

Alleygating - Chadderton

Report of the Head of Community Safety Services

Portfolio Responsibility: Environment and Infrastructure

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Purpose of Report

The neighbourhood alleygating reports have been presented to all District Partnerships. The Chadderton report gave not only an overview on alleygating but also gave details of those areas in Chadderton that had been identified as areas suffering from a range of problems including anti social behaviour through to other types of sub criminal activity. All these areas have been identified as areas that would benefit by the installation of alleygates.

The initial report was prepared as an overview and acted as guidance so that local partnerships could decide as to whether this was a suitable tactic to deploy in those areas identified as being problem areas for local residents.

This supplementary report has been prepared to act as additional information to assist the Chadderton District Partnership to make informed decisions as to the installation of alleygates in order to reduce crime and disorder.

The report will also provide information as to levels of commissioned activity to date and will include all relevant information in regard to the installation of alleygates funded by the Chadderton partnership.

Exec Summary

The Borough of Oldham has a very high proportion of terraced properties and as a result has a lot of alleyways that provide access for residents to the rear of their properties. Unfortunately alleyways also provide access for criminals providing burglars with a means to break in from the rear of the house. Residents with rear alleyways also often experience anti social behaviour and other forms of criminal activity. In addition, if a burglar knows the area well, they provide easy escape routes, making it far more difficult for the police to catch them. Residents who live in areas with rear alleys also often experience anti social behaviour; evidence is often found of drug taking activity; fly tipping, dog fouling and graffiti.

Of course other forms of target hardening or environmental improvements are available to reduce crime and disorder. Oldham's Community Safety Services regularly uses other tactics such as improved lighting, vegetation management, dwelling security improvements (including alarms, locks, security lighting) and crime prevention education (presentations, leaflets etc) which is all tailored to meet the individual needs of the area concerned.

This report outlines the benefits of alleygating and the positive impact it has had on the levels of burglary and anti social behaviour. Many projects have shown considerable success, some cases have shown reduction in burglary levels of up to 90%. The report outlines the benefits including reduction in anti social behaviour, reduction in litter, dog fouling, fly tipping, drug abuse and other forms of sub criminal activity.

It will provide the detail as to where Chadderton's District Partnership can continue to direct resources towards the installation of alley gating as a tactic to reduce crime and disorder.

Recommendations

1. For the Chadderton District Partnership to consider the information presented in the report.
2. In the event of the schemes not meeting the required resident approval rate Community Safety Services be allowed to liaise directly with the councillors for the relevant ward on the possibility of alternative schemes.

3. For the District Partnership to approve allocating £5509.50 from the North ward Safe, Clean and Green budget to the following identified schemes

	Location	Estimated cost
North Ward	2 gates at Butterworth Street (10 –30) and to include 19 – 25 Andrew St and 62 - 68 Wellington St	£2203 + vat £385.52
	Victoria Street	£2486 + vat £435.05
	TOTAL COST inc vat	£5509.50

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1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The neighbourhood alleygating report has now been presented to all District Partnerships. The Chadderton report gave not only an overview on alleygating but also gave details of those areas in Chadderton that had been identified as areas suffering from a range of problems including anti social behaviour through to other types of sub criminal activity. All these areas had been identified as areas that would benefit by the installation of alleygates.
- 1.2 The initial report was prepared as an overview and acted as guidance so that local partnerships could decide as to whether this was a suitable tactic to deploy in those areas identified as being problem areas for local residents.
- 1.3 This report has been prepared to provide additional and more detailed information to assist the Chadderton District Partnership to make informed decisions as to where to continue with Alleygating installation.

2 Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Borough of Oldham has a very high proportion of terraced properties and, as a result, also has a lot of alleyways that provide access for residents to the rear of their properties. Unfortunately alleyways also provide easy access to criminals, providing burglars with the means to break in from the rear of the house without the risk of being seen. In addition, if a burglar knows the area well, they provide easy escape routes, making it far more difficult for the police to catch them. Residents who live in areas with rear alleys also often experience anti social behaviour; evidence is often found of drug taking activity; fly tipping, dog fouling and graffiti.
- 2.2 Of course other forms of target hardening or environmental improvements are available to reduce crime and disorder. Oldham's Community Safety Services regularly uses other tactics such as improved lighting, vegetation management, dwelling security improvements (including alarms, locks, security lighting) and crime prevention education (presentations, leaflets etc) which is all tailored to meet the individual needs of the area concerned.
- 2.3 This report outlines the benefits of alleygating and the positive impact it has had on the levels of burglary and anti social behaviour. Many projects have shown considerable success, some cases have shown reduction in burglary

levels of up to 90%. The report outlines the benefits including reduction in anti social behaviour, reduction in litter, dog fouling, fly tipping, drug abuse and other forms of sub criminal activity. It will provide the detail as to where Chadderton's District Partnership can best direct resources and provide evidence that will form intelligence led methodology in forming the District plan.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. For the Chadderton District Partnership to consider the information presented in the report.
- 3.2. In the event of the schemes not meeting the required resident approval rate Community Safety Services be allowed to liaise directly with the councillors for the relevant ward on the possibility of alternative schemes.
- 3.3 For the District Partnership to approve allocating £5509.50 from the North ward Safe, Clean and Green budget to the following identified schemes

	Location	Estimated cost
North Ward	2 gates at Butterworth Street no's 10 –30 to include 19 – 25 Andrew St and 62 – 68 Wellington St	£2203 + vat £385.52
	Victoria Street (unadopted would require gating order)	£2486 + vat £435.05
	TOTAL COST inc vat	£5509.50

4 Background

- 4.1 Residents who live in areas with rear alleyways often experience anti social behaviour; evidence is often found of drug taking activity; fly tipping, dog fouling and graffiti.
- 4.2 Community Safety Services and Oldham Partnership has adopted many tactics to reduce domestic burglary and anti social behaviour. One of these tactics is to prevent easy access for criminals to the rear of homes. The installation of lockable gates at the end of each alleyway makes access to the rear far more difficult whilst providing peace of mind to the residents.
- 4.3 Of course other forms of target hardening or environmental improvements are available to reduce crime and disorder. Oldham's Community Safety Services regularly uses other tactics including improved lighting, increased security in dwellings (including alarms, locks, security lighting) and crime prevention education.
- 4.4 The benefits of alleygating are considerable and range from real reductions in levels of domestic burglary through to the creation of defensible space for

local residents. Reclaiming the areas at the rear of their properties enables residents to create safe places for their children to play and where they can meet their neighbours and develop a stronger sense of community. It also provides an area that non residents find difficult to access so providing residents with an element of control, enabling them to keep the areas clean and providing an opportunity for them to enhance the area by making environmental improvements such as introducing flowers, planters and benches.

5 Current Position

5.1 To date, the Crime Reduction Team in Community Safety Services have completed 367 alleygating projects, installing 1,050 gates in problem areas around Oldham. These gates are now providing protection, peace of mind and reassurance to 10,019 homes in Oldham; the total cost has been £1,207,115.

5.2 The table below provides the current position in Oldham and provides details of data relevant to the Chadderton neighbourhood.

Area	No of Projects	No of Gates	Expenditure
Oldham West	83	235	293,068
Oldham East	63	193	219,708
Failsworth / Hollinwood	99	297	319,950
Royton, Shaw & Crompton	33	68	75,967
Chadderton	81	239	273,821
Saddleworth & Lees	8	18	24,600
Total	367	1,050	£1,207,114

5.3 The following is an update of all the alleyways the District Partnership has commissioned Community Safety Services to investigate, and where possible, to progress gating installation.

North ward	Location	Update	Costs
	Butterworth Street (1)	Gates installed	£2108 (£368.90)

South ward	Location	Update	Cost
	Wem, Street/Thompson Lane	Gates installed	£6323 (£1106.53 vat)
	Priory Grove/Thompson Lane	Gates installed	
	Summercroft Derby Street	Resident consultation still in progress	£3,500 (£612.50 vat)
	Higher House Close/Scholes Drive	Resident consultation failed to meet 80% approval rate and in addition insufficient crime levels to justify gating order application. Project withdrawn, residents informed.	£3,200 (£560 vat)

Central ward	Location	Update	Cost
	Geneva Walk/Lucerne Close/Landsdowne Road	Gating Order application now at final stage of public advert. If there are no objections at this stage gating installation should commence mid March 2010.	£2,825 (£494.37vat)
	Denton Lane (213- 247)	At second stage resident consultation	£3,500 (£612.50 vat)
	Denton Lane (212 – 266) Including Fourth Ave/Mendip Close/Pagnall Court and Brooklands Ave	At second stage resident consultation	£6,000 (£1050 vat)

6 Options/Alternatives

6.1 Other options have been investigated and to large extent many of these options are still utilised as tactics to reduce domestic burglary, crime and disorder. Target hardening of properties is a common option and can be focused on individual properties where individual and specific problems are

identified. This as an option will continue but alleygating of back alleyways can be more cost effective and has numerous additional benefits as outlined previously. The average cost of target hardening a home in Oldham is £180 where the average cost to securing a home by alleygating is £120.

7 Preferred Option

7.1 The preferred option is for the Chadderton District Partnership to continue funding the gating of problem alleyways in Chadderton. To continue this initiative is to continue with the valuable work already carried out by Community Safety Services in reducing crime and anti social behaviour in the Chadderton neighbourhood

The preferred option is to gate those alleyways listed below that have previously been identified as being problem areas. The information that has driven this initiative had been drawn from police data and analysis, resident's consultation and referrals from elected members and local neighbourhood officers. It should be remembered that if this preferred option is progressed that the activity in actually gating these areas depends on the results of resident consultation and the achievement of an approval rate of 80% or more. If this is not achieved then the gating of these areas cannot be carried out.

The funding for these schemes will come from the North ward Councillors Safe, Clean and Green budget of £14,500.

These alleyways are as follows.

Ref No.	Location	Areas Covered	No.of gates	Cost	Background
	Butterworth Street (2)	2 gates at Butterworth Street 10 –30 to include 19 – 25 Andrew St and 62 - 68 Wellington St	2	£2203 + vat £385.52	ASB and quality of life issues
	Victoria Street		2	£2486 + vat £435.05	ASB and quality of life issues
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST TO DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP. Chadderton North £5509.50					

8 Consultation

Resident Consultation

8.1 Ideally, successful alleygating schemes require the support and consent of all residents who live along the alley to be gated and as such are directly affected by the closure of the alley. Transitory resident's views will be considered in the same way as those of a permanent resident. Under normal

circumstances, consultation does not take place directly with landlords or Registered Social Landlords, unless the property is empty or void.

- 8.2 Initially, letters are sent to all those parties above, detailing the proposal to gate the alleyway, outlining the advantages and any possible disadvantages. The letter will be accompanied by a leaflet and voting form. The completion and return of the form and its contents will show the initial level of support from local residents.

9 **Financial Implications**

- 9.1 The cost of fitting alleygates will be met from either funding held within the Community Safety Services Section or from District partnership funds.

10 **Legal Services Comments**

- 10.1 Gating orders are made under powers inserted into the Highways Act 1980 by the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Before making a gating order, the Council must be satisfied that premises adjoining or adjacent to the highway subject to the order are affected by crime or anti social behaviour, the existence of the highway is facilitating the persistent commission of criminal offences or anti social behaviour and it is in all the circumstances expedient to make the order for the purposes of reducing crime or anti social behaviour. In considering whether it is expedient to make the order, the Council should have regard to the likely effect of making the order on the occupiers of premises adjoining or adjacent to the highway, the likely effect of making the order on other persons in the locality and in a case where the highway constitutes a through route, the availability of a reasonably convenient alternative route. (A Evans)

11 **Human Resources Comments**

- 11.1 N/A

12 **Risk Assessments**

- 12.1 There are non – specific at this stage.

13 **IT Implications**

- 13.1 None

14 **Property Implications**

- 14.1 The proposals will improve the security of residential properties in the areas, reducing the opportunity for crime and removing the fear of crime for residents.
- 14.2 The improved security of the area will enhance the feeling of well being and quality of life, positively affecting the liveability aspect of the community.

15 **Procurement Implications**

15.1 N/A

16 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

16.1 There are non – specific at this stage.

17 **Community Cohesion Implications [including Crime & Disorder Implications in accordance with Section 17 of the Act] and Equalities Implications**

17.1 The proposals will improve the security of residential properties in the areas, reducing the opportunity for crime and removing the fear of crime for residents.

17.2 The improved security of the area will enhance the feeling of well being and quality of life, positively affecting the liveability aspect of the community.

18 **Forward Plan Reference**

18.1 N/A

19 **Key Decision**

19.1 No

20 **Background Papers**

20.1 The following is a list of the background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents, which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by that Act:

Report to cabinet on 21/10/09. Scrutiny review: Alleygating

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21 **Appendices**

21.1 None