

Alleygating – Failsworth Hollinwood

Report of the Head of Community Safety Services

Portfolio Responsibility: Neighbourhoods

12th September 2011

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Purpose of Report

To request funding from the District Partnership for the following projects:

Failsworth West

Sydney St (2-12 and 1-9)
Hulton St (6-20)

Failsworth East

Minor Street (168–178) with Mersey Rd Nth (23–37) with Mable Rd and Norman St
Minor Street (110-134) with Sheply St and Stansfield Rd

Hollinwood

Fox Street (4-48) Limeside Road (69-75)

Previous reports gave details of those areas in Failsworth and Hollinwood that had been identified as areas suffering from a range of problems including burglary, 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. Alleygating has now been carried out successfully in several areas of Failsworth and Hollinwood but there are however still many areas where problems still exist and therefore would also benefit from the installation of security gates.

This report has been prepared to look into the detail of these areas and as such will act as information to assist the Failsworth and Hollinwood District Partnership to make informed decisions as to where to concentrate these resources.

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.

The benefits of alley gating are now well documented; the success of this single crime reduction intervention has been unprecedented. Several years on and the popularity of alley gating with residents of Oldham continues. Community Safety Services continue to be saturated, on a daily basis, with calls and requests for new projects. This report will provide the detail as to where Failsworth and Hollinwood District Partnership can best direct resources and provide evidence that will form intelligence led methodology.

Recommendations

For the Failsworth and Hollinwood District Partnership to give approval to installing alleygates in those identified areas. This will be in addition to alleygating activity presently ongoing but funded by Community Safety Services

Failsworth West

Sydney St (2-12 and 1-9)

Hulton St (6-20)

estimated cost £3000

Failsworth East

Minor Street (168 – 178) with Mersey Rd Nth (23 – 37) Mable rd and Norman St

Minor Street (110-134) Sheply St/ Stansfield Rd. estimated cost £5,000

Hollinwood

Fox Street (4-48) Limeside Road (69-75)

estimated cost £4,000

The funding to be awarded from sources available to the District partnership and 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

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Portfolio Responsibility: neighbourhoods

1.1 Purpose of Report

For the Failsworth and Hollinwood District Partnership to give approval to installing alleygates in the following areas.

Failsworth West

Sydney St (2-12 and 1-9)
Hulton St (6-20)

Failsworth East

Minor Street (168 – 178) with Mersey Rd Nth (23 – 37) Mable Rd and Norman St
Minor Street (110-134) Sheply St/ Stansfield Rd.

Hollinwood

Fox Street (4-48) Limeside Road (69-75)

- 1.2 Previous reports gave details of those areas in Failsworth and Hollinwood that had been identified as areas suffering from a range of problems including burglary, 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. Alley gating has now been carried out successfully in several areas of Failsworth and Hollinwood but there are however still many areas where problems still exist and therefore would also benefit from the installation of security gates.
- 1.3 This report has been prepared to look into the detail of these areas and as such will act as information to assist the District Partnership to make informed decisions as to where to concentrate these most recent resources.
- 1.4 This supplementary report has now been prepared to look into the greater detail and as such will act as additional and more detailed information to assist the District Partnership to make informed decisions as to where to concentrate resources.

2 Executive Summary

- 2.1 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.
- 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 The benefits of alley gating are now well documented; the success of this single crime reduction intervention has been unprecedented. Several years on and the popularity of alley gating with residents of Oldham continues. Community Safety Services continue to be saturated, on a daily basis, with calls and requests for new projects. This report will provide the detail as to where the District Partnership can best direct resources and provide evidence that will form intelligence led methodology.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 For the Failsworth and Hollinwood District Partnership to give approval to installing alleygates in those identified areas. This will be in addition to alleygating activity presently ongoing in these areas but funded by Community Safety Services.

Failsworth West

Sydney St (2-12 and 1-9)

Hulton St (6-20)

Failsworth East

Minor Street (168 – 178) with Mersey Rd Nth (23 – 37) Mable Rd and Norman St

Minor Street (110-134) Sheply St/ Stansfield Rd

Hollinwood

Fox Street (4-48) Limeside Road (69-75)

- 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.

The funding to be awarded from sources available to the District partnership.

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 has completed 542 alley gating projects, installing 1,427 gates in problem areas around Oldham. These gates are now providing protection, peace of mind and reassurance to 14,020 homes in Oldham; the total cost has been £1,711,002.

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

Area	No of Projects	No of Gates	Expenditure
Oldham West	115	293	395,792
Oldham East	84	245	295,494
Failsworth / Hollinwood	119	330	376,945
Royton, Shaw & Crompton	98	220	256,272
Chadderton	109	299	339,200
Saddleworth & Lees	17	28	47,299
Total	542	1427	1,711,002

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 Failsworth and Hollinwood District Partnership to continue with the gating of problem alleyways. 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 Failsworth and Hollinwood neighbourhood.

The preferred option is to gate those alleyways listed below that have 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.

These alleyways are as follows.

FAILSWORTH WEST					
Ref No.	Location		No. of gates	Estimated cost	Background
	2 – 12 and 1-9 Sydney St 6-20 Hulton Street and the rear of 221/3 Oldham Rd		2/3	3000	ASB

FAILSWORTH EAST					
Ref No.	Location		No. of gates	Estimated cost	Background
517	Minor St 168-178 Mersey Rd Nth 23-37 With Mable Road and 19-41 Norman Street		3	3000	ASB
538	Minor Street 110-134 with Shepley St/Stansfield Rd		2	2000	ASB

HOLLINWOOD					
Ref No.	Location		No. of gates	Estimated cost	Background
500	Fox St 4-48 Limeside Rd 69-75		3 with fencing	4000	Burglary/ASB

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 funding held within 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.

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: Alley gating

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21 **Appendices**

21.1 None

