

Report to: **EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

Date: **15<sup>TH</sup> March 2006**

Report of: **DIRECTOR OF ADULT SERVICES**

Contact: **MATTHEW EMERSON**

Tel No: **33 (8427)**



**Report No.**

**TITLE OF REPORT:**

**Update on the use of Alley Gating In Bolton**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Executive Member is asked to note the report.

**DECISION**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leader / Executive Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Monitoring Officer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

This report provides an update to members on the implementation of alley gating in Bolton. Detailed information is provided on the use of the alley gating policy to date, how consultation has been carried out within the community, areas identified, use of funding and future development of the project.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 An alley gating policy for Bolton was approved in September 2005.
- 1.3 Funding (£200,000) has been made available through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and the Environment Department to fund alley gating projects in the borough to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The process for managing the funding operates within the boundaries of the policy.
- 1.4 Community Safety Services have overseen the process and had direct responsibility for identifying suitable areas for alley gating. Bolton at Home have carried out the consultation with residents on behalf of Community Safety and provided project management arrangements for the implementation process.
- 1.5 The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 acquired royal assent last summer but, as yet, the parts relating to gating orders have not come into force.

## **1. Funding**

- 1.1 The funding made available for alley gating is split into two lots,
- NRF £100,000
  - Environmental Services £100,000
- 1.2 There is a requirement on the NRF element to be spent by the end of March 2006 whereas there is no such time limit on the Environmental Services allocation. With this in mind, the process for managing alley gating has been split into two phases.

## **2. Phase 1 2005/2006 - Neighbourhood Renewal Fund**

- 2.1 The primary focus for phase 1 was to target alley ways which would prove more 'straight forward' in terms of closure. Unadopted, non-highways do not require formal closures and, unless there is opposition from residents, can be closed with minimal difficulty. The phase 1 approach was thus taken to ensure the NRF funding allocated could be spent to the funding deadline set.

## **3 Phase 2 April 2006 + - Environmental Services Allocation**

- 3.1 A broader approach will be taken in phase 2. It is envisaged that the relevant parts of the Cleaner Neighbourhood and Environment Act will be 'live' by March enabling problematic alley ways which are public rights of way to be tackled as well. As the process for a formal closure can be lengthy, the Environmental Services allocation, with no time limit, will be utilised.

## **4 Identifying Alley Ways**

- 4.1 Requests for alley gates have come from a variety of sources including elected members, police, housing officers and members of the public. The type of alley way referred also varies in terms of problems encountered, location, housing tenure and highway status.
- 4.2 All requests are assessed individually by Community Safety Services against a number of criteria.
- Levels of recorded crime attributed to the alley way
  - Levels of recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour attributed to the alley way
  - The extent to which residents' perceptions and fear of crime is affected by the alley way.
  - Whether the alley way 'lends' itself to alley gating
- 4.3 Only alley ways which can demonstrate a link with significant levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and/or fear of crime will go forward to the next stage which is consultation.
- 4.4 Consultation is carried out with all those affected by the gating of an alley way. Only with community support can an alley way be gated off, so the community consultation process is important.

## **5 Progress to date**

- 5.1 Since the policy was approved in September 2005, Community Safety Services have dealt with 102 separate referrals.
- 5.2 So far this financial year a total of 20 schemes have been put forward by Community Safety for alley gating. Depending on the size of each scheme (ie the number of residents involved), the lead in time to the installation of gates can vary.

- 5.3 The table below shows the 20 unadopted/non-highways assessed by Community Safety Services and put forward for alley gating.

Address	Ward/location	Tenure	Funding	Status
School Street	Little Lever	Private	NRF	Gates erected
Eavesham Drive	Farnworth East	Housing	NRF	Gates erected by 10/3/06
Victory Road	Little Lever	Private/Housing	NRF	Gates erected
Cross Street	Farnworth	Private	NRF	Gates erected
Grisdale Road	Higher Deane	Housing	NRF	Gates erected
Dove Walk	Highfield	Housing	NRF	Unclear of highway status
Singleton Avenue	South Breightmet	Housing	NRF	Gates ordered
Garstang Avenue	South Breightmet	Housing	NRF	Gates ordered
Rawcliffe Avenue	South Breightmet	Housing	NRF	Gates erected by 10/3/06
Bispham Avenue	South Breightmet	Housing	NRF	Gates erected by 10/3/06
Woodstock Street	Smithills	Private	NRF	Gates erected
Heywood Park View	Great Lever	Housing	NRF	Gates ordered
Mere Walk	Halliwell	Housing	NRF	Gates ordered
Vernon Street	Halliwell	Housing	NRF	Gates ordered
Crescent Road	Great Lever	Private	NRF	Gates ordered
Thornton Close	Farnworth East	Housing	NRF	Gates ordered
Edward Street	Farnworth East	Private	NRF	Gates ordered
Kilsby Close	Farnworth East	Private	NRF	Gates ordered
Glenfield Square	Farnworth East	Private	NRF	Gates ordered
Cawdor Street	Farnworth East	Private	NRF	Gates ordered

- 5.4 It is envisaged that all of the schemes in the above table will be completed by the end of March 2006. However, as always, there is a risk with alley gating in that the process is long and it is never guaranteed that gates will be erected.

## 6. Future development

- 6.1 The way this project develops will depend largely on future funding arrangements. Presently, phase 1 of the project uses alley gating sporadically across the borough focussing on referrals made by elected members, the public etc. Phase 2 will continue this way of working but take a broader approach which will consider public highways.
- 6.2 Before the possibilities of a phase 3 can be considered, it will be necessary to evaluate the schemes implemented in phase 1 and 2 in order to assess their impact, and the process used. A full review of the Council's policy will also be undertaken looking at the impact of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act and the criteria used in assessing schemes. A likely development could be to focus on specific blocks of housing in order to maximise impact and avoid displacement. Funding will need to be secured based on the evaluation and review.

**7. For Decision**

7.1 The Executive member is asked to note the report.