

# Safe and Secure Landscapes

Partnership working in full bloom



## Defensive Planting and Landscape Project

A partnership approach between Essex Police, RHS and SBD

# Project Aims

Safer green spaces is more than just a garden, it's about creating a sense of wellbeing, with the security measures in place blending in seamlessly into the background.

The overarching aim of our proposed partnership project is to mitigate the risks of crime by promoting the security benefits of effective landscape / garden design. We will be able to showcase that security does not need to be fortress in nature, but subtle and affordable!

The primal design focus of the garden will be to make the garden relatable. Demonstrating how it is possible to providing a natural attractive plant supplement for the protection of properties whilst taking into consideration the health and wellbeing of all.



Secured by Design



Official Police Security Initiative



## The Projects Legacy:

*“Well thought out defensive planting as part of garden design can provide an element of security, whilst at the same time provide a pleasant environment to live and work”*

Ian LeGros – Head of RHS Garden Hyde Hall



Official Police Security Initiative

# Project Objectives

- Showcase to the public what a 'Safe and Secure Model Garden' can achieve.
- Showcase 'Safe and Secure Landscapes' principles that align consistently across the RHS Gardens.
- Creation of plant lists that are aesthetically pleasing whilst providing additional security benefits. This will be pertinent in the broader context to public realm and business space.
- Opportunity to deliver broader crime prevention advice.
- Illustrate to the planning community how *Essex Police Designing out Crime Officers (DOCO)* tailor advice to provide security benefits, whilst aligning to wider health and wellbeing agendas.
- Through public engagement, dispel the myth that to create a safe garden all plants need to be spikey and thus promoting the fortress mentality.
- Encourage the public to be resilient by taking simple crime prevention measures and encourage a security conscious mindset.
- Working in partnership with the RHS and Essex Police to shape, inform and influence regarding all elements relating to specialist landscape and crime prevention advice.

# The Request

## Funding request: £12,000

This amount supports the costs of (*but not restricted to*) the pitch site, landscape design, pre and post enabling works, infrastructure, labour costs, plants and plant husbandry (i.e., looking after the plants while they are in quarantine to ensure that they do not spread disease), plant and site maintenance, supportive garden literature, to media campaigns (internally and external).

We are seeking financial contribution to achieve the £12,000 required.

The figure quoted has been provided by the RHS Charity. It is important to note that all costings are at a significantly reduced cost and at a discounted rate, demonstrating their commitment to the project.

The Essex Police Designing out Crime Team (DOCO) will continue to seek other forms of sponsorship. This will facilitate the garden by providing relevant security products to demonstrate best practice and crime mitigation measures.

The DOCO will be responsible for the orchestration and project management of the garden from a Policing perspective throughout the life cycle of the project. From a crime prevention perspective the show garden will be resourced by members of Local Policing Support Unit, predominately the DOCO there to provide specialist advice and support.



# The Proposal: The Show Garden

## Hyde Hall Royal Horticultural Society Flower Show – Safe and Secure Garden 2022 Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2022

A joint partnership venture with RHS, PCPI and SBD approved member companies to provide practical demonstration of a safe and secure garden, whilst being aesthetically pleasing. From a crime prevention perspective the show garden will practically demonstrate how the garden environment can be the first line of defence. Applied appropriately, your garden can protect the house, garden, outbuildings and property therein. The garden will innovatively demonstrate the application of defensive layered planting, secure boundaries and physical security measures.



# The Proposal: The Show Garden



- Essex Police have been given the opportunity to build a showcase garden in partnership with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Hyde Hall at this year's flower show in a prime location within the show.
- It is important to note that the *Safe and Secure Garden* is the only show garden in the flower show and therefore a key feature. In 2019, **32,959 people** were in attendance and it is estimated that the Essex Police team interacted with approximately 8,000 members of the public.
- The garden will demonstrate how planting can be used to aid security and minimise ASB, some examples include:
  - Encourage judicious planting – making sure that the plant used is actually suitable for the environment that it is being used in
  - Holly in a planter could potentially deter unwanted activity.
- The garden will be resourced by the Local Policing Support Unit based at Essex Police HQ, including the Designing out Crime Officers and Essex Watch Liaison Officers who will be assisting throughout the show to help resource the garden.
- RHS were keen to work collaboratively and promote the concepts of health and wellbeing linked with feeling of safety and security, whilst minimising the opportunity for crime to take place.

# The Proposal: Further Tenants

To support the prestigious Show Garden, the project will include the below:

**Plant Trail:** The objective of the plant trail is to provide the public and those within the landscape and building industry with a location where they can visit and see growing defensive plants of a mature nature. The garden trail will feature plants of a defensive nature, which are also pollinators and are ecologically stable. As a means of reference, an explanatory guide and trail map will be provided. To assist in identifying the defensive plants within the garden, there will be a SBD branded label. The aspiration will be for the labels to be adapted for national use across all RHS gardens.



**Defensive Planting Mix for developers, landscape designers and the public:** The Plant mix will promote suitable RHS, British Association of Landscape Industries and Bee Conservation Trust agreed defensive plant mixes to protect boundaries and vulnerable features of buildings for landscape designers, developers, and others. This will further seek to inform landscape design to consider safety and security within landscape projects, specifically new build projects and regenerations schemes. This will be in step with broader sustainability strategies and aligned to walkable neighbourhoods’.

# Partnership Lead Approach

This project is unsustainable without the support and commitment of the partnership that engulfs it, and without would not achieve its broader objectives.

**Royal Horticultural Society:** The core partnership between RHS and Essex Police is fundamental. Initially focused on the creation the Safe and Secure Show Garden, the partnership has a broader scope with their expertise influencing such guidance as Secured by Design (SBD).

**Police Crime Prevention Initiatives – Secured by Design:** In previous years the support from SBD has been unmeasurable from providing necessary contacts, media support and coverage, to the opportunity to present at the National Designing out Crime Officers Training. This partnership has potential for expansion with the opportunity to engulf concepts and designs across PCPI's Training Academy and SBD Guidance Documents.

**SBD Police Preferred Products:** The garden relies on the generosity of SBD member companies to kindly provide examples of their product within the show garden. The team ensure that all products are fitted to the manufactures specification as to ensure that the product is showcased in the best possible light. Enthusiasm from those companies has been exponential. This has been supplemented by blogs and social media posts advertising both the garden and the importance of security within the garden environment. Previous companies have included, Jackson Fencing, Expanded Metal Company, uWatch Cube, Pragmasis, TriMetals and Solon Security.





# Governance

- **PFCC Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 2024:** The Building Blocks of Success.
- **Essex Crime Prevention Strategy 2021-2025:** Aligns to the Dwelling Burglary and Street Robbery portfolio by providing our communities with up to date crime prevention advice, information and resources so they take action to protect themselves and their property.
- **National Planning Policy Framework – Section 8, Paragraph 92, Sub-section b:** Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder and the fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes.



The Police and Crime Plan and its overall successes are built on:

- Prevention**  
Improving the wellbeing of people across Essex, making sure that crime and anti-social behaviour do not happen in the first place and that children and vulnerable people are kept safe from harm.
- Communications and engagement**  
Giving the public a voice in local policing so they feel they are heard, feel able to come forward to report crime and anti-social behaviour and have confidence in the way that the police protect them.
- Volunteering**  
We want the police to be part of local communities and local communities to be part of the police by enabling more people to play an active role in keeping us safe.
- Partnership**  
To improve the safety of our communities we must work closely in partnership with other services across Essex. Only by working together with the fire and rescue service, local councils, community safety partnerships, the voluntary sector, community sector and health can we help our communities stay safe, prevent crime and protect the vulnerable.



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government



safer essex

ESSEX POLICE  
Protecting and serving Essex

PFCC  
POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME  
COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX

ECVS

**Crime Prevention  
Strategy 2021-2025**

# Benefits Realisation: Overarching goals

The below strategic benefit plan outlines the short to long term outcomes of the project and ensures a proactive approach to burglary prevention in its broadest application.



## Short Term Benefits

- Encourage community resilience and provide the public with easy and cost-effective measures to improve their garden / home security.
- High volume of public engagement
- Maximise on media interventions.
- Engagement with wider community.
- Reduction in opportunistic burglary.
- Position Secured by Design Preferred Companies and their services.



## Medium Term Benefits

- Increased participation in watch schemes.
- Deter offenders and reduce burglaries.
- Provide supporting evidence for the Crime Prevention Strategy.
- Establishing best practice for both PCPI and the office of the PFCC.
- All plants acquired for the garden will be used to support the RHS Plant Trail, achieving sustainable goals. Supplemented by ongoing support and advice from Essex Police.



## Long Term Benefits

- Look to developers adopting garden security within new homes and consider the maturity of planting.
- Embed public realm safety and security within the training strategy for the crime prevention programme.
- Sustain relationships with key stakeholders.
- The inclusion of RHS horticultural expertise influencing designing out crime.

# Benefits Realisation: Broader Application

It is important to identify the benefits of a scheme to ensure that the project is sustainable after implementation.

## Primary Benefits

- Reduction in opportunistic burglary.
- Advocate the planting mix.
- Considering the audience (i.e. purchasing plants at the show) and there is potential for the public to consider the added security benefits of their purchase.
- Showcase the office of the PFCC and Essex Police.
- Showcase PCPI and especially SBD Police Preferred Products.

## Secondary Benefits

- Sustain the legacy of the garden through the planting mix.
- To be a feature of Essex Police Burglary prevention campaigns.
- Proven partnership working approach with common aim to design out crime and encourage feelings of safety.

## Broader Benefits

- Aligning Essex Police prevention advice to Health and Wellbeing strategies.
- Use the garden as best practice and best evidence.
- Practical demonstration of the Designing out Crime Officer advice given to Planners / Developers etc.
- Work with developers to promote the tenants of a safe and secure garden within new projects.
- Broader acknowledgement and appreciation of what makes a safe space.

# Benefits Realisation: Health and Wellbeing

The Health and Wellbeing agenda recognises how the positive characteristics and qualities of an environment can help people to achieve and experience better quality lifestyles. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of everyone having easy access to open spaces, be that within their home or broader public realm.

The goal is therefore to construct spaces that deliberately deter crime through design and which by means of natural surveillance, physical security, cohesion, and a sense of community ownership help to create socially inclusive, active communities and seek to build in opportunities for residents to be active through their everyday lives.

**How does this align to the project:** The garden illustrates that safety and security principles can be applied within the home environment whilst being subliminal to the end user of that space whilst being aesthetically pleasing.

Constructing well designed places, buildings and communities that promote both sustainable communities and health and wellbeing is an objective that the Essex Police DOCO widely supports.

It is important that when considering green spaces, to place importance on the design and layout of landscape plans, play areas, residential and public realm space etc, as if not effectively designed these spaces could be conducive to crime and ASB. If designed appropriately will enhance the Health and Wellbeing of all.

