transferable
    - Adaptable – help out-innovate adaptive criminals

But there's a more prosaic though very serious challenge to face first

The dismal leg-iron of Implementation Failure

Implementation failure

- Many evaluations of crime prevention have shown performance to be limited
  - Mainstreaming of ‘success story’ demonstration projects often disappoints
  - A pervasive problem across English-speaking world (and probably everywhere)
  - From Problem-Oriented Policing to Communities That Care

What's causing the problem?

- Explanations include
  - Deficient project management skills
  - Limited analytic capacity of practitioners
  - Short-term funding
  - Over-centralised management
  - Unsupportive organisational context
  - Mission drift
- These are valid but they neglect ***inadequate knowledge of practice*** and
- behind that, ***inadequate knowledge of delivery***

Some knowledge-related causes of Implementation Failure

- Inadequate local supply of people with necessary skills to develop and implement sound projects
- Training limited in quality and quantity
- Career development traditions of generalism and ‘moving on’ among police & local government
- Lack of organisational support for knowledge-based actions
- Limitations in the information evaluations collect
- Limited synthesis of these findings

What kinds of knowledge?

- **Know crime & crime prevention – definitions**
- **Know-about crime problems**
- **Know-what works**
  - **To reduce crime**
  - **To support delivery**
- **Know-who to involve**
- **Know-when to act**
- **Know-where to distribute resources**
- **Know-why – symbolism, values, politics, ethics, relation to justice**
- **Know-how to put into practice**

Know Crime & Crime Prevention

Definitions

- Vague and inconsistent terminology and weak underlying concepts hinder:
  - Exchange of ‘what works’ information
  - Communication and collaboration
  - Strategic thinking
  - Links between theory and practice
  - Organising knowledge for education and training – practitioners remain technicians not consultants
- Terms should be precision tools for thinking, planning, communicating, acting and evaluating
- But not so esoteric as to exclude stakeholders

Improving terminology – defining Crime prevention

Crime prevention is

Intervening in the causes of criminal events

to reduce their risk,

whether the probability of their occurrence or

their harmful consequences

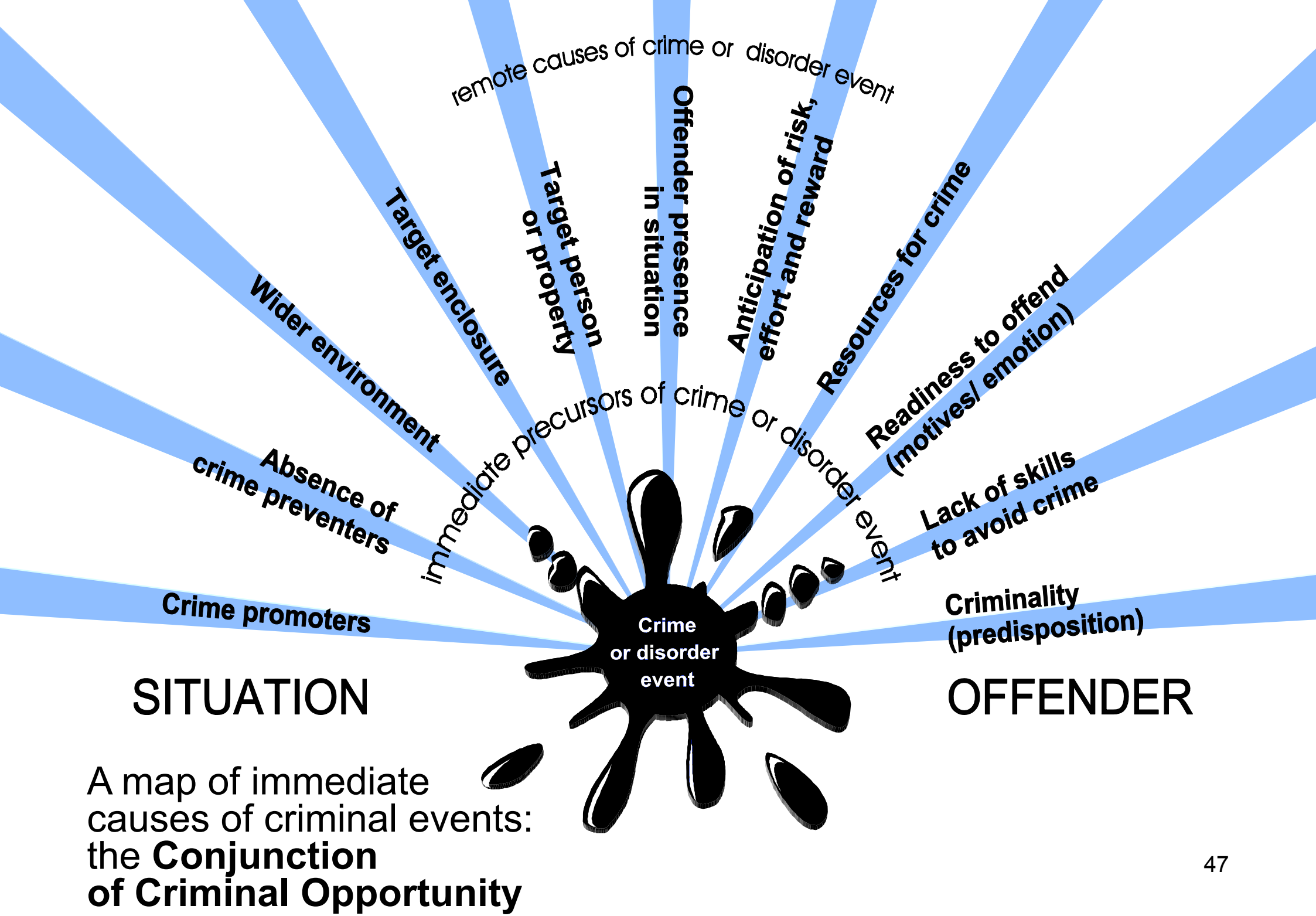
Defining Community Safety

- A broader concept, an aspect of the quality of life
- A state of existence in which people, individually & collectively:
  - Are sufficiently free from / reassured about a range of real & perceived hazards/ harms including crime & related misbehaviour
  - Are able to cope with those which they nevertheless experience, or
  - Are otherwise sufficiently protected from their consequences through mitigation, and confident of legitimate remedy…….
  - To allow them to pursue the necessities of their social and economic lives and access services
  - To create and enjoy wealth in the widest sense
  - To establish conditions of trust and cohesion

Know about crime problems

Causes of crime

- Practitioners need to understand causes – but
  - Many theories
  - At different levels (individual, group, society)
  - Different focus (developmental, here-and-now)
  - They may overlap or compete for explanation but different terminologies mean their relationship is unclear
  - Even in a single domain, such as Situational Crime Prevention, scholars have failed to fit the theories together (Routine Activities, Rational Offender, Pattern Theory, Crime Triangle) so practitioners have to try to assemble for themselves – IKEA flat pack with no instructions



A map of immediate causes of criminal events: the **Conjunction of Criminal Opportunity**

Consequences of crime problems – Harm

- Policymakers and public don't think enough about the **consequences** of crime
- Much crime prevention strategy is driven by **getting the numbers down**
- More research, more debate needed on **consequences, conflicting or competing values, and priorities**
- This can fill out the substance of the definition of community safety

Know what works in crime prevention

Limitations of Know-What knowledge

- Systematic Reviews of what works – eg Street Lighting, CCTV, Scared Straight
- A rigorous and systematic evidence base is very necessary – but not sufficient if results are confined to one dimension, and a short stretch of that dimension
- 'What Works' knowledge is often compressed into just a few numbers – % reduction in crime, or effect size
- Remedy
  - A *richer, multi-dimensional input* is needed for nurturing intelligent decision-making and planning
  - A *Choice Report* approach – **What's overall good value + What's best for you**

Dimensions of Choice when selecting Good Practice actions (1)

- Overall good value
  - **Are actions *effective or cost-effective?* Do anticipated *benefits* significantly outweigh *costs/ risks?* Are there *undesirable side-effects?***
- This is where most evaluations, and Campbell-type systematic reviews of interventions, stop – but there is so much more to know…..

Dimensions of Choice when selecting Good Practice actions (2)

Overall good value – are actions:

- ***Responsive?***
  - Can they be efficiently *targeted* on *causes* of crime problem?
  - Can they be efficiently *prioritised* on basis of the *consequences* of crime, *needs* of victim and wider society?
- ***Legitimate*** and ***acceptable to community****?*
- ***Sustainable*** in effectiveness, financial, Human Resource terms?
- ***Adaptable*** – proofed against social/ technological change and adaptive offenders?
- ***Deliverable*** with an acceptable level of risk, given the context and the resources available?

Dimensions of Choice when selecting Good Practice actions (3)

Choices to fit the crime problem and context

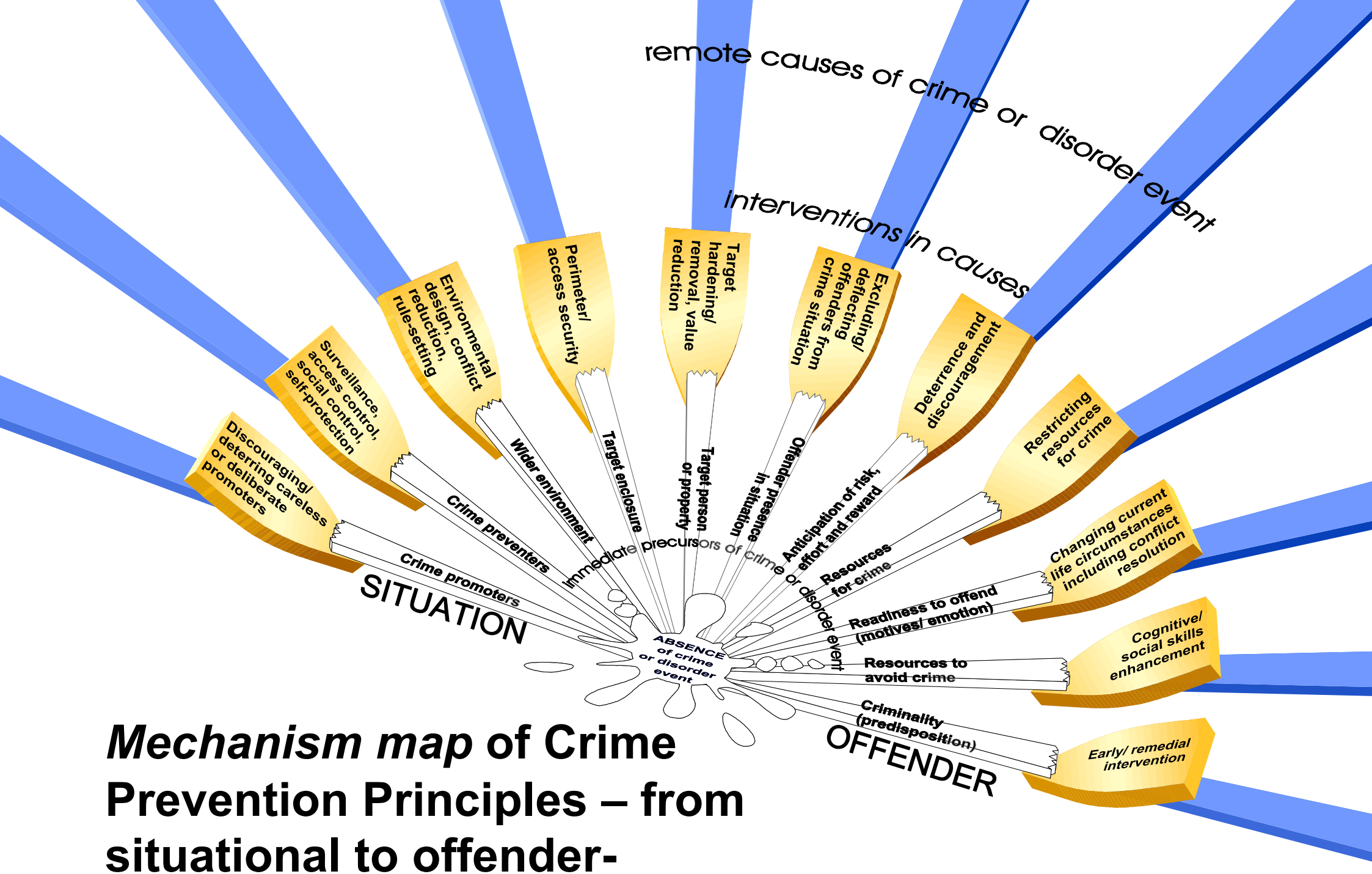
- Over what ***timescale*** and ***geographical scale*** is the action designed to operate?
- What are the ***conflicts, tradeoffs and synergies*** with other policy values (privacy, energy consumption, justice, regeneration…)
- What is the ***scope*** of the action – does it tackle a narrow range of crime types or a broad range? Does it go beyond crime?
- ***Coverage*** on the ground – ***how much*** of crime problem tackled? (eg is it cost-effective in only some types of area, or all areas?)

What Works – the subtleties

- **Context** knowledge is vital – differences in cultural, administrative, police-community relations make a big difference – **what works, where?**
- Likewise, we need to know about **causal mechanisms** – **how does it work**? 'Working with young people' is insufficient!
- Putting both together, mechanisms of prevention are delicate and can only be triggered when certain **necessary contextual conditions** exist – just as lighting a fire with a match only works in the dry, with still air and suitable kindling
- And **replication** is actually in large part **innovation**
- Failure to collect and disseminate mechanism and context information leads to **cookbook copying**, and **replication failure**

So evaluations should systematically address and report on all these issues

And we need a systematic way of mapping the mechanisms of intervention



Mechanism map of Crime Prevention Principles – from situational to offender-oriented intervention

Know who to involve

Know who to involve

- Most crime prevention interventions are not directly implemented by professionals such as police
- In ‘civil prevention’, the professionals aim to get residents, private companies or other local/ national government institutions to make changes in their own practices with a view to influencing the causes of crime
- This can work via
  - Partnership
  - Mobilisation
  - Climate-setting – changing people’s expectations and understanding of who should be doing what to prevent crime

Mobilising people to do crime prevention

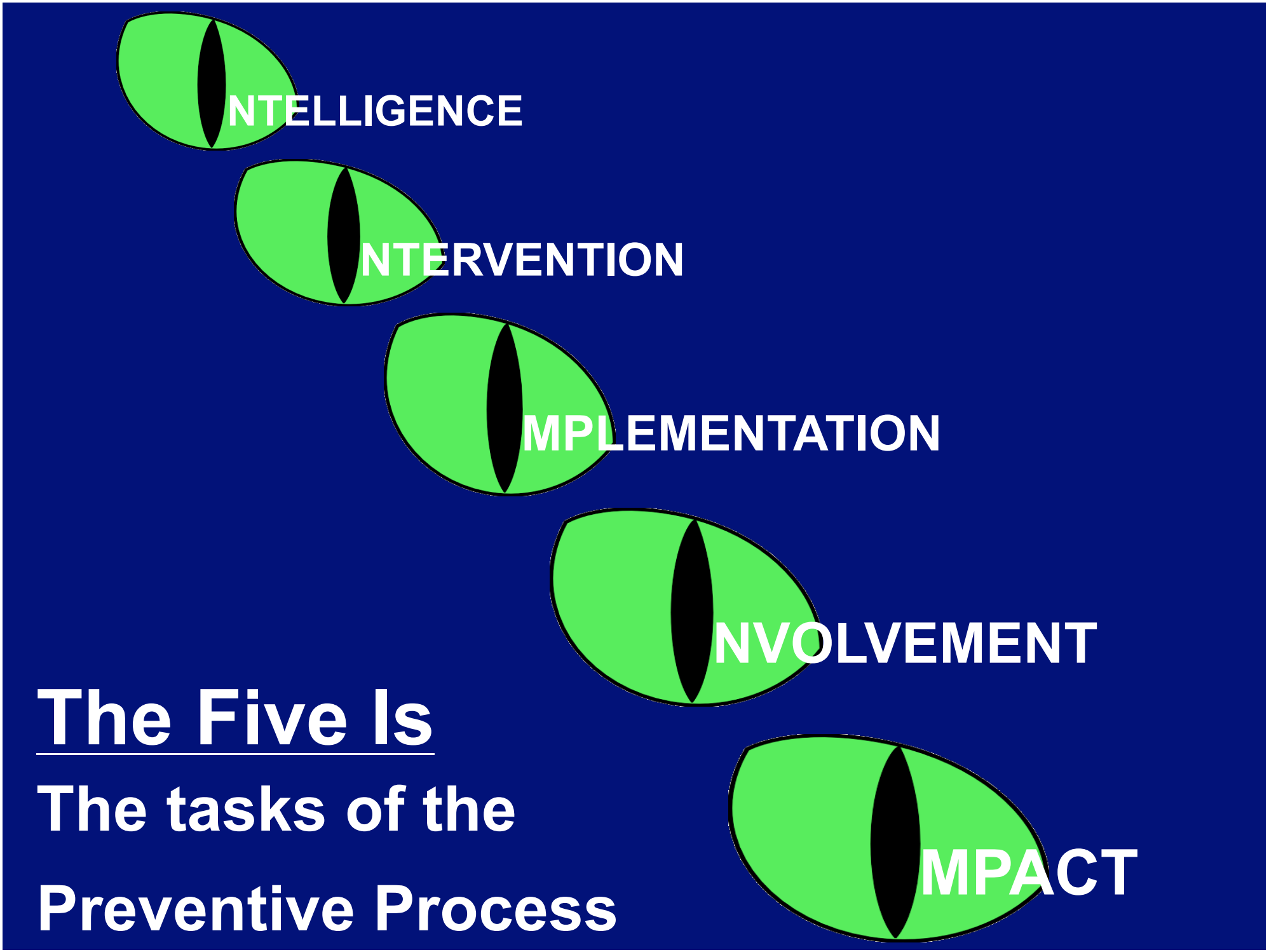
- This is a complex undertaking:
  - **C**larify crime prevention tasks that need to be done
  - **L**ocate appropriate individuals/organisations) capable of taking effective responsibility… then
  - **A**lert and
  - **I**nform them about crime issue & their part in it as preventers/promoters
  - **M**otivate them to take responsibility for prevention
  - **E**mpower them (with resources – eg knowhow, property-marking kit, authority)
  - **D**irect and constrain them (targets, regulations, standards)
- Many people/organisations may have to be involved in an ‘implementation chain’

Mobilisation (2)

- Implementation chains are tricky
- Every individual or organisation has their own needs, own priorities so they will adapt and adjust often in unexpected or undesired ways
- This is a property of '**complex adaptive systems**'
- For example, access to insurance may lead people to become careless about loss
- Setting of targets can be subverted
- This problem is called '**system failure**'
- It requires a sophisticated understanding of all the stakeholders and their needs and how they might interact

Know-how

- Know-how brings it all together
- Having the right understanding of **process** is vital for *doing* crime prevention as a **practitioner**, and also for *supporting* practice with human, financial, organisational and informational resources as a **delivery manager**
- Unfortunately, existing process models are rather limited – **SARA** (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment) is very simple & easy to learn, but has insufficient detail to organise knowledge & guide thinking, especially the Response stage
- So I designed my own – the **5Is framework**



The Five Is

The tasks of the Preventive Process

5Is - features

- Systematically captures a lot of detail – structured subheads under each 'I'
- Consistent terminology
- Both 'record' and 'playback' modes
- Supports intelligent replication and innovation
  - Uses generic preventive **principles** and practical **methods** broken down into elements which can be recombined to fit new contexts and new problems
  - Attempts to capture tradeoffs eg between security, convenience, privacy, sustainability – whose resolution might be very different if project is replicated elsewhere – a 'design-like approach
- Fits with Conjunction of Criminal Opportunity to focus on mechanisms of causation/ intervention

Overall philosophy

- CCO and 5Is frameworks are more complex than their predecessors – but crime and prevention are complex
- ***High investment*** in training, guidance and other infrastructure leads to ***High return*** in successful performance of crime prevention
- A major factor behind this is ***richness of information*** captured in evaluations
- And ***systematic collection and organisation of knowledge*** to share, for policy, delivery, practice
- Practitioners – should be less like ***technicians*** applying a simple prepackaged remedy; and more like expert ***consultants***, using generic principles to customise to context, to innovate, design and reconfigure diagnoses and solutions as they go

And finally, a reminder – do no harm!