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Tackling property damage: A guide for local commerce groups, councils and police

Anthony Morgan, Jessica Anderson & Hayley Boxall

CRIME PREVENTION ASSIST

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Introduction

Property damage is the intentional 'destruction or defacement of public, commercial and private property' (Howard 2006: 1). This covers a range of different acts, including vandalism (eg smashing windows, knocking over letterboxes) and graffiti. Graffiti is the act of marking property with writing, symbols or graphics and is illegal when committed without the property owner's consent (White 2001).

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Crime Victimisation Survey 2011–2012*, malicious property damage was more common than any other property offence, with 7.5 percent of respondents reporting having been a victim in the previous 12 months (ABS 2013). The cost of property damage to private property owners, local and state governments and businesses are significant, with an estimated cost of $1,522 per incident (in 2012 dollars) and a total cost to the Australian community of nearly $2 billion each year (Rollings 2008).

Using the handbook

This handbook forms part of a series of guides developed by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) to support local commerce groups (ie representative groups for business owners and operators), local government and the police to implement evidence-based crime prevention strategies. This handbook has been developed to help guide project managers through the stages of planning, implementing and evaluating a crime prevention project to reduce property damage offences in their local community, particularly in and around commercial precincts.

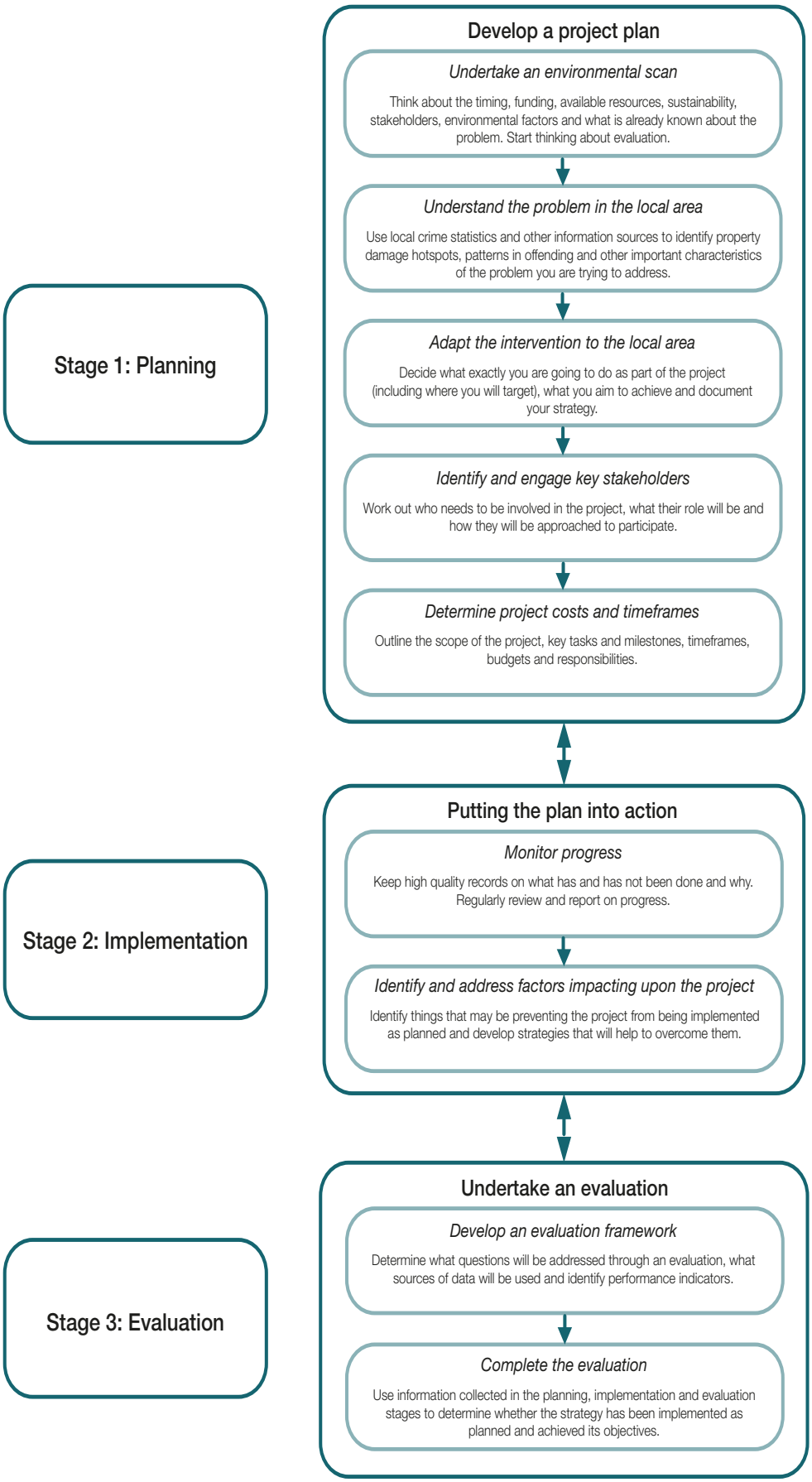
The handbook provides an overview of the three key stages that are involved in delivering a project to reduce property damage:

- Stage 1: Planning;
- Stage 2: Implementation; and
- Stage 3: Review.

These steps do not necessarily need to be undertaken in order. Some steps may be undertaken concurrently or it may be necessary to revisit earlier steps. However, it is vital that some steps, such as consulting stakeholders and planning for evaluation, be undertaken early on in the project.

Property damage is a very broad offence category. The choice of a particular intervention or interventions will depend largely on the nature of the local problem. Similarly, the successful implementation of a prevention strategy will often be heavily influenced by the characteristics of the local community. This needs to be considered throughout the life of a project.

Key steps in project planning, implementation and review



Evidence-based strategies to tackle property damage

The best available evidence suggests that strategies involving a combination of access control measures, crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) and/or awareness-raising campaigns can be used to prevent property damage offences (Morgan et al. 2012). These are most effective when implemented alongside other interventions, such as improved lighting, community patrols and proactive policing, as part of a comprehensive crime prevention strategy.

Access control refers to interventions that improve the perimeter security of locations that have been identified as experiencing high rates of property damage, such as public transport facilities, high-density housing estates and the areas around licensed premises. Specific strategies can include installing or upgrading physical security (such as installing perimeter fencing or self-closing secure doors) or restricting access to an area during certain times. Determining the most appropriate type of access control measure for the target area will depend upon what local information identifies as being the major security weaknesses, targets and entry points for offenders.

CPTED involves the design and management of the built and landscaped environment to limit opportunities for crime to occur. CPTED can involve strategies that are designed to increase natural surveillance by encouraging more people to make use of pedestrian thoroughfares and strategies that limit or prevent access to certain areas. Interventions that have been implemented to target property damage offences have typically focused on urban renewal measures, which aim to improve the general amenity of an area by keeping it clean, well maintained and attractive to potential users. This can help to encourage feelings of personal safety among users and increase pedestrian movement and use of an area. Strategies include removing graffiti from fences and windows and repairing damaged facilities in commercial areas, public housing estates or on public transport. Other potential measures could include tree trimming to improve visibility, landscaping or introducing features such as picnic tables or cafes to improve the amenity of an area. The type of CPTED measures most appropriate for an area will depend on the precise nature of the local problem.

Awareness-raising campaigns that have been implemented to support other interventions have included providing training to people who have the potential to facilitate the commission of a property damage offence through their actions, inactions or attitudes. This could be targeted at the owners or managers of commercial premises and housing estates, who may inadvertently create opportunities for property damage offences by failing to adequately secure or maintain premises or property. Awareness-raising campaigns could also focus on providing information to other victims (or potential victims) of property damage, such as residents or vehicle owners, about reducing their risks of victimisation. Importantly, a key feature of awareness-raising campaigns is that they require the active participation of the target group and are delivered in support of other strategies.

Case study 1 Golf Links Estate in London

This strategy was targeted at a public housing estate that was experiencing high rates of crime, including property damage. The estate was rundown, dirty and prone to vandalism and the surrounding grounds were overgrown and not landscaped. To improve the appearance of the estate, repairs were made to the buildings (eg broken windows were replaced and the exterior of the buildings repainted) and the grounds were cleared and landscaped. Other interventions delivered as part of the strategy included the installation of improved security doors on the residential buildings, increasing the frequency of police patrols of the estate and the development of an after-school activities program for children living on the estate. An evaluation of the strategy found that despite a number of implementation issues, the number of criminal damage offences occurring on the estate decreased by 71 percent between 1983 and 1990.

Source: Bozkurt in Osborne 1994

How does this work?

An important focus of the AIC's review of the available evidence was to develop a better understanding of how certain interventions work, not just whether they are effective or not (Morgan et al. 2012).

Access control measures, such as improved perimeter fencing in public transport holding yards and security doors in public housing estates, aim to make it more difficult to enter high-risk areas and reach potential targets of crime (eg decommissioned trains). These measures discourage potential offenders by increasing the perceived effort associated with committing a property damage offence. By manipulating the physical environment and minimising access points, access control measures can also help to encourage a sense of ownership of defined spaces among residents and business operators or users of a public space. This can, in turn, lead to improved surveillance and an increased risk of offenders being detected.

CPTED measures focused on urban renewal (eg cleaning, maintaining and 'beautifying' landscaped areas) create environments that are more attractive and inviting to actual and potential users. This, in turn, encourages legitimate use of the space and feelings of

safety and residential pride. Encouraging legitimate use of the space increases natural surveillance opportunities and deters potential offenders. Commercial precincts, public housing estates and public transport facilities that are busy and well-maintained are not appealing to potential offenders as there is a higher likelihood that their criminal behaviour will be detected.

Awareness-raising campaigns provide information to people who inadvertently facilitate property damage offending by raising their awareness of specific issues, crimes, services and/or preventative measures. Awareness-raising campaigns aim to encourage people to consider the implications of their actions or inactions (eg not properly securing doors and windows) and discourage behaviour that may create opportunities for crime to occur.

Case study 2 Subway graffiti in New York City

Despite the introduction of a number of initiatives, by the early 1980s, graffiti on the New York City subway train system had become a serious problem. A multifaceted strategy was implemented in 1984 to try and reduce graffiti. The strategy involved:

- frequent security patrols of train yards;
- cleaning the graffiti off subway cars;
- upgrades to the train yard perimeter fencing and lighting;
- the development of an education program targeted at high school children that informed them about the consequences of graffiti for the community and individual offenders; and
- the implementation of undercover police patrols on trains during periods when potential offenders (students) were more likely to use the subway.

The evaluation concluded that this strategy had been effective and that by 1989, there was a substantial reduction in subway graffiti. The program exceeded its annual targets every year during that period.

Source: Sloan-Howitt & Kelling 1992

What else can be delivered alongside these strategies?

Despite being based on a relatively small number of studies, it does appear that access control, CPTED and awareness campaigns are most effective when delivered together and in combination with other interventions, such as community patrols and lighting. A number of the strategies were also supported by an increased police presence targeted at problem areas during high-risk times.

Community patrols involve coordinating a group of people to actively patrol their community, and reporting incidents and information to police. Community patrols can be organised on a voluntary basis or can involve professional security patrols. These patrols aim to introduce or improve formal or informal surveillance and increase the perceived risk that committing an offence will result in identification or capture. They can also assist with the apprehension of offenders (by providing information to police).

Lighting helps to improve visibility, which makes it easier for people in and around deserted public transport facilities, licensed premises and housing estates to detect suspicious or criminal behaviour and to identify perpetrators. This can lead to an increase in the risk an offender associates with the commission of an offence (based on the perceived likelihood that they will be identified or apprehended), which may deter them from committing the offence in the first instance. Lighting upgrades also improve the general amenity of an area, promote feelings of safety among users (or potential users) and encourage pedestrian movement through an area that may have previously been avoided. Increased pedestrian movement improves natural surveillance, which also assists in the detection of suspicious behaviour, and well-populated areas may be less likely to be targeted by offenders.

Where does it work best?

Effective strategies targeted areas that were identified as hotspots for property damage offences. This was determined on the basis of local crime statistics and/or on the basis of concerns raised by the community, local residents and people working in the area. This included public transport facilities and areas in and around licensed premises—areas that frequently experience high rates of property damage, vandalism and graffiti. At least one of the interventions reviewed was implemented at a site where other strategies had been piloted but had failed to have an impact on offending rates.

Strategies targeting residential areas with high-density housing appear to benefit when residents are enthusiastic about the interventions being delivered. Proactive and engaged residents are important as they will ultimately be responsible for the success of the strategy in the long term, such as through the regular reporting of incidences of vandalism to the appropriate authorities. In strategies targeting public housing estates, effective projects appeared to be supported by a good working relationship with tenants, which helped to ensure regular maintenance and quick repairs.

Case study 3 Possil Park housing estate, Glasgow

This strategy was implemented on a public housing estate in north central Glasgow with a high unemployment rate among residents. The estate had a problem with empty dwellings being regularly vandalised and stripped of their copper and lead.

The strategy was developed by local residents in partnership with the Possil Park Community Business, a committee comprised of residents that aimed to provide employment opportunities for people living on the estate. The intervention involved the creation of an unemployed workers' group. Unemployed residents were employed by the local council to patrol areas that contained empty dwellings, perform general repairs to the buildings and maintain the general appearance of the estate grounds.

An evaluation found that between 1985 and 1987, property damage offences decreased from 252 to 188 recorded offences. Although offence rates had begun to rise again by 1990, they appeared to decrease again shortly thereafter.

Source: Knight 1994

Stage 1: Planning

Planning is key to effective crime prevention. The steps required to plan a strategy tackling property damage are outlined in this section.

Complete an environmental scan

When planning any crime prevention strategy, the capacity and resources available in the local community need to be considered, as well as the circumstances in which the strategy will be delivered.

This involves conducting an environmental scan of the local area. Table 1 outlines some important considerations when planning a strategy, why they are important and what can be done to address them. This can be completed individually or by a project team or steering committee, where it already exists.

Table 1 Important considerations when planning a strategy to prevent property damage

Consideration	Questions to ask and why these are important	Possible ways to address this
Timing	Is it a good time to implement the project? Are key stakeholders motivated and project resources available? Is the project likely to clash with any other crime prevention activity, or any other community activity that could influence results? Or would it more likely complement these other activities? Are there project deadlines that need to be met? What is feasible within this timeframe? How long will the project take to implement? This will depend on the size of the target area, the measures implemented, how willing stakeholders and the community are to get involved and the availability of qualified professionals, key personnel and materials required	Be clear on deadlines and commitments under grant funding, particularly if progress reports and other deliverables are required by the funding body or other areas within council. Take note of what is also being implemented in the community and timing of local events so that the effect this will have on project delivery can be considered. Use other similar projects as a guide and ask professionals for their advice on how long things like the installation of security will take. Align strategies with any future plans for upgrades or improvement, where possible
Funding	Is there external grant funding available for the project and if so, how much? How much 'in kind' funding can be provided? Is the proposed project viable within the available funds? If adequate funding is not available, the strategy may go over budget and stakeholders may be disappointed	Identify all the elements of the planned project and the resources required and estimate likely costs. Refer to the relevant section in this handbook on estimating project costs
Available staff	Does the project require any particular expertise? For access control strategies, qualified professionals may be needed to carry out security audits or install the proposed measures. Are suitable people available to oversee the project, including undertaking any administrative tasks?	Scan services in local council and find out what/who is available and/or what is required to get the appropriate workers or technicians
Sustainability	Is there access to ongoing funds? Can the level of staffing for the project be sustained? Does the project need one-off resourcing (eg for the installation of perimeter security), or continuous investment (regular landscaping or maintenance etc)?	Develop an exit strategy for the project—a way of closing the project at completion or continuing to resource any ongoing work. Be sure to select an intervention that can be supported by local resources and available funding

Table 1 Important considerations when planning a strategy to prevent property damage

Consideration	Questions to ask and why these are important	Possible ways to address this
Stakeholders	Does the project require support of certain individuals or organisations? Can they contribute resources? How can they be asked to participate? If the project requires the involvement of local business operators and/or community members to help implement the strategy, how can they be encouraged to participate? If the necessary stakeholders (incl. the community) are unwilling to participate and unlikely to become involved in the project, the strategy may not be able to be implemented properly	When developing the project, consult identified stakeholders and find out if there is anyone else who should be involved in p planning process. Find out whether they are supportive and if they have any concerns. If the project requires the involvement of local business operators and/or community members, ensure they are aware of what might be involved should they commit to the project and what could realistically be achieved by adopting the measures. It is important to have police involvement from the outset. They can provide information on local property damage offences, can assist with determining intervention targets, provide expert knowledge and skills and can also support the strategy with proactive policing and targeting known offenders
Environment	Is the environment compatible with the proposed strategy? It may be difficult to implement some intervention types if most property damage offences occur in areas where access control and CPTED measures cannot be used	Become familiar with the local environment and any characteristics that might impact on certain intervention types. Observe the area in which the intervention is planned to identify any potential problems
Type of property damage offence	What is actually known about the problem? Is there a problem with vandalism or graffiti or both? Is the problem in one hotspot or is more widely distributed? What are the main targets? What are the key characteristics of offences, offenders and victims? Is the problem likely to be a temporary spike that may correct itself when circumstances change, or is it a more long-term problem?	Review property damage crime statistics over time. Ask police or other relevant local agencies to find out if any particular increases in offences can be explained by any temporary factors. Refer to the relevant section in this handbook for additional guidance on analysing the local problem
Monitoring and evaluation	Can results from the project be measured? How will success be measured (eg decrease in the number of property damage offences, drop in repeat victimisation, community uptake of measures etc)? Can the data for each measure be accessed?	Review available data sources (eg police statistics on property damage) and determine what information would be needed pre, during and post project to measure an effect. Ensure the effectiveness of the strategy can be measured so changes to the property damage problem can be observed. Review Stage 3: Evaluation for more information

While most of the work in an evaluation is undertaken towards the end of the project, it is important to start planning the evaluation while the strategy is being developed. Evaluation is important because it will help to determine whether the project has contributed to a reduction in property damage offences. It's also important to establish processes to monitor the progress of the project during the implementation phase. This will help to identify any problems as they arise and respond appropriately. It will also help to inform the final evaluation.

Start thinking about what information might need to be collected, analysed and reported to determine whether the strategy has been implemented as planned and how effective the project has been. More information on monitoring and evaluating is provided in *Stage 3: Evaluation.*

Understanding the nature of the local property damage problem and its causes

Situational crime prevention works most effectively when it is targeted at a specific crime problem (in this case property damage) in a specific context. For example, effective strategies tacking property damage have been targeted at public transport infrastructure, commercial premises (particularly in entertainment precincts) and public housing estates with high rates of recorded offences.

The key to this is a problem-solving approach. This involves a thorough and systematic analysis of current data on the prevalence and characteristics of property damage offences, their causes and risk factors. High-risk locations and factors that contribute to this high risk can then be identified and appropriate responses developed and implemented. Problem solving is an

ongoing process and should occur throughout the life of the project. It is vital that key indicators of property damage continue to be monitored so that a sudden increase in offences can be detected and a response developed.

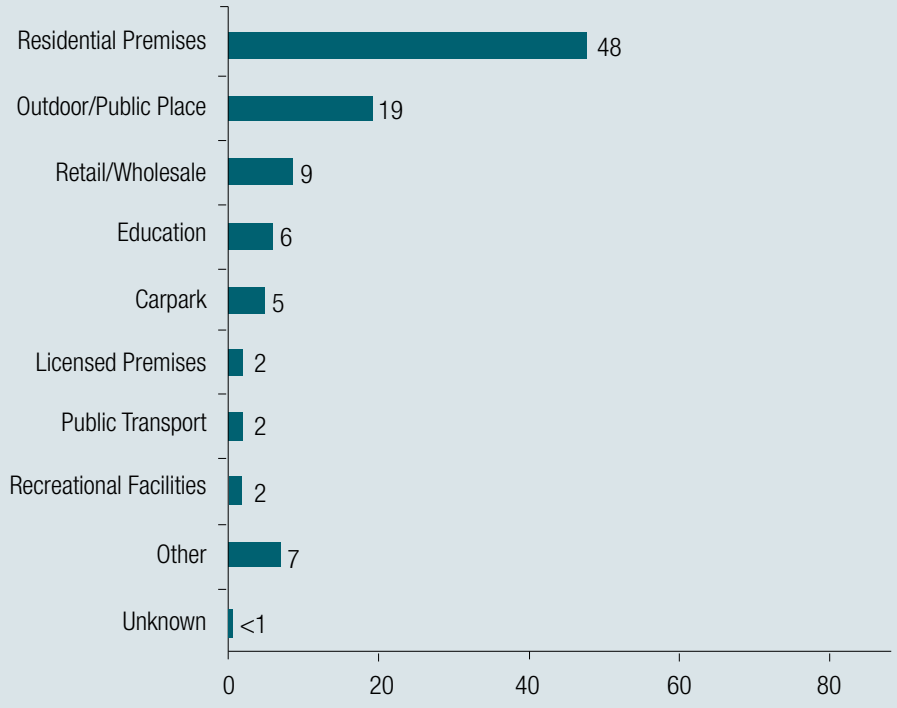
Review research into the causes of property damage

Read as widely as possible to better understand property damage offending and how it can be prevented. Further information on the causes and prevention of vandalism and graffiti is available on the AIC website www.aic.gov.au (eg Morgan & Louis 2009). A range of resources can be downloaded for free and there are links to research available on other useful websites (eg Howard 2006).

Gather local statistics and knowledge to analyse the local property damage problem

Collect information from a range of sources to develop a better understanding of the property damage problem in the local area. Consider both qualitative and quantitative data sources. Quantitative data (eg recorded crime and arrest data) provide useful information about the nature and extent of a particular problem or phenomenon. Qualitative information (such as interviews, reports and consultations with relevant local stakeholders) can be helpful in understanding the problem and what local factors may influence the delivery of the project. A combination of both types of data will provide a more complete picture of the local problem.

Figure 1 Property damage offences by location, 2012 (%)



Source: NSW BOCSAR 2013

There is a range of data that might be available or could be collected to help better understand the local problem and develop a targeted response:

- Many police agencies publish recorded crime data online, which is a valuable source of information about property damage offences from trends and temporal patterns (ie by month, day of week and time of day). Figure 1 is an example of the type of information that is available online and presents a breakdown of property damage offences in New South Wales in 2012 by the location of the offence. It shows that the most common reported location for property damage offences is residential premises, followed by public places, retail locations, education premises and car parks.
- Some police and research agencies also provides a range of hotspot maps online, which provide a visual representation of the locations within each area (local government area or suburb) with the highest number of recorded offences, including property damage offences.
- Recorded crime data might also be available direct from police (local police or information management sections) on the locations of recent property damage offences, the extent of repeat victimisation, the types of locations that are targeted and the types of property that get damaged. Data may also be available

on offenders apprehended by police. It may be necessary to complete an official data request to access this information.

- Surveys or interviews with victims of property damage can provide useful information about community members' experiences of property damage, risk factors and the types of measures that residents or business owners and property managers either had in place or have since installed.
- Surveys of the wider community (including business owners, residents and visitors) will help to assess the degree of concern among the community about the prevalence of property damage in their neighbourhood, perceptions of safety and the level of support for different types of prevention strategies.
- Surveys or interviews with property damage offenders, while potentially difficult to undertake, have been used to develop a better understanding of the motivation of offenders and the reasons they target specific property.
- Consultation with relevant local stakeholders can provide useful information about their experience and understanding of property damage in the community. For example, police might be able to provide additional information about property damage offences that might not be readily available through administrative data, based on their experiences of responding to victims and targeting offenders. Private security providers might be able to provide information about the level of demand for security devices and the types of security devices that are purchased by local residents. Neighbourhood Watch groups and other community groups may be able to provide information on local initiatives trialled in the past.

Use Table 2 to determine the type of information that might be needed to identify and understand the characteristics of property damage offences in the local area.

Table 2 Understanding the local property damage problem

	What is known?	Data source(s)
How many offences?		
Is there a problem with vandalism, graffiti or both?		
Have there been any notable trends over time?		
Are there certain times of the day that offences are more common (eg night time or after school hours)?		
Is there a particular day of the week that most property damage offences occur (eg weekdays or weekends)?		
Is there a seasonal pattern or certain peak times of the year?		
Are there clear hotspot areas (eg suburbs, streets, commercial precincts, housing estates, public transport facilities, licensed premises etc)?		
Are there particular targets (eg letterboxes, windows fences, vehicles, signs, public facilities, bus and train stations)?		
Are some targets being repeatedly victimised?		
What are the common points of entry to the properties being targeted?		
Is there limited pedestrian or vehicle traffic in the areas targeted (ie limited natural surveillance opportunities)?		
What access control measures are currently in place (eg security patrols, perimeter fencing, security gates etc)?		
What are the main characteristics of the locations and/or property being targeted (ie high-risk property)?		
What is known about property damage offenders, if anything (eg motives)?		

Table 2 Understanding the local property damage problem
Are there other factors contributing to the problem (eg excessive alcohol consumption, poor maintenance of facilities etc)?
What other crimes are being reported in the areas with high rates of property damage offences?
Any other factors?

Source: Adapted from Anderson 2010

There are certain things to remember when using different data sources. It's important to be aware of the limitations of each data source prior to making decisions based on these data. For example, some police statistics may cover the whole local area command rather than the targeted hotspot, may not cover the same geographic area as other data sources (such as Australian Bureau of Statistics' data), may not be publicly released, may not be available for the correct time period or available at the time it is needed. Talk to people who are familiar with the data or the local area to help interpret any patterns and understand the data in the wider context.

For more information on how to analyse data to understand the crime problem and develop an effective response, refer to Clarke and Eck's (2005) guide for problem solvers.

! Make sure to keep a record of the information collected while planning the project. This information will provide a baseline against which the impact of the project on property damage can be assessed

Adapting the chosen intervention(s) to the local area

Once the property damage problem has been identified and understood, an appropriate response can then be developed based on the evidence in support of the chosen approach and a consideration of the circumstances to which it will be adapted.

It will be necessary to adapt the strategies described in this handbook to suit the local context and crime problem. Adopting an intervention that has worked before without considering the context of its application and the resources needed to deliver similar results is a major contributor to implementation failure.

It is important to understand the causal mechanisms that underpin chosen intervention. This will help ensure that, in adapting the chosen strategy to suit the local circumstances, the 'active ingredient' that is needed for it to work is not overlooked.

Deciding what to do

There are a number of important factors that need to be considered in determining which prevention strategy is the most appropriate and most likely to be effective. Brown and Scott (2007) have identified ten questions to ask about planned interventions as part of the planning stage:

- What is the change mechanism?
- What evidence is there that the intervention has worked before?
- How difficult will it be to implement the intervention?
- Does the intervention rely on external partners' actions?
- Are regulatory or high-level policy changes required to implement the intervention?
- How will the intervention interact with other interventions being implemented in the same area/ with the same group?
- What will be the stakeholders' reactions to the intervention?
- Will any negative consequences accrue from the intervention?
- How long will it take for the intervention to show results?
- Can the impact be measured?

The answers to each question will help inform the process of deciding what to do to address the identified crime problem. Use Table 3 to guide the decision-making process. This is not an exhaustive list of all the things that need to be considered, but it will help with deciding how to adapt the CPTED, access control measures and/or awareness campaigns to suit the local context.

Table 3 Factors to consider in deciding what to do

Strategy component	Considerations	Factors to guide decision making
Type of CPTED and/or access control measures required	What types of CPTED and access control measures will be needed to minimise unauthorised access and improve natural surveillance? What factors will determine which CPTED and access control measures to use? Will it be necessary to install new or upgrade existing perimeter security to high-risk locations? Are the locations requiring an upgrade to perimeter security or improved maintenance owned by the council or are they managed by another government agency (eg public transport or housing authority) or privately owned? Will the application of CPTED principles require significant redevelopment to the location being targeted, or will the changes be relatively minor? Are there any factors that might impact on the ability of project partners to make changes to the built or landscaped environment? What type and level of maintenance will be required?	See Table 4 for possible options. This should be informed by a detailed analysis of the local problem, including some form of CPTED and security assessment. Interventions that have been implemented to tackle property damage have typically focused on urban renewal measures, which aim to improve the general amenity of an area by keeping it clean, well maintained and attractive to potential users (thereby increasing natural surveillance). Avoid inadvertently creating potential hiding spots. Experience has shown that if CPTED and access control measures are not maintained the benefits will be reduced over time
Nature and target of awareness-raising campaign to be delivered	Who will be the target of the awareness-raising campaign? What type of information will be delivered and what will it aim to achieve? How often will information be provided to the target group (ie one off or on a regular basis)? How will the target group be engaged in the awareness-raising campaign? Who will be responsible for the development of materials required to deliver the information to participants?	Awareness-raising campaigns can be targeted at potential victims and those business or property owners that inadvertently create opportunities for offending. Strategies targeting victims and crime promoters are likely to be easier to implement and more effective than awareness campaigns targeting potential offenders. A key feature of effective awareness-raising campaigns is that they are delivered in support of other strategies
Design and installation of CPTED or access control measures	Who will be responsible for designing and installing the CPTED and access control measures?	Professionals with relevant expertise (eg environmental planners and security professionals) will be best placed to determine the type of CPTED and access control measures required
Improving natural surveillance	If CPTED measures are introduced, who will provide natural surveillance? How will people be encouraged to use previously abandoned spaces once the strategy has been implemented?	CPTED aims to improve natural surveillance, which makes it easier for people in and around crime prone spaces to detect suspicious behaviour and deter potential offenders. This requires people (people using the space, pedestrians, bicycle and vehicle traffic in surrounding areas) to provide natural surveillance
Other interventions	What other interventions will be delivered alongside CPTED, access control and/or awareness campaign? What are police doing to address property damage (eg targeting known offenders)? What other initiatives are being delivered to address the problem in the local area?	Preventing property damage is likely to involve a comprehensive approach comprising a number of different interventions delivered in combination

A range of possible strategies that may be suitable for different types of property damage problems are presented in Table 4 to help guide decision making. In practice, preventing property damage is likely to involve a number of different interventions delivered in combination.

Table 4 Local strategies to prevent property damage offences

Type of property damage problem	Possible responses
Graffiti	*CPTED* (green screening)—Planting greenery alongside walls to prevent access to and/or decrease visibility of graffiti *Access control*—Installing fixtures such as bollards or fencing to limit access to a site with high incidence of graffiti Rapid removal of graffiti to keep area well maintained and attractive to potential users
Vandalism to public facilities	*Access control*—Installing fixtures such as bollards or fencing to limit access to a particular site with high incidence of vandalism Community patrols of area to increase likelihood of offenders being detected *CPTED*—Including trimming of vegetation, creating pedestrian thoroughfares to encourage legitimate use of spaces and deter offenders
Vehicles being damaged in residential areas at night	*Awareness-raising campaign*—Encourage residents to park their cars in a garage, off the street or in a well-lit area *Lighting*—Increase visibility and enhance surveillance of a high-risk area and increase the likelihood of an offender being detected
Residential homes being damaged (eg letterboxes, doors, windows)	*Awareness-raising campaign*—Encourage residents to adopt measures to reduce their risks of victimisation (eg installation of sensor lighting, security screens) *CPTED*—Improve general amenity of area to encourage feelings of personal safety, pride and ownership *Access control*—Closure of laneways to prevent offenders accessing homes in high-risk areas
Property damage offences in areas surrounding licensed premises	Enhanced accords and enforcement of responsible service of alcohol (RSA) Introduce transport options, such as providing a late-night bus to move patrons out of area

Set clear aim and objectives for the project

It is important to have clear aims and objectives to guide the project. These should emerge from an understanding of the problem and relate directly to the specific activities that will be delivered as part of the project. Project aims describe the desired outcomes from a project (ie what the project will achieve), while project objectives describe what will be delivered as part of the project (ie project outputs; Brown 2006). Some examples of possible objectives for a CPTED, access control and/or awareness-raising campaign to prevent property damage offences are presented in Case Study 4.

Case study 4 Project aims and objectives

A local council led working group, also comprising representatives from the local Chamber of Commerce and police, identified the following aims and objectives for their strategy to prevent property damage. These aims and objectives helped to guide decision making with regards to the development of the strategy. It was against these aims and objectives that the overall effectiveness of the strategy was to be assessed.

The project aims were to:

- reduce the overall incidence of property damage offences in the areas targeted by the prevention strategy;
- reduce the overall incidence of repeat property damage offences in the areas targeted by the prevention strategy;
- reduce the level of concern about property damage among local residents and business and property owners;
- increase the level of awareness and understanding among local business owners and residents of the steps that can be taken to prevent property damage offences;
- increase the level of satisfaction among local residents and business operators with the response to property damage from local government, police and other key stakeholders involved in the project; and
- increase the capacity of local government, police and other key stakeholders to develop, implement and evaluate local crime prevention initiatives.

The objectives of the project were to:

- establish an expert working group (involving local council staff, police, volunteers, environmental planner or security provider) and conduct CPTED and security audits at three high-risk locations across the central business district (CBD);
- redevelop the local commercial precinct and surrounding areas, including landscaping and improving poorly maintained public spaces (in accordance with the CPTED/security audit outcomes);
- Install perimeter security, fencing and gates to prevent access to commercial premises in shopping mall arcades in the local CBD (also in accordance with the CPTED/security audit outcomes);
- produce information materials (including information leaflets, security audit toolkits and/or other resources) and distribute information on conducting CPTED and security audits to commercial premise operators throughout the local CBD; and
- hold a one-day seminar for commercial premise owners or operators and managers of public facilities in the local CBD to provide information on steps to minimise risk of victimisation from property damage.

Document project activities

Once these decisions have been made, it is important to document what will be delivered as part of the project, why and how it is expected to deliver the desired outcome. This might take the form of a project brief and action plan. Reviewing this document at key stages of the project will help assess whether the project is on track and whether any changes are required. This information is also useful when it comes time to review and evaluate the project.

Table 5 describes the type of information that should be documented. Record key information about the strategy (ie context, objectives, activities, indicators, timing, responsibility) and aim to keep the document as focused as possible. This document can be shared with stakeholders so that everyone is clear on the purpose of the project from the outset. This has the additional benefit of justifying decisions made in relation to the implementation of the project, should there be disagreement among key stakeholders at some stage in the future.

Table 5 Information that should be recorded	
What is the context in which the project is being delivered?	Provide a description of the project team's understanding of the property damage problem in the location targeted by the project, based on the information collected to date. This does not have to be long, but should provide a reasonable overview of the local context. Highlight any characteristics specific to the local area, summarising the information in Table 2 (eg the level of concern among local residents, scope of the problem, whether targeted households are predominantly apartments or detached dwellings, owner occupied or rented or a public housing estate, particular entry points and escape routes for offenders, whether apartment complexes have security measures to enter the buildings etc)
What are the project aims and objectives?	Write down clear aims for the project that describe the desired outcomes (ie what the project will achieve). Then develop objectives that reflect the outputs from the project (ie what will be delivered). Aims and objectives should be SMART—specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. For example, the aim of a project to tackle property damage offences should refer to the specific problem being addressed (ie vandalism and/or graffiti), the target location and the timeframe for the objective to be achieved. Project aims can reflect both short (eg reducing the opportunities for vandalism) and longer term outcomes (reducing property damage offences). It is helpful to develop project objectives once project aims have been identified, as this will help ensure that the project is focused on delivering outputs that contribute directly to the aims of the project. Some examples of aims and objectives for a project involving CPTED, access control measures and/or an awareness campaign to tackle property damage are presented in Case Study 4
What activities will be delivered to achieve these objectives?	Identify and describe the range of activities that the project team proposes to implement as part of the project. Outline how each activity is meant to address the property damage problem (eg make it harder for offenders to damage property by increasing perimeter security around high-risk locations). For each planned activity, identify and document the resources (financial, human and infrastructure) required, the individual or agency responsible and the anticipated timeframe for implementing each activity
How will progress be monitored and the impact of the project evaluated?	Information will need to be collected on a regular basis to monitor the progress of implementing the project and determine whether the project is delivering the desired results. Refer to *Stage 3: Evaluation* for further guidance

Getting stakeholders involved

Stakeholder involvement is an essential part of successfully implementing most interventions. Effective crime prevention projects targeting property damage offences reviewed by Morgan et al. (2012) were typically overseen by a steering committee comprised of representatives from different stakeholder groups (including the community) who were affected by the problem. The committee oversaw the development and implementation of the project, and ensured that there were clear accountability mechanisms in place to make sure that the variety of organisations and individuals involved in the delivery of the program were fulfilling their responsibilities. Steering committees also help to ensure that implementation issues are identified and addressed in an appropriate and timely manner.

Similarly, it is important to establish appropriate consultation mechanisms at the commencement of the project to seek input from individuals that will be affected by the strategy. This can include the owners and managers of commercial premises, public housing authorities, residents of housing estates and public transport workers and commuters. It is important to involve these people in the development of strategies as they are likely to necessitate their involvement (or at least compliance) and will impact upon them.

Case study 5 Geelong Local Industry Accord

The Geelong Local Industry Accord was developed in response to escalating rates of alcohol-related crime (including property damage) occurring in and around licensed establishments situated in Geelong's CBD. Geelong had previously developed a local industry code of conduct but it had proven to be ineffective in reducing alcohol-related crime rates.

The strategy involved the development of a steering committee comprising local community organisations, licensees, the local council and police. The committee met on a regular basis and developed a series of voluntary 'best practice' guidelines for signatory licensees to abide by. In particular, licensees were required to provide their employees with RSA training (which at that time wasn't mandatory). Other guidelines included the cessation of 'happy hours' after 7 pm and free drink promotions. This was accompanied by stricter enforcement of liquor licensing and sale of alcohol to underage patrons, denying patrons access to bars/pubs after certain times (to prevent pub-hopping).

Sixty-five percent of licensees involved in the scheme reported that there had been a decline in property damage offences since the introduction of the scheme, which appeared to be reflected in police recorded crime data

Source: Rumbold et al. 1998

The next step in the process therefore involves identifying the key parties that need to participate and mobilising them for action (assuming a project team or steering committee comprising the relevant stakeholders doesn't already exist). It is important to know who to engage as stakeholders and what to expect from them as part of the project. Identify who can provide important services as part of the project, who can advise on strategy development and who can provide data or other support. The preliminary environmental scan, described in an earlier section, should help to target key stakeholders more strategically, in addition to drawing upon any pre-existing stakeholder relationships with other key agencies.

There is a range of stakeholders that could be involved in a strategy to prevent property damage. For example, a project that involves CPTED, access control and an awareness campaign might involve the stakeholders identified in Table 6. Use this Table to help identify potential project partners and/or participants.

Table 6 Stakeholders involved in a project to prevent property damage

Stakeholder	Types of activities that they could be involved in	Contact details
Local council	Member of project working group (planning, project oversight and coordination of stakeholders), conducting CPTED audits, developing and implementing management of grant, tenders for security installation, evaluation	
Business owners and operators (and representative bodies, such as commerce groups)	Member of project working group (planning, project oversight and coordination of stakeholders), improving perimeter security and/or maintaining commercial premises and surrounding areas	
Police	Member of project working group (planning, project oversight and coordination of stakeholders), proactive policing of high crime areas, community engagement and awareness raising, data provision, conduct CPTED audits, respond to reported property damage offences, provide local intelligence on property damage offences	
Housing authority	Stakeholder consultation, providing access to buildings, property maintenance and improvements to security	
Public transport authority	Improving the perimeter security and/or maintaining public transport facilities that are targeted by graffiti offenders	
Neighbourhood Watch and similar groups (may also include volunteers)	Door-knocks, assisting in the delivery of the awareness campaign, promoting access control measures	
Home owners	Participating in community consultations, installing recommended security measures, providing access to their properties (if required)	
Security providers	Installation of security devices and providing expert assistance in conducting security audits and assessments	

Table 6 Stakeholders involved in a project to prevent property damage		
Stakeholder	**Types of activities that they could be involved in**	**Contact details**
Local media	Assist with promoting awareness campaigns; advertising community meetings	
Wider community	Community engagement and awareness	
Others?		

Source: Adapted from Anderson 2010

Depending on the size of the project, it may be ideal to set up a local stakeholder group or committee (if one does not already exist), comprising representatives from each stakeholder involved in the project and that meets on a regular basis. These meetings should be focused and always work towards a tangible outcome. Regularly inform stakeholders of any developments and allow them to participate in decision making wherever possible. Some stakeholders may not wish to get involved at each stage or in every decision, so do not over-consult or pass on unwanted information as this might deter a stakeholder from engaging with the project.

Consider the following steps in determining how best to approach potential project partners:

- List the groups or individuals who should be approached based on the information identified in the scanning stage.
- Be specific on what they can contribute and whether there are costs (financial or otherwise) in getting them involved. Engaging with stakeholders early in the planning process will help to work this out. Determining the capacity, interest and willingness of stakeholders to contribute to the project is also important.
- Be prepared when engaging potential stakeholders and consider how they might be encouraged to participate in the project. Conduct research on the potential stakeholder to determine their needs and how they might benefit from being part of the project. Benefits can include better information sharing, the contribution of the project to their agency goals (particularly if crime prevention is their core business), or reducing the impact of property damage on their business (eg cost of repairs to damaged property). Members of the community can also be key project stakeholders, particularly for interventions that require residents to take an active role in the implementation phase (eg homeowners adopting home security measures).
- Be collaborative—Involve stakeholders in the strategy development and do not dictate what needs to be done. There may be something that has been overlooked or they may bring specialist expertise. This will also help to ensure their support for and ownership of the project.
- If the project is aimed at a specific target group (eg business operators in a commercial precinct or residents of a public housing estate), make sure their views are considered as part of the consultation process.

This information, including stakeholder roles and responsibilities, can be recorded using the stakeholder engagement template provided in Table 7.

Table 7 Stakeholder engagement template

List the groups or individuals who should be involved in project activities	What they can offer/do? eg provide data, services, financial support etc	Are there costs (financial or otherwise) in obtaining their services? What are they?	How can they be encouraged to participate? eg data sharing, activities align with goals, play key role in delivery of activity etc	Are there any concerns that should be addressed? What (if any) are they?

Source: Anderson 2010: 33

Estimating the project cost and timeframe

Developing a reliable estimate of the cost of the resources needed to plan, implement and review a crime prevention project is an important element of effective project management. Accurate cost estimates are a key factor in ensuring that projects can be completed within the available budget and implemented in accordance with how they are designed. It is important that, in planning a crime prevention project, the full range of cost items is considered and reliable estimates of the cost associated with each item are calculated.

Table 8 provides a budgeting framework for calculating the cost associated with planning, implementing and evaluating a project involving access control, CPTED and/or an awareness campaign to prevent property damage offences.

Factors influencing project cost

Costs associated with a project may be fixed or variable. Fixed costs are costs that will not change with each additional unit of output. Variable costs are those costs that are impacted by factors such as the size of the target area, the number, type and size of the intervention sites targeted by a project, or the length of time over which the project will be implemented.

A number of decisions will influence the total cost associated with a strategy involving access control, CPTED and awareness campaigns to prevent property damage offences. This includes:

- whether the project will aim to prevent vandalism or graffiti or both forms of property damage;
- whether the project will involve redeveloping the intervention site and surrounding areas, landscaping, improving poorly maintained public or private spaces or other enhancements to high-risk locations;
- the scale of the changes to the built and landscaped environment required to address situational risk factors for property damage offences, and whether these measures will have ongoing costs (eg the regular removal of graffiti to keep areas well maintained and attractive to potential users);
- the type of access control measures that will be required to limit unauthorised access to high-risk locations;
- who will be responsible for undertaking CPTED audits and/or security assessments (eg police, local council staff, volunteers, environmental planner or security provider contracted by local council);
- whether an environmental planner (or equivalent) will be required to develop a design or redevelopment for the intervention site that is consistent with CPTED principles;
- who will be required to implement changes to the built or physical environment and install or upgrade security in the high-risk locations;
- the type of information that will be delivered as part of the project, the target of the awareness campaign, the strategies required to ensure the active participation of the target group and the personnel responsible for the development of materials required to deliver the information to the target group;
- the total duration of the project and the number of locations and/or size of the area that will be targeted;
- whether the project already exists, or whether the new project extends upon an existing intervention;
- any ongoing costs associated with maintaining a strategy involving CPTED, access control and awareness campaign over time; and
- other interventions that may be delivered alongside access control, CPTED and an awareness campaign, such as lighting improvements, rapid removal and community patrols.

The budgeting framework has been created to assist local commerce groups, councils and police develop a project budget for a strategy involving access control, CPTED and awareness campaign to prevent property damage offences. For each stage of the project, the Table describes the range of items that may need to be considered in developing a project budget.

To use the framework, identify the cost per unit for each of the items within the framework that are relevant to the project. Determine the total number of units of each item that will be required. It will then be possible to determine the total cost for each item and the overall cost of the project.

The examples presented in the framework (for a strategy involving access control in laneways, green screening and the distribution of information to commercial premises to prevent graffiti and vandalism in a commercial precinct) are provided as cost estimates only and exclude GST. These estimates will need to be adapted to suit individual projects.

Project timeframes

There is no clear formula for determining how long it should take to implement a project. Breaking the

project down into key tasks and then estimating the time required to complete each task is typically the most accurate way of determining how long a project will take. Another good way to estimate is to review the timeframe for similar projects undertaken by other organisations, paying careful attention to any factors that may have influenced project delivery.

Unexpected factors may impact on how long it takes to deliver certain project activities, so it is important to allow for some flexibility. Factors that can impact on project timeframes and that are often overlooked include the time taken to consult with stakeholders, to collect, analyse and interpret data collected to better understand the process, going through a tender process to engage external service providers and engaging project participants.

As most projects are based on short-term funding, it is also important to consider an 'exit strategy'. This requires working out how the project will be sustained or phased out once the initial funding ends.

Table 8 Project budget for a strategy involving access control, CPTED and an awareness campaign to prevent property damage offences

Enter the following information for the project (examples provided):						
Project stage	**Cost component**	**Cost item**	**Brief description of cost item**	**Number of units**	**Cost per unit**	**Total cost (specify in kind)**
Planning	Personnel	Personnel responsible for project planning, including consultation with key stakeholders, consultation with the users of the intervention site and local residents, regular and ongoing collection and analysis of data and sourcing quotes from relevant service providers	Project officer (local council)		$	In kind
	Other (specify)				$	$
Implementation	Equipment	Perimeter security, fencing and gates to prevent access to properties (including installation costs)	Improved fencing to prevent access to laneway during night time hours	75 meters of palisade fencing 8 gates at opposite ends of 4 laneways	$175 per metre of palisade fencing $1,500 per gate	$25,125
	Equipment	Building and landscaping materials that are required as part of redevelopment of the intervention site and surrounding areas, landscaping, improving poorly maintained public or private spaces or other enhancements to high-risk locations	Plants to be placed in front of walls to prevent access and decrease visibility of graffiti	40 mature plants	$100.00	$4,000
	Experts/contractors	Professionals engaged to conduct CPTED and security audits and/or to distribute CPTED and security audits in high-risk locations (eg local council staff, police, volunteers, environmental planner or security provider contracted by local council)	Project officer (local council) to distribute security audit toolkits to operators of commercial premises or public facilities in high-risk locations; police to distribute security audit toolkit to recent victims of property damage offences		$	In kind
	Experts/contractors	Professionals (eg environmental planner) required to develop a design or redevelopment for the intervention site that is consistent with CPTED principles	Council—planning		$	In kind

Table 8 Project budget for a strategy involving access control, CPTED and an awareness campaign to prevent property damage offences

Enter the following information for the project (examples provided):						
Project stage	Cost component	Cost item	Brief description of cost item	Number of units	Cost per unit	Total cost (specify in kind)
	Experts/contractors	Professionals responsible for building or landscaping changes in accordance with the design or redevelopment	Installation of improved fencing to prevent access to laneway during night time hours		$5,000 for the installation of new fencing and gates	$5,000
			Landscaping and maintenance associated with planting of mature trees		$	In kind
	Experts/contractors	Production of information materials (incl information leaflets, security audit toolkits and/or other resources), including typesetting, publishing, advertising and other media costs	CPTED and security audit toolkits for distribution to operators of commercial premises or public facilities in high-risk locations and who have been recent victim of property damage offence	200 toolkits	Not applicable	$5,000
			Regular newsletter alerting residents, commercial premise owners and operators of recent property damage offences and characteristics of offenders and locations targeted, and steps to minimise risk of victimisation	1,000 newsletters	Not applicable	$1,500
	Personnel	Personnel responsible for the development of security audit toolkit (for self-assessment) and/or information materials	Project officer (local council)		$	In kind
	Personnel	Personnel responsible for conducting information seminars or distributing information direct to residents, commercial premise owners or operators and managers of public facilities to provide information on steps to minimise risk of victimisation	Project officer (local council) in partnership with police		$	In kind

Table 8 Project budget for a strategy involving access control, CPTED and an awareness campaign to prevent property damage offences

Enter the following information for the project (examples provided):						
Project stage	**Cost component**	**Cost item**	**Brief description of cost item**	**Number of units**	**Cost per unit**	**Total cost (specify in kind)**
	Personnel	Personnel responsible for project management, including records management, progress reports to funding providers, stakeholder liaison and administrative support for project working group	Project officer (local council)		$	In kind
	Administrative	Regular project committee meetings to oversee project implementation	Project officer (local council)		$	In kind
	Other (specify)				$	$
Evaluation	Personnel	Personnel responsible for undertaking internal evaluation (data collection, analysis and reporting) (if not external)	Project officer (local council)			In kind
	Administrative	Expenses associated with interview, survey or other data collection and analysis			$	$
	Other (specify)				$	$
					Total personnel cost	**$0 (all in kind)**
					Total equipment cost	$29,125
					Total experts/contractors cost	$11,500
					Total administrative cost	$0 (all in kind)
					Total other cost	$0
					Total project cost	$40,625

The examples presented in this project budget are estimates only and may not reflect the actual cost associated with undertaking the described activities. In kind contributions may not be available for other similar projects. These estimates will need to be adapted to suit individual projects

Stage 2: Implementation

Having documented a clear strategy that describes the planned project activities, who is responsible for each activity and how each activity will be delivered will help as the project moves into the implementation stage. The information collected during the planning stage can be used as a checklist to guide the process of implementing the project, helping to ensure the project stays on track.

A project coordinator will need to oversee the project, coordinate the actions of the stakeholders and make sure that activities remain on track. Strong leadership is important. However, it's also important to share responsibility for implementing the different parts of a project.

It's important to be flexible throughout the implementation process. This does not mean abandoning any planning, but acknowledges that no strategy will always go exactly to plan. The risk to a project can be mitigated by thinking about any potential obstacles or problems that might occur (eg what to do in the event that business operators don't comply with requests to modify their behaviour to reduce opportunities for property damage) and how they might be overcome.

Related to this point is the need to carefully manage the project budget. Keep track of what is being spent and where. Going over budget may require trade-offs in other areas of project delivery.

It is important to meet regularly with the project steering committee to review progress. Brown (2006) describes the importance of a dynamic project lifecycle, where each phase of the project is carefully monitored. When problems are encountered, particularly during the implementation phase, they can be quickly identified and addressed by making minor adjustments to the project (more common) or, in some cases, replanning or even redesigning the project (less common). Replanning the project might simply involve revising the project plan to reflect any changes that have to be made to how the project is being delivered.

Redesigning the project may be required when it is discovered that an intervention is not appropriate or effective for a particular community. This will require revisiting the planning stage (eg consulting with stakeholders or the community, updating the environmental scan, analysing crime data etc) to redefine the problem and to come up with a better response. This should not be regarded as a failure—rather, it's important to take action to address problems with the project as soon as possible. There are many examples of crime prevention projects that have gone on to be very successful after major changes have been made.

Maintaining progress reports will assist with the process of carefully monitoring the progress of projects (an example is provided in Table 9).

! Continuously monitor progress throughout the life of the project. This will make it possible to celebrate success or identify problems when they occur and develop appropriate and timely responses

The importance of maintaining high-quality records

Good records are an essential part of project planning and implementation. Projects require a great deal of planning, involve many stakeholders and agencies and ultimately need to be evaluated for effectiveness. In addition, projects are often confronted with problems relating to staff turnover (among key project staff or representatives from project partners) that can result in the loss of valuable information about progress or lessons learned and in planned activities being delayed or not fully implemented. Maintaining high-quality records of what has been done and why can assist with transferring responsibility to new staff and project partners. These records can be used to justify to stakeholders, the community and funding bodies why certain actions were or were not taken. Good records, particularly information about anything that might have interfered or aided in the delivery of the project, are also a useful source of information for the final evaluation.

Throughout this handbook there have been recommendations as to the type of information that should be recorded and a number of resources have been provided to assist with record keeping.

Table 9 Monthly progress report template (with example)

For each action required as part of the project assess the status of the action against each of the following criteria						
Activity delivered as part of project	Action underway and on schedule	Resources available to deliver activity	Key stakeholders involved in delivery	Action completed to date		Strategies to address problems identified
CPTED audits of high-risk locations by local council and police	Yes	Yes	Local council and police crime prevention officer	12 audits completed with recommendations for action as at dd/mm/yy	Not required	

Source: Adapted from Morgan & Homel 2011

Factors impacting on implementation

Regardless of how well a project designed to prevent property damage is planned, there will always be unexpected and/or unintended issues that arise during the implementation stage. Table 10 highlights some of the most common factors impacting on the implementation of crime prevention projects and some possible strategies to overcome them.

Table 10 Factors impacting on implementation and possible responses

Consideration	Why this is important	Possible ways to address this
Lack of community participation	In order for activities to work, they often need to be accepted and supported by the wider community	Propose good practice strategies that the community will want to get involved in. Make sure that community members have an opportunity to have a say on what is to be done. Make sure that no one group or individual dominates the proceedings or dictates to the community what is to be done. Regularly and openly communicate with the community about what is being done—do not limit communication with the community to a one-off event at the beginning of the project. This communication can be a useful source of information on whether the strategies are successful in the eyes of the community. Alert the community to the strategy through the local media (eg local television guide or paper, local radio, community meetings etc)
Attracting skilled workers	Attracting experienced staff to short-term projects can be difficult, especially in rural and remote areas	Think of who is willing to participate in the project and build a plan around the available skills base in the area, or build in training and mentoring
Staff turnover	If staff leave during the project, it takes time to replace them. New staff may take time to become familiar with the project. This can impact on the implementation of activities and makes it harder to determine how the project is progressing	Look at ways of encouraging staff to stay with the project. Keep good records of project activities so that a new person can pick things up quickly. Provide ongoing support and mentoring to new staff
Managing the budget	Parts of the project can sometimes cost more than expected. The length of time required to deliver a reduction in property damage offences may require more money than the budget available to the project	Always try to include in the budget all the resources likely to be required for the project. Try and identify multiple sources of funding. Have a plan for continuing project work once external funding has ended. Remember that some of the best project activities are simple and only require limited resources
Sustainability	Attracting local or additional funding and support can be difficult, especially if the local area is not wealthy or the project is seen as important to only one part of the community	Additional local funding is also a great way for the community to take ownership of the strategy. Highlight to key people in the local area how they will benefit from the project and provide opportunities for them to support the project through financial and in-kind contributions
Unexpected events	Events such as droughts, economic factors and out of the ordinary happenings can impact on the project	It is not always possible to predict 'unexpected' events. However, it can be possible to minimise the impact of these events by adopting a flexible approach. Do not let the success of the project hinge on one or two factors. Think of how the project could be altered if there was a change in circumstances
Needing to change project activities once the project has already started	It can be difficult to work out in advance just what might be required to achieve project aims and objective(s). Sometimes projects need to change if a planned strategy is not achieving what it was supposed to	Keep funding bodies informed about progress and discuss the need for changes in the project's activities. Continue to consult the community ahead of making any project changes. Review the objective(s) carefully and how the activities were originally linked to the objective. Find out about other crime prevention activities and what they have achieved

Source: AIC 2006

Stage 3: Evaluation

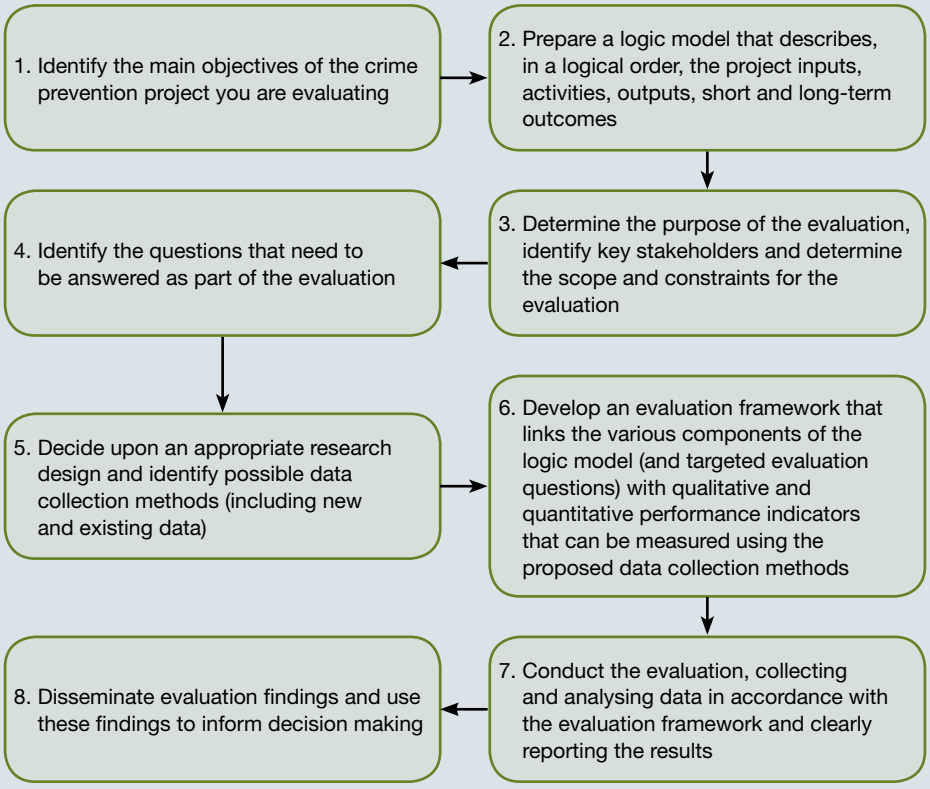
A good evaluation can determine whether a project has been implemented as planned (and if not why not), what outcomes have been delivered as a result, whether the stated objectives of that project have been achieved and the reasons that a program did or did not work. Evaluation is important for a number of reasons, including:

to work out whether the project has been successful in reducing property damage offences;

- for accountability purposes, particularly where a project receives funding from an external source;
- to help assess what parts of the project are working well and what could be improved;
- to understand why a project was not successful, so that past mistakes are not repeated;
- to contribute to the evidence base around effective crime prevention and characteristics of effective interventions; and
- to identify and share important lessons with other communities confronted with similar problems, provide guidance on good practice and highlight potential challenges associated with implementing similar projects in the future.

Evaluators should adopt a systematic approach to evaluation. One approach that has been used extensively by the AIC (and many other evaluators) has been to develop an evaluation framework that guides the evaluation and keeps it focused. The basic steps involved in developing an evaluation framework and conducting the evaluation are described in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Steps in conducting a systematic evaluation



Source: Morgan & Homel 2013

Evaluation questions

The type of information required and the methods used to evaluate a project will depend on the questions that need to be answered. The most common types of evaluation are process and outcome evaluations. Many evaluations involve some combination of the two. A process evaluation aims to improve understanding of the activities that are delivered as part of a project and assess whether they have been implemented as planned. This can be undertaken at any stage of a project and helps to inform changes to project activities where they are required.

An outcome evaluation is more concerned with the overall effectiveness of the program, including the impact of the project on participants, stakeholders and the broader community. This is usually undertaken at the end of a project.

Important questions for an evaluation that combines both a process and outcome evaluation can include:

- What were the main activities delivered as part of the project?
- What were the characteristics of the problem, places and/or people being targeted by the project?
- Was the project implemented as it was originally designed (ie implementation fidelity)?
- How did the project attempt to prevent or reduce the targeted problem and how was it adapted to the local problem and context?
- Was the project consistent with best practice in terms of its design and implementation?
- What was the nature and extent of stakeholder (incl. business operators and residents) involvement in all stages of the project?
- What impact did the project have on the level of crime in the target area?
- What other outcomes were been delivered as a result of having implemented the project?
- Were there any unintended consequences or outcomes from the project?
- What factors influenced the implementation and effectiveness of the project (this can include external factors such as the apprehension of a prolific offender or offenders)?
- What changes could be made to the design, implementation and management of the project in the future (assuming it will continue) to help improve its overall effectiveness?
- What were the main lessons learned from the project that could help inform similar initiatives in other areas?
- What were the financial benefits of the strategy relative to the costs associated with its operation (return on investment)?

Develop a logic model

A logic model is a way of describing (usually in a table or as a diagram) the inputs, activities or key work areas, outputs and outcomes involved in a project and the connections between these different project components. It encourages those responsible for the planning and implementation of projects to think through, in a systematic way, what the project aims to accomplish in the short and longer term and the steps through which the project will achieve the desired outcomes (ie project aims). Importantly, the logic model provides the foundation for identifying a set of appropriate performance indicators and determines what outcomes can be reasonably attributed to the project.

More information, including an example of a program logic model for crime prevention strategies delivered by local councils is available in the *Model Performance Framework for Local Crime Prevention* (Morgan & Homel 2011).

Performance indicators

Performance indicators describe what is measured to assess various aspects of an organisation or project's performance. They can be measured using quantitative or qualitative data. Performance indicators should be identified early in the life of the project so that information relating to those indicators can be routinely collected.

An evaluation should include indicators relating to the *outputs* and *outcomes* from the project. Output indicators provide evidence that the project has been delivered as planned, including what and how much has been done and whether it has been done well. Outcome indicators provide evidence that an output has caused a change in the knowledge, skill, attitude, behaviour or circumstances of the target group, including how much change and the value of that change.

For example, a performance indicator for measuring whether the project was implemented well could be the 'extent to which residents and business or property owners are satisfied with the actions taken to prevent property damage' (an output indicator). A performance indicator to measure the impact of a project involving CPTED, access control and/or an awareness campaign could be 'the number and proportion of business operators that reported a

property damage offence in the previous 12 months' (an outcome indicator).

Sources of information

There is a variety of different sources of both quantitative and qualitative data that might be useful for an evaluation. Some data will be readily available and some may need to be collected at different stages of the project. Potential sources of data include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Police recorded crime data for property damage offences in the target area for the period prior to the project, during the period of implementation and after the project was completed. This can be compared with adjacent areas to assess whether there has been any increase or decrease in areas not targeted by the intervention (ie displacement or diffusion of benefits); to other areas that share similar characteristics to the location in which the project was implemented to assess whether any changes in property damage can be attributed to the project; or compared with overall trends for the rest of the suburb, local government area or statewide.
- A survey of the community (eg commercial premise operators and/or local residents) could be conducted prior to and at the end of the project to measure rates of self-reported victimisation, concern about property damage offences, awareness of the project and satisfaction with the services delivered as part of the project. As with recorded crime data, this could be administered in a second location not targeted by the project.
- A review of administrative data collected over the course of the project (ie project records) relating to the various activities that were delivered, such as the number of locations with improved perimeter security, the number of CPTED audits completed, the number of residents or business owners who received information on strategies to minimise their risk of victimisation and the nature of these activities (ie what did they actually involve).
- In-depth and semi-structured interviews or focus groups with business operators or residents who have been involved in the project in some way can be used to gauge their satisfaction with the services delivered as part of the project and views regarding the effectiveness of the project in reducing property damage.
- In-depth and semi-structured interviews (or, if numbers permit, a survey) with key stakeholders involved in the management and/or delivery of the project to obtain their views regarding the project and its effectiveness in reducing property damage, and their satisfaction with the services that were delivered.

The collection of data from multiple sources is important as it helps to validate evaluation findings and overcome the limitations associated with relying on any single data source. Factors that can influence the choice of data source can include the evaluation questions, target audience, availability and accessibility of the data, evaluation budget and timeframe, ethical considerations, stakeholder views and the knowledge and skills of the person conducting the evaluation.

Bringing it all together in an evaluation framework

Having determined the evaluation questions, developed a logic model, identified performance indicators and chosen appropriate data collection methods, it is possible to develop a framework that can help guide the evaluation. An evaluation framework outlines the key evaluation questions, performance indicators and sources of data and links them together in a structured way. It forms the basis of the evaluation and helps guide the collection and reporting of data. A template (with some examples) is provided in Table 11.

Reporting on key findings

The format and content of an evaluation report will depend on whether it is a progress report or a final evaluation report. The report can be structured around the evaluation questions or the performance indicators in the evaluation framework.

It is important that sufficient time and resources are allocated to the work involved in conducting and writing up the results of an evaluation. Having a well-conducted and well-written evaluation report will help to demonstrate the impact of the project, share lessons with other organisations and, in many cases, help with attempts to gain further funding.

Table 11 Evaluation framework template (with examples)

Evaluation question	Performance indicators	Likely data source	Comments regarding data collection, availability or timing
What impact has the project had on the number of property damage offences within the target area?	Number of households located within the target area that reported a property damage offence to police in the previous 12 months	Recorded crime data from police	Will require being able to obtain reliable data for the specific area targeted by the project and surrounding areas (as opposed to wider local government area) for periods before and after the strategy was implemented
	Extent to which stakeholders involved in the management and delivery of the project report the project as having contributed to a reduction in property damage	Interviews with stakeholders involved in the project	Depending on the number of stakeholders involved in the project, it may be possible to develop and administer a brief survey

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