## **Report to Cabinet**

# Don't Trash Oldham/Transformation: Year End Review and Next Steps

#### Portfolio Holder(s):

Cllr A Shah, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Reform & Regeneration Cllr C Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

#### Officer Contact(s):

Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive Nasir Dad, Director of Environment

#### **Report Authors:**

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18th March 2024

#### Reason for Report:

Clean streets and tackling issues of fly tipping and littering that blight our communities remain a priority for Oldham residents and for the Council. The second iteration of Don't Trash Oldham (DTO) campaign commenced in October 2022, and in addition to community engagement, it also focused on betterment / transforming communities by working with ward members and this was supported by a limited budget for each area, which could be used to realise the requests of Councillors.

This end of year report details the outcomes and achievements of the Transformation campaign, examines the lessons learned (what has worked and what could be improved) and proposes some new measures / targeted interventions for the future, which strike a balance between new ways of working and addressing the ongoing environmental challenges faced by the residents of Oldham and the Councils approach in addressing such challenges.

#### Recommendations:

Cabinet is asked to:

- 1. Note the achievements of the Don't Trash Oldham/Transformation Campaign across the borough between 2022 and 2023
- Approve the priorities listed in Section 4 of the report, which aim to provide a sustainable and deliverable legacy for the DTO/Transformation campaigns and outline key areas of focus moving forward

3. Delegate to Director of Environment and the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the prioritisation of funding for the delivery of priorities

Cabinet 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024

#### 1. Don't Trash Oldham Campaign: Background

- 1.1 The 'Don't Trash Oldham' (DTO) campaign commenced in September 2021, with the aim of cleaning all council owned alleys and road infrastructure of fly tipped/dumped waste and litter across the borough, on a ward-by-ward basis, spanning a full calendar year. The first year of the campaign concluded on 30 October 2022 with the end of year findings reported at that time.
- 1.2 From October 2022 to October 2023, the DTO campaign morphed into a Betterment phase to transform neighbourhoods and build on the legacy work from year one. This was backed up by intensive enforcement and clean up activity in highlighted 'hotspot' neighbourhoods. The accepted aim of this programme was to 'make a difference'. This included visibly improving areas, ensuring detailed attention and physical improvements that were not always deliverable as part of routine work.
- 1.3 For the transforming neighbourhoods' elements of programme to work effectively, a material budget of £3,000 per ward was allocated. To understand the local area and ward member priorities for the focus of the work, meetings were held between the Communities Team, ward members and officers from the Environmental Services to understand the requests and agree what was deliverable within the timescale and budget. Meetings typically took place a month before the teams were due to visit the locality and work in each area typically lasted 4 weeks.
- 1.4 This report provides a summary of the work completed boroughwide this includes details of engagement with members, the work completed, waste removed from wards, a summary of the enforcement action undertaken, and the wider improvement(s) achieved because of the additional funding.
- 1.5 Finally, the report also outlines proposals on how the legacy of DTO/Betterment campaign will be embedded and what this will look like moving forward. There is a recognition that given the work completed over the last 2 iterations of DTO/Betterment, a sustainable approach is needed to ensure previous gains are not lost and a more durable model is adopted moving forward, which meets the needs of the borough, the residents and ensures a clean environment for all.

#### 2. End of Year Performance Review

2.1 This section outlines the principal areas of work completed as part of the Betterment campaign / Transforming Neighbourhoods (2022/23) along with details of the specific activity and outcomes achieved.

#### 2.2 Targeted Hot Spot Enforcement & Cleanup

- 2.2.1 Integral to the option approved at cabinet in September 2022 was a targeted approach in the known hotspot locations with enforcement and a dedicated clean-up to influence a sustained behaviour change amongst residents.
- 2.2.2 This focused activity involved consistent enforcement and clean-up work across 5 of the inner town wards of Alexandra, Medlock vale, St. Marys, Waterhead and Werneth. Coupled with this reactive work, the Enforcement Officers and Environment Marshals served legal notices to ensure private yards are cleared and any defects resolved.
- 2.2.3 As part of this work, a range of visits, advice and enforcement actions were undertaken, and these are summarised below:
  - 4,996 service requests (average of 416 per month)
  - 1,741 enforcement actions taken (average of 145 per month)
  - 41 prosecutions taken to court or submitted to legal
  - 166 FPNs served
- 2.2.4 The focused work in the identified hotspot locations resulted in a significant amount of waste being removed. The recorded weight removed per ward during this period has been recorded on a weekly basis so that trends can be examined, and the impact of this approach further analysed this is presented in Appendix 1.
- 2.2.5 The use of mobile CCTV cameras has also been trialled in certain rural locations where repeat flytipping incidents were reported and investigated. The existence of these overt cameras and accompanying signage did, by their very nature, deter potential fly-tippers. However, the images captured have so far not identified those responsible, and therefore, officers have been unable to progress a case to prosecution. In one location in particular, the CCTV system was subject to vandalism and theft of the hardware, but in general, where these cameras are installed, there was a reduction in the volume of reports and incidents.

#### 2.3 Betterment Works / Transforming Neighbourhoods

- 2.3.1 Transforming neighbourhoods' projects were completed in areas identified by local ward members and the aim was to ensure general improvements, and to leave the area in a welcoming and improved state. Given the scale of the exercise, the campaign was split over 12 months and the timetable is listed below:
  - St James & Waterhead: 31 October 2022 to 25 November 2022
  - Hollinwood: 28 November 2022 to 23 December 2022
  - Chadderton North & Coldhurst: 2 January 2023 to 27 January 2023
  - Chadderton Central & Chadderton South: 30 January 30 to 24 February 2023
  - Royton (both wards): 27 February to 31 March 2023
  - Medlock & Werneth: 3 April to 28 April 2023
  - Alexandra: 8 May to 2 June 2023
  - St Mary's: 5 June to 30 June 2023
  - Shaw & Crompton: 3 July to 28 July 2023
  - Failsworth (both wards): 31 July to 25 August 2023
  - Saddleworth (3 wards): 28 August to 29 September 2023

2.3.2 Details of work in each ward, with photos showing the improvements, are listed in Appendix 2. However, the work was varied and although cleaning and removal of litter was done in every area identified, some wards were subject to additional works – these included path works, pruning, weeding, tree, and bulb planting.

#### 2.4 Milestones

- 2.4.1 As part of the engagement with members after the first iteration of DTO, there was significant feedback from some wards regarding the status of milestones specifically, that they needed refurbishment and maintenance. To address this issue as part of the Betterment campaign, all Milestones in the borough were identified through review of records and engagement with residents and ward members.
- 2.4.2 To date, 10 milestones have been refurbished. Given the specialist and weather dependent nature of the work, it is anticipated that work will begin again in Spring 2024 on the remaining milestones. A full breakdown of all milestones and their status is available in Appendix 3

#### 2.5 Community Engagement

- 2.5.1 The focus of the Engagement Team over the last twelve months shifted towards the Cost-of-Living response. In April 2023, the team was realigned into five District Teams, to allow for more targeted local support. While the team have not been specifically attached to Don't Trash Oldham, they have continued to hold conversations and provide information to residents around environmental issues, and the alignment to Districts has ensured that this has happened across all areas of Oldham.
- 2.5.2 During the 12 months from October 2022 to September 2023, the team have had 26,548 conversations with residents. Of these, 795 households raised environmental issues. The most commonly raised issues were:
  - Flytipping 238 households
  - Vermin 90 households
  - Overgrown trees 84 households
  - Overgrown land 61 households
  - Noise nuisance 42 households
- 2.5.3 The team signposted a total of 1,069 for environmental issues (Note this reflects the fact that some households received multiple pieces of advice / signposting). A breakdown of this can be seen in the Table below.

Signposting	Number of Signpostings	Signposting	Number of Signpostings
Environmental Health	522	MART - Only	5
Waste Management	274	Regenda	5
MART - Other Signposting	59	Age UK	4
FCHO	47	Places For People	3
Council Website - Other	32	United Utilities	3
Council Help Line	31	Guinness Partnership	2
Highways	28	How are you feeling/we can help	2
None	18	Money Advice Toolkit	2
Bulky Bobs	11	Police 101 and 101 Online	1
Crimestoppers	11	Residents' Panel	1
Onward Homes	8		

2.5.4 Doorstep engagement work has provided valuable insight and intelligence, as well as the opportunity to signpost or intervene earlier by supporting residents with issues that may previously not have come to the attention of services. The team frequently advised residents on where to report issues, signpost to services, flag issues, and work closely as part of the district teams to enable a comprehensive response to more complex problems when they arose.

#### 2.6 Community Awareness & Communications

- 2.6.1 Don't Trash Oldham / Betterment has been one of the Councils most high profile and successful communications campaigns of the last several years both in terms of output and engagement. The campaign has attracted interest from other local authorities and has been replicated across the country. In 2022, it was shortlisted for a Local Government Chronicle Award.
- 2.6.2 Over the past 12 months, DTO & Betterment has featured across all the council's communications channels, including social media, press releases, briefings & resident newsletters. News and information has been shared in the Oldham media and regionally. Communications have been both proactive and reactive, and have included messages promoting council services, neighbourhood improvement works, community partnership working, details of how residents can get involved in the campaign and information on how to report environmental crimes.
- 2.6.3 During the same period, the Council has also promoted days and weeks of action and national events such as Great Britain Tidy's, The Great British Spring Clean, and Love Park's Week. Over the past 12 months, the Communications team has also provided updates on successful prosecutions that have been concluded. In addition to the above, and linked to the Betterment campaign, details of boroughwide tree planting, promotion of our parks, green spaces and visibility of campaigns using traditional and new media channels has continued. Below is an article that was recently published in the Council's 'Oldham Council Working for

You', which is delivered to more than 90,000 homes across the borough. It signposts residents to services, shows completed works and highlights how environmental issues impact people and the borough.



#### 3.0 Areas of Improvement / Lessons Learned

3.1 Given the scale and duration of the programme, there is a recognition that there are areas for improvement which need to be addressed moving forward. The main learning points are discussed further, below.

#### 3.2 Member Engagement

3.2.1 It has become clear during the programme that not all members engaged in the process, and in some cases, little or no discussion or programme of work was created. The absence of such engagement, therefore, required officers from Environmental Services to fill the gap, by undertaking work that they felt would benefit the ward. In addition, there was also a change in elected members during the Betterment campaign, and this may have also contributed to the issue. As part of any future campaign and embedding of the improvements achieved, ward member engagement will be key to any success and long-term sustainability – see future options section.

#### 3.3 Lack of Resident Engagement/Compliance

3.3.1 It has become apparent during the two years the DTO/Betterment campaign has been active that some residents have not embraced the change/recognised the work being undertaken to improve and clean their areas and have continued to fly tip waste. Alleys where gates were introduced to provide community safety, control of the immediate space around the rear of resident's properties, and to prevent fly tipping are still subjected to fly tipping. It is, therefore, evident that the flytipping is being generated by the properties that back onto the space and alternative models for enforcement (use of CCTV where appropriate) will have to be considered.

#### 3.4 Commercial/Criminal Flytipping

3.4.1 Commercial fly tipping, typically the 'man with a van' or those linked to organised crime has continued over the past 12 months – although more focused in rural areas, the cost from such criminality remains significant and it also remains a challenge to enforce against. Several media campaigns, both local and regional, have been undertaken to remind residents of their 'duty of care' and to only use reputable and licensed waste removal companies. However, the challenge remains. Options for dealing with this challenge are discussed further in this report. A key aspect of this will include CCTV, both covert and overt.

#### 3.5. Unadopted/Unregistered Alleyways

3.5.1 This issue has remained a significant challenge throughout the Betterment exercise. There are approximately 300 such alleyways in Oldham, stretching over 32km in length. Their legal status means that the Council has, typically, not taken any ownership or done any maintenance as they either belong to the residents who back on to them or are under no one's ownership. During the Betterment campaign, it became clear that these alleys were a priority for some ward members, and therefore, it was agreed that where ward members wanted these to be cleaned/vegetation removed, this work would be done and would be

incorporated into the time spent in that ward. However, given the scale of the ask, and change in approach midway through the programme, only a small number of such alleyways were maintained.

- 3.5.2 Any work in unadopted / unregistered alleys or change to the approach needs to consider legal challenges and the issue of liability. Unadopted alleys remain a priority for some ward members but require significant resource and materials. As part of the DTO/Betterment legacy, there needs to be a consideration about the scale of work, the investment needed and the long-term sustainability of the chosen approach.
- 3.5.3 In addition to the issues listed above, through resident and ward member engagement, additional issues have also been identified which remain a priority for the aforementioned. A key area being gulley cleaning and maintenance. The current approach to gully cleaning requires changes as it is unable to meet the current demand. As part of future options, this issue is also considered further.

#### 4.0. Future Priorities

- 4.1 It is clear that, over the last 2 years, both the DTO and Betterment/Transformation campaigns have delivered significant improvements boroughwide, changed behaviours, and where necessary, secured legal action against individuals and businesses that were committing environmental crimes. It is also clear that, in some areas, fly tipping remains a problem and although there have been some improvements, overall, the problem remains persistent.
- 4.2 In addition to the above, as the campaigns have delivered their priorities, additional issues have also been identified that require attention, with the main ones being unadopted/unregistered alleys and gully cleaning (boroughwide).
- 4.3 Given the above, and the need to consider additional / different options to build on the successes and to focus resources where needed the most, below, there are several priorities, which it is felt, could deliver a longer lasting and effective approach and build on the successes of the last two years and also deliver on the lessons learned.

#### 4.4 Priority 1

- 4.4.1. Continue to target known hotspot locations with focused enforcement and quick pick up to remove the waste as soon as possible to deter further flytipping.
- 4.4.2 Realignment of resources to improve the clean-up response times in targeted hotspot locations.
- 4.4.3 Actively link enforcement activity into the wider Pest Control and housing enforcement work within Environmental Health

#### 4.5 **Priority 2**

4.5.1 Merge the Hot spot enforcement / flytipping team in Environmental Health with those already in place in Environmental Services to create one larger, more responsive team that combines enforcement and street cleansing/ pick up.

4.5.2 Priority 2 will then focus deliver on the 5-district model and ensure a quicker and more effective service around waste and fly tip removal. The enforcement activity would be linked in with active responsive clearance but also combined with the Pest control / Housing enforcement functions.

#### 4.6 **Priority 3**

4.6.1 Maximise opportunities to bid for extra resources from Government to tackle flytipping issues on the back of the success of the DTO/Betterment investment. Officers are currently working on a bid for £50k to support a number of mobile, rechargeable, battery powered CCTV camera packages for use in rear alleyways and other hotspot locations.

#### 4.7 Priority 4

- 4.7.1 New, boroughwide approach to gulley cleaning to address the persistent complaints regarding the Service.
- 4.7.2 This investment will result in a coordinated, ward by ward operation which will result in the cleaning of every gulley.
- 4.7.3 After completion, future delivery will be supported through existing resources.

#### 4.8 **Priority 5**

- 4.8.1 The District Teams will continue to work alongside Environmental Services to support Members and community groups to take part in social action within their neighbourhoods, including those people wishing to organise litter picks, enhance open spaces, or improve the condition of their alleyway.
- 4.8.2 The developing District Community Councils will provide a new forum within which local schemes can be prioritised, giving an option for a more formal process around agreeing key areas to target.
- 4.8.3 The strengthening of operational partnership co-ordination through the emerging PBI structures will allow for a more joined-up response in those circumstances where environmental issues are only one part of the challenge in an area.

#### 4.9 Priority 6

- 4.9.1 The cleansing team currently undertakes scheduled maintenance of adopted alleys boroughwide.
- 4.9.2 Expanding the role to unadopted alleys would significantly increase the workload and expectations would have to be managed.
- 4.9.3 A ward by ward approach could be undertaken, spread over a number of years and could result in a one-off cleaning removal of waste, vegetation, weeds, moss, and algae, which effectively gives the alley back to the residents to ensure they can utilise the space. This input would also encourage residents to respect the place and discourages further flytipping.

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to progress this in the ratare.	
This option will be further developed and subject to approval and budget if a decisior to progress this in the future.	n is made

#### 5 Financial Implications

5.1. This report deals with a number of different options, taking each one in turn and the potential financial impact please see financial comments below –

Option 1 - No further financial resource required, this option can be funded from existing budget resource.

Option 2 - No further financial resource required, this option can be funded from existing budget resource.

Option 3 - No further financial resource required, this option can be funded from existing budget resource.

Option 4 – This option is being dealt with by a separate Delegated Officer Report named "Gulley Cleaning Review and Restructure". The additional financial resource required for this option has been calculated at £43,060.

Option 5 – No further financial resource required, this option can be funded from existing budget resource.

Option 6 – It is noted that Option 6 will require a significant financial resource due to the number of unadopted alleys boroughwide. Therefore, if a decision is taken to approve this option, this will form part of a separate report to fully identify the financial resource required.

(John Hoskins)

#### 6 Legal Implications

6.1. Any use of covert CCTV cameras will require authorisation under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, including authorisation by a magistrate before they can be used. (Alan Evans)

#### 7 Co-operative Agenda

7.1 The report identifies the achievements of the 'Don't Trash Oldham' campaign. A core cooperative element of this campaign was to work in social partnership with residents to both clean up areas within the borough and prevent further littering and fly-tipping.

(James Mulvaney, Policy Manager)

#### 8 Human Resource Implications

8.1 If Option 1 or 2 are approved the appropriate authorisations must be sought to establish and recruit to the new roles following Council processes to ensure a fair and transparent process. The job description with grade and job evaluation reference should be attached to this report as an appendix. (Catherine Reed, Strategic HR Lead)

#### 9 Environmental and Health & Safety Implications

9.1 This work is designed to support a holistic approach to improving the local environment. The current boroughwide initiative (Betterment) has provided a much-needed boost to the local environment, whilst giving the opportunity for All Ward Councillors to play an active part in the improvements made.

(Glenn Dale, Head of Environmental Services)

The Environmental and Health and safety implications are covered throughout the main body of the report and each service lead is responsible for the risk assessments required to ensure the health and safety of all colleagues are always considered.

(Neil Crabtree, Head of Public Protection)

#### 10 IT Implications

10.1 None.

#### 11 Property Implications

11.1 Comments are contained in the report in the restricted part of the agenda.

#### 12 Procurement Implications

12.1 Comments are contained in the report in the restricted part of the agenda.

#### 13 Environmental and Health & Safety Implications

13.1 Comments are contained in the report in the restricted part of the agenda.

# 14 Community cohesion, including crime and disorder implications in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

14.1 The proposals to tackle fly-tipping within the Don't Trash Oldham campaign should contribute positively to community cohesion. Fly-tipping has a negative impact upon communities and contributes to creating areas where people choose not to live. (Natalie Downs, Stronger Communities Manager).

Community Safety – s17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998: Fly-tipping is a signal crime which causes a blight on the communities where it occurs. There are a significant number of Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) across the borough, which complement the DTO campaign as the terms prohibit the discarding or storing of waste in alley ways. Consultation is due to start on the introduction of 5 overarching Place PSPOs, the terms of which will also allow for proactive development of the alleys as community spaces, with the written consent of the Council, which the supports the betterment/transformation development work.

(Lorraine Kenny, Head of Community Safety Services)

15	Oldham Equality Impact Assessment, including implications for Children and
	Young People

- 15.1 Yes
- 16 Key Decision
- 16.1 Yes
- 17 Key Decision Reference
- 17.1 NEI-01-24
- 18 **Background Papers**
- 19.1 None
- 19 **Appendices**
- 19.1 Contained in this report



#### Appendix 1 – Table showing month by month waste collection from hotspot areas.

Week Com	Werneth	Alexandra	Waterhead	Medlock	St Marys	Total KG
				Vale		
28 Aug	1560	1100	680	1020	1260	5620
4 Sept	640	1900	2200	360	1100	6200
11 Sept	1540	1140	1040	620	540	4880
18 Sept	100	640	780	800	1380	3700
25 Sept	1440	880	1440	820	620	5200
2 Oct	1300	940	1200	200	480	4120
9 Oct	1920	940	320	740	2020	4740
16 Oct	1760	1560	560	280	1380	5540
23 Oct	1640	300	1460	860	1240	5500
30 Oct	440	700	1200	280	2120	4740
6 Nov	1520	940	1940	200	940	5540
13 Nov	1620	600	2000	100	1260	5580
20 Nov	1240	460	3820	960	500	6980
27 Nov	1580	960	1960	520	880	5900

#### \_Appendix 2 – Betterment programme, Ward by Ward



### Appendix 3 – Milestones and their status

Road	Town\Area	Location	TM Required	Comments	Completed
A640 Rochdale Rd (North	Denshaw	200 Yds NW of Junction	No	No 6 Metal on stone	Yes
A640 Huddersfield Rd (South)	Denshaw	Embankment of dowry Reservoir	Yes	On Footpath Metal	Yes
A640 Huddersfield Rd (North)	Denshaw Moor	1/4 Mile South of County Boundary	No	Lay by opposite. Stone\Metal	Yes
A62 Huddersfield Road (South)	Scouthead	20 Yds West of Three Crowns inn	No	Opp 977 at L\C 139	Yes
A62 Oldham Road (North)	Delph	50 Yds SW of the Sound	No	At Bus Stop Shelter	Yes

A 669 Oldham Road (North)	Grass croft	Junction Of Parkfield	No		Yes
A 669 Chew Valley Road (South)	Greenfield	100 yds west of Clarence Hotel	Yes	Opp L\C 45 & 46	Yes
Huddersfield Road (East)	Diggle	100 yds S of ward Lane	No		Yes
A670 Oldham Road (West)	Uppermill	side of navigation inn	no		yes
A672 Oldham Road (West)	Old Tame	30yrds S of Horest Lane	No	Side of 98	To be done
A6052 Denshaw Road (North)	Linfitts, Delph	20 Yds N of N58 Stubbing	Yes	opp L\C 23	To be done
A670 Mossley Rd (North)	Grasscroft	50Yds E of clough Lane	Yes	Ivy Needs trimming back	To be done

A635 Holmfirth Road (North)	Greenfield	1/4 Mile South of Upperwood house	Yes		To be done
Huddersfield Road (west)	Diggle	100yds N of Ridge Lane	yes		To be done
Platting Road (East)	Lydgate	100 yds N of Grotton Hall	yes	need grass cutting back	To be done
A672 Ripponden Rd	Denshaw	1/4 Mile north of junction inn PH	?	NO MARKER FOUND	-
A6052 Delph Rd (East)	Delph\Denshaw	100 yds N of green Ash	Yes	NO MARKER FOUND	-
A62 Oldham Road (North)	Wall Hill	100Yds Southwest of wall hill road	No	NO MARKER FOUND	-
A62 Huddersfield Road (North)	Delph	100 Yds SW of Laceby Farm	?	NO MARKER FOUND	-

A62 Huddersfield Road (North)	Delph	20 Yards N of Pack Horse Lane	?	NO MARKER FOUND	-
A 669 Oldham Road (South)	Grotton	100yds of Coverhill Road	?	NO MARKER FOUND	-
A635 Holmfirth Road (North)	Greenfield	1/4 Mile south of Binn Green	?	NO MARKER FOUND	-
A635 Holmfirth Road (North)	Saddleworth Moor	Hollin Brow Knoll 1/2 M S of Boundry	Yes	NO MARKER FOUND	-
A 670 Standedge Road (West)	Diggle	100 Yds of Carr Lane	?	NO MARKER FOUND	-
A 669 Oldham Road (South)	Grotton			At junction of Oldham Road and Hillside Avenue	
A672 Ripponden Rd	Denshaw	1/4 Mile north of junction inn PH	?		

A6052 Delph Rd (East)	Delph\Denshaw	100 yds N of green Ash	Yes		
A62 Oldham Road (North)	Wall Hill	100Yds Southwest of wall hill road	No	On Google maps, this appears to have been done.	
A62 Huddersfield Road (North)	Delph	100 Yds SW of Laceby Farm	?		
A62 Huddersfield Road (North)	Delph	20 Yards N of Pack Horse Lane	?	Near junction of Old Pack Horse Road	
A635 Holmfirth Road (North)	Greenfield	1/4 Mile south of Binn Green	?		
A635 Holmfirth Road (North)	Saddleworth Moor	Hollin Brow Knoll 1/2 M S of Boundary	Yes	County border line	
A 670 Standedge Road (West)	Diggle	100 Yds of Carr Lane	?		