

# Urban Woodland Design

Minimising Anti-social  
Behaviour through Design



# Introduction

This section of the course covers:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Government responses
- 'CABE space' recommendations
- Exercise with feedback
- Design guidance
- Conclusions

What is 'anti-social behaviour'?

How does the familiar notion of  
'anti-social behaviour' impact on woodland?

## Examples

- Vandalism
  - damage
  - fly tipping
  - graffiti
- Fires
  - habitat
  - trees
  - furniture and structures

## Examples

- Vehicles
  - cars
  - motorbikes
  - mountain bikes
- Young people
  - noise
  - intimidation
- Dogs
  - fouling
  - wildlife disturbance

## Scottish Government's response

'Putting our Communities First'-  
a strategy for tackling anti-social behaviour

- ASBOs (anti-social behaviour orders)
- Community Reparation Orders
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
- Parenting orders
- Fixed Penalty Notices
- Electronic monitoring

## Scottish Government's response

- Power to disperse groups
- Higher charges for abandoning vehicles
- Ban sale of spray paint to under 16s
- Good neighbour declarations
- Involve communities in anti-social behaviour strategies

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

Tackling anti-social behaviour through design:

- **Target hardening**  
trying to make facilities nearly indestructible
- **Place making**  
using good design, attractive new facilities and proper maintenance to make places that the community will want to use & enjoy



## Target hardening

Trying to make facilities nearly indestructible by:

- limited use of structures overall
- using hard, non-flammable, well secured structures and materials
- specifying specialist anti-vandalism and anti-climb finishes
- using security fencing and 'impenetrable' barriers
- locking up spaces at night
- increasing CCTV use

This results in the 'fortification' of the environment.

## Place making

Where good design, attractive new facilities and proper maintenance make places that the community will want to use & enjoy. Achieved by:

- providing the facilities needed by the community
- design of a high quality
- involving the community in establishment and management of woodland
- increasing staff presence
- providing regular maintenance and management

The result is a useable and valued place.

## Key approaches

- Fully engage the community
- Provide facilities which people need and will use
- Create a safe, welcoming character
- Design open vistas and clear sight lines
- Use robust but attractive and suitable materials
- Repair damage promptly and remove abandoned vehicles etc...quickly
- Establish warden/ ranger patrols

## Options

What are the options for limiting anti-social behaviour?

- Asking others to step in (Government actions)
- Engage with the community
- Locate and design functions and activities in the woodland to discourage anti-social behaviour
- Design spaces which make anti-social behaviour difficult

## Options

- Use materials and techniques which are hard to vandalise
- Manage the site very actively and have a regular presence
- Use 'target hardening' (eg CCTV), if required, but sparingly

## Exercise 2

### Minimising anti-social behaviour

A project manager needs to take action to tackle different types of anti-social behaviour.

- Using the table provided, look at the list of anti-social behaviour issues raised by an imaginary community.
- Consider which actions are appropriate and why.
- Fill in the table.

# Exercise 2

## Minimising anti-social behaviour

**Minimising Anti-Social Behaviour**

Issue raised by community	Potential Action(s)				
	Community engagement	Design of Woodland	Woodland or site management	Detail design of structures	On site presence
Stop the burnt out cars – they look horrible and are dangerous					
Please get rid of the dog shit					
No mess or litter, or fly tipping					

# Exercise 2

## Minimising anti-social behaviour

**Minimising Anti-Social Behaviour – Tutor's suggestions**

Issue raised by community	Potential Action(s)				
	Community engagement	Design of Woodland	Woodland or site management	Detail design of structures	On site presence
Stop the burnt out cars – they look horrible and are dangerous		<i>Narrower routes or changing width of paths – perhaps plant up vulnerable access routes</i>	<i>Clear burnt out cars immediately</i>	<i>Use of bollards? Regrade land or increased planting at vulnerable entrances?</i>	
Please get rid of the dog shit	<i>Speak to dog owners</i>	<i>Provide a dog run at most used entrance?</i>		<i>Provide signs? Check on dog bins</i>	<i>Speak to dog owners</i>
No mess or litter, or fly tipping	<i>Have a community 'clean up'</i>	<i>Look at ways to limit vehicle access</i>	<i>Get rid of rubbish quickly</i>	<i>Can we do something to reduce vehicle access?</i>	<i>Speak to culprits</i>



# Anti-social behaviour

## Strategies for minimising anti-social behaviour

The range of strategies available for minimising anti-social behaviour include:

- engaging the community;
- designing spaces and structures;
- managing the site.

The remainder of this part of the course considers the spatial design options, in other words;

**designing to discourage anti-social behaviour**

## Four main design topics

- Space and function
- Views and visibility
- Character and sense of place
- Access

## Space and function

- Identify community needs and plan them into the woodland to encourage popularity and self-policing
- Identify particular groups – young people, dog walkers – who might carry out ‘anti-social’ activities. Can they be better accommodated in the design?
- Locate functions and activities appropriately – where would you site seating for the elderly, children’s play, a mountain bike track?

## Space and function

- Think about how these functions interact – do the elderly have to walk past the young people's shelter to get to seating? Does it matter?
- Design spaces and woodland to reflect the functions and activities – create a setting which is 'activity specific', not ambiguous
- Plan in potential fire breaks as well designed, multi-functional, integral spaces – not afterthoughts

## Views and visibility

- Make sure that vulnerable areas are visible or overlooked – passive surveillance
- Design sight lines and inter-visibility between spaces – remember you can look under branches and through woodland, too
- Avoid long corridors with only one exit
- Create welcoming, wide access points, with clear sight lines at the entrance

## Views and visibility

- Avoid extensive lengths of narrow, closed in spaces and 'blind' corners
- But – avoid huge open spaces which can be unwelcoming and exposed

## Character

- Keep the design low key and natural in appearance – a friendly, informal environment, but not tatty!
- Plant natural barriers, such as scrub, which can be as effective as fencing in some situations
- Establish an attractive environment, with diversity in spaces and species
- Add winter colour and shelter to encourage year-round use
- Plan spaces to make the most of aspect and shelter, to encourage 'sitting', not just 'passing through', which makes for better security

## Access

- Pre-plan for problems by planting scrub and trees to limit access and free movement of vehicles in the woodland
- Develop dedicated sites for motorbikes and mountain bikes if necessary, working with the local community
- Plan fenced, dog-free areas (with fences hidden in shrubs) for play areas, or fenced dog-walking runs
- Create some easily accessible footpaths with lighting if necessary to encourage use by everyone at all times



## In conclusion

- 'Place making' is more a more powerful approach than 'Target hardening' in the long run
- An attractive, easily accessible, safe environment, with facilities which people want to use, is more likely to be valued by the local community, and be self policing
- Plan functions and activities to encourage appropriate, frequent and consistent use
- Good, high quality design of spaces and structures should be robust but attractive – there is a subliminal message that the site matters

## In conclusion

- Management of the site, maintaining a 'cared for' appearance, reinforces the sense of value
- Prompt action on vandalism and abuse reinforces the sense of a well-tended and monitored environment
- A regular on-site presence reinforces security, ensures prompt management, and encourages engagement

The next slideshow is entitled  
'Design Introduction'