

	<h2>Environment Committee</h2> <h3>24 September 2015</h3>
Title	<h2>Alley Gating - Effective Community Safety Intervention</h2>
Report of	Commissioning Director, Environment
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix 1: An Assessment of the Evidence Relating to Alley Gating.
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Summary

Available evidence suggests that alley-gating schemes can be effective in reducing residential burglary, reducing anti-social behaviour (ASB) such as fly tipping and improving public confidence – however the cost effectiveness of similar alley-gating schemes reviewed has been quite variable.

This report details research that has been carried out into similar schemes and recommends an approach for Barnet that identifies a delivery model which maximises the cost effectiveness of individual schemes.

Recommendations

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| 1. That the Committee consider and comment on the costs and the cost benefits of an alley gating scheme set out in appendix 1 of this report. |
| 2. That the Committee delegate the alley gating approach to the Area Committees in order for consideration to be given as part of area based interventions. |

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The Chairman of the Environment Committee raised an urgent item at the 15 July 2015 meeting in relation to misuse of unregistered land in respect to such areas being fly tipped and in some circumstances encountering rough sleepers. The Committee resolved that:
The Commissioning Director for Environment produce a report to the next meeting which outlines options to combat this issue.
- 1.2 Therefore this report has been produced to provide an initial assessment as to the viability of alley-gating as a community safety and environmental intervention. This report sets out:
- i. A brief explanation of what is alley-gating.
 - ii. The prima facie case for alley-gating.
 - iii. An assessment of what the evidence says (national and local).
 - iv. Exploration of costs.
 - v. Consideration of the strategic alignment of this type of intervention with Barnet's priorities.
 - vi. A cursory survey of different delivery models.
 - vii. Conclusion and recommendations.
- 1.3 For the purpose of this report alley-gating will be defined as:
'The installation of security gates across a footpath and alleyways. It is a form of situational crime prevention that attempts to reduce the opportunity to commit crimes such as domestic burglary'¹
- 1.4 The scope of this report is limited to the application of alley-gates to alleys and paths which are not public rights of way.

The Prima Facie Case For Alley-gating.

(The link between alley-gating and positive local outcomes)

The connection between alleyways and offending

- 1.5 Many residential streets have utility alleys running along the rear of houses. The original purpose of these alleys variously includes: providing residents

¹ 'Installing Alley-gates practical lessons from Burglary Prevention Projects' Shane Johnson and Camille Loxley July 2001 (Home Office Briefing Note 2/01)

easy access to the rear of properties, acting as the domestic rubbish collection point; or providing vehicle access to resident's garages. It is quite common for an alleyway to no longer be used for its original purpose.

1.6 In some locations alleyways have come to be viewed as providing access routes for offenders, and facilitating crime and antisocial behaviour². Alleyways may provide opportunities for crime and anti-social to take place due to the natural cover they provide, lack of formal or informal surveillance and little guardianship.

1.7 A 2009 study into residential burglary in Barnet concluded:

The geographic layout of Childs Hill (and Barnet in general) has more widely spaced houses, rear gardens, back alleyways than more central boroughs in London. These factors create increased opportunities for burglaries to occur, specifically where entry is gained through the rear of the premises. It is estimated this effect contributes around an extra 450 burglaries [in Barnet] per year.

Stated benefits of alley-gating

1.8 Proponents of Alley-gating can point to the following benefits^{3 4}:

- Alley-gates 'increase the effort' for offenders to gain access to the alley area at the rear of houses – hence reduce the use of the area for crime or ASB activities.
- Alley-gates can help households 'reclaim' control and ownership of rear areas (whether they be private gardens, communal alleyways or paths).
- 'When installed and properly used, alley-gates should control access to vulnerable target areas⁵'
- Improving the environment – e.g. reduced fly tipping, rubbish and littering.
- Increasing community involvement- Residents may be encouraged to take greater ownership of the area.
- Increased resident satisfaction with the area in which they live.
- Reducing residential burglary.
- Reducing arson attempts.
- Reducing the fear of crime.

² 'The prevention of domestic burglary' Niall Hamilton-Smith and Andrew Kent in the 'Handbook of Crime Prevention and Community Safety' Nick Tilley 2005

³ (a) Installing Alley-gates practical lessons from Burglary Prevention Projects' Shane Johnson and Camille Loxley
July 2001 (Home Office Briefing Note 2/01)

(b) The prevention of domestic burglary' Niall Hamilton-Smith and Andrew Kent in the 'Handbook of Crime Prevention and Community Safety' Nick Tilley 2005

⁴ The prevention of domestic burglary' Niall Hamilton-Smith and Andrew Kent in the 'Handbook of Crime Prevention and Community Safety' Nick Tilley 2005

⁵ Installing Alley-gates practical lessons from Burglary Prevention Projects' Shane Johnson and Camille Loxley
July 2001 (Home Office Briefing Note 2/01)

- Reduced opportunities for groups of people to cause disturbance or annoyance - this could mean anything from drinking in the alleys to taking drugs.
- Stopping access to those intent on spraying garages and walls with graffiti.
- Fewer problems with dog fouling by stray dogs.
- Provide safe play areas for children.

Strategic Alignment with Barnet's Community Safety Strategy 2015-2020

1.9 Given the evidence that Alley-gating:

- can be effective in reducing Burglary, reducing ASB, increasing community confidence;
- has the potential to improve the environment through reduced fly tipping, rubbish and littering;
- has the potential to increasing community involvement through residents being encouraged to take greater ownership of the area;

There is an apparent alignment between the likely outcomes of an effective alley-gating delivery scheme and the strategic aims and priorities set out in Barnet's Community Safety Strategy 2015-2020. Specifically contributing towards the following outcomes:

Outcome 1: Residents and businesses feel confident that the police and Council respond to crime and ASB in their area.

Outcome 6: Sustained reductions Burglary and other high volume crime types.

The scheme will also contribute to each of the three overarching objectives in the strategy:

Objective 1. To provide a victim centred approach to victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Objective 2. To maintain reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour.

Objective 3. To improve the perception of Barnet as a safe place to live, work and visit.

Types of Delivery Models

1.10 A cursory review of open source information relating to alley-gating delivery models operated by other London local authorities identifies that the strongest ally-gating delivery models tend to be those which:

- Provide a clear interface between residents who are thinking about pursuing an alley-gating scheme and the Council.
- Clearly demark responsibility for the different stages of implementing a scheme between residents and Council.

- Provide a clear timetable and process map so that residents can understand what is expected.
- Are transparent about the criteria for application are reviewed against for example for funding or part funding.

1.11 It is also apparent that the different delivery models can be broadly characterised by the question of who has responsibility for the different stages and requirements of implementing the alley-gates and maintaining the alley-gated area. These are listed in the table below:

Table 1: Who has responsibility for the different stages and requirements for implementing an alley gate.

Task	Responsibility of...
Securing agreement from all relevant parties (e.g. residents, home owners, people who may be effected by the gates)	Residents OR Council
Conducting Land registry checks	Residents OR Council
Applying for planning permission if relevant	Residents OR Council
Financing purchase of gates and instillation cost	Residents OR Council
Issuing copies of keys	Residents OR Council
Maintaining gates once installed	Residents OR Council
Removing rubbish or overgrowth as necessary to allow gate instillation	Residents OR Council
Removing rubbish /overgrowth from the area (i.e. after gates are in place)	Residents OR Council
Providing advice	Council

1.12 Depending on the delivery model the costs, cost variance, resource implications for the Council can differ greatly. In order to capture the benefits of providing a universal alley-gating model while minimising resource and cost implications (especially cost variability) for the Council, the model recommended is set out in table 2.

Table 2: Model Proposed

Task	Responsibility of...
Securing agreement from all relevant parties (e.g. residents, home owners, people who may be effected by the gates)	Residents
Conducting Land registry checks	Residents
Applying for planning permission if relevant	Residents
Financing purchase of gates and installation cost	Council provide 50% match funding with the remaining funding being raised by local residents. Schemes are agreed and funded through the Area

	Committee process
Issuing copies of keys	Residents
Maintaining gates once installed	Residents
Ownership of gates	Residents
Removing rubbish or overgrowth as necessary to allow gate installation	Residents
Removing rubbish or overgrowth from the gated area (i.e. after gates are in place)	Residents
Providing advice	Council

1.13 This model suggested in table 2 somewhat similar to Ealing’s model. The Ealing model is outlined to residents in a way that is clear and easy to understand.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 This report has highlighted:

- That the costs of an alley-gating scheme can vary from locality to locality.
- Local community engagement and partnership is crucial to ensure local ownership and long term sustainability for example the securing of the gage and maintaining the restricted areas.
- The need and appropriateness of installing an alley gate to prevent crime and ASB will be based on local if not street based data if we were to provide a scheme that targets resources effectively in the areas that have the most need and ensure full evaluation of impact.
- The benefits of increasing community confidence and reducing the fear of crime.

2.2 The area forums have been identified as a potential forum that could consider this scheme as one of their local interventions as this would ensure that the scheme is driven by local community need and targets the right areas.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 Alternative delivery models in other local authorities have been considered. There are no funding streams available to fund a borough wide alley-gating scheme. The preferred model set out in section 1.23 of this report is best aligned with the Council’s vision set out in its 2015-2020 Corporate Plan as highlighted in section 3.4 of this report. Therefore, the recommendations made in this report can lead to ensuring such an intervention is driven by local community need.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 If the recommendation is approved to present the information for consideration to the area forums the following action will be taken:
- i. This information will be presented to the area forums to consider.
 - ii. Barnet Community Safety Team will produce area based analysis on burglary and alley ways to support the presentation of information at the forums.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The approach recommended in this report furthers the priorities set out in Barnet's Corporate Plan 2015-2020 in a number of ways, specifically:

- (a) More involved and resilient communities – developing greater community participation, engagement and involvement. The approach suggested in this report supports the Council's vision to develop a new relationship with residents that enables them to be independent and resilient and to take on greater responsibility for their local areas. Recognising that residents would like to be more involved in what happens in their community.
- (b) Barnet's local environment will be clean and attractive.
- (c) Barnet will be amongst the safest placed in London, with high levels of Community cohesion, and resident's feelings safe – the Council will work with communities and partners to achieve long-term sustained reductions in crime and reduce overall crime including burglary and prevent and deter anti-social behaviour and repeat victimisation.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 If the Committee decides an alley gating scheme is required for the borough there will be cost implications to the Council. The exact cost of the scheme will be dependent on the delivery model and approach agreed. Costs would include staff resources to manage and deliver the scheme as well as the installation of the gates.
- 5.2.2 The average cost that has been estimated from other information included in appendix 1 is estimated to be £2,000 per gate. The recommended model will require a match funding contribution from residents. There will be also be staffing costs to manage and deliver the scheme as well as the process for installing the gates. This will have to be considered on a case by case basis and approved by the Area Committees.

5.3 Social Value

Not relevant to this report.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, it is also a duty of the Council (and other partner agencies, including police, fire & rescue, GLA, TfL) when exercising its functions to have due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour), misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances and re-offending.

5.4.2 The Council's Constitution (Responsibility for Functions – Annex A) sets out the Terms of Reference of the Environment Committee which includes Street Scene and Footways.

5.4.3 In each case a due diligence Land Registry check is required to identify any registered owner of the alleyway who will need to be notified of the proposal. However in many cases the absence of registration will mean that the land is in unknown ownership. Any gating of a private alleyway will require the consent of adjoining landowners having use of the alleyway.

5.5 Risk Management

Not applicable to this report.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies **to have due regard** to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services. There is no equality impact issues relating to the matters set out in this report. When analysing information on victims, offenders or location of crime and ASB generally, the protected characteristics are recorded, analysed and disproportionate trends identified when planning the appropriate strategic and operational intervention.

5.7 Consultation and Engagement

5.7.1 Engagement and consultation with local area committee's may be required.

5.8 **Insight**

Not relevant to this report.

6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

'Installing Alley-gates practical lessons from Burglary Prevention Projects'
Shane Johnson and Camille Loxley

July 2001 (Home Office Briefing Note 2/01)

'The prevention of domestic burglary' Niall Hamilton-Smith and Andrew Kent
in the 'Handbook of Crime Prevention and Community Safety' Nick Tilley 2005

Appendix One

An Assessment of the impact and installation of Alley Gating.

-What the national and local evidence has to say on the benefits of alley gating-

1. National Research

1.1 Evidence for Burglary Reduction:

- A reduction in the residential burglary rate of 50% to 60% was observed in four standalone trials (Armstrong 1999, Young 1999, University of Liverpool 2003).
- Seven large component studies as part of a national reducing burglary initiative demonstrated a 15% reduction in burglary (change relative to a control area)⁶.
- The paper 'Alley-gating revisited' Armitage & Smithson 2007 reviewed studies which assessed the impact of alley-gating on burglary and found that "Previous studies of Alley-gating schemes and their crime reduction impacts have revealed positive findings. These studies focused mainly on the reduction of burglary in the scheme areas, with reductions ranging from 37% (net of changes in the wider area) to 65% (gross reduction)." Several evaluations are described in detail in this paper, as an illustration, here is one example:

The Abbey Ward Alley-gating Scheme in Merton, London Reed and Nutley (1998) report the findings of an evaluation of an Alley-gating scheme in one particular ward (Abbey) in Merton, London. Crime pattern analysis revealed that the Abbey ward, which contained 14 per cent of the population, was experiencing 22 per cent of the crime in the borough and that burglary was 50 per cent higher than the next highest ward. The local partnership applied for SRB funding to implement a variety of crime reduction measures, one of which was alley-gating.

An independent evaluation revealed that in the one year period following the installation of 170 gates, rear entry burglary was reduced by 50 per cent. Reed and Nutley (1998) state that in a one year period, where alley-gating schemes had been completed, not one burglary via the back alleys was reported."

1.2 Evidence for non-burglary reduction related benefits for example ASB and Public Confidence:

⁶ The prevention of domestic burglary' Niall Hamilton-Smith and Andrew Kent in the 'Handbook of Crime Prevention and Community Safety' Nick Tilley 2005

Armitage & Smithson 2007 conducted a survey of residents in locations where Alley-gating schemes had been implemented. Their conclusions are summarised below:

- Schemes demonstrated a wider impact than solely the reduction of crime (such as burglary).
- Alley-gates have led to an increased satisfaction with the area, reductions in reported levels of ASB and increased feelings of safety.
- For almost all categories the levels of ASB in the gated areas were statistically significantly lower than in the non-gated areas.
- The schemes demonstrated a sustainable impact on crime and ASB – a follow up survey conducted four years later as part of the study identified that the improvements had been sustained. This is in contrast to some other types of community safety interventions which demonstrate diminishing returns after the initial impact.
- The sustainability of gates is likely due to the fact they provide complete closure to the defined area, are durable and permanently affect the routine activities of offenders.

2. Local Evidence

2.1 Review of an Alley-gating scheme in Barnet:

The Safer Communities Partnership implemented an Alley-gating scheme in Child Hill during 2011, in the two and a half year period after the gates were installed the street in the scheme, demonstrated a gross burglary reduction of 56% and a net reduction (net of change in the wider area) of 23%.

2.2 Review of the Enfield Alley-gating model:

The below summary of alley-gating in Enfield borough is based on an enquiry made by Barnet Community Safety Team to Enfield Community Safety Team.

2.3 Alley Gating in Enfield Borough:

- Started in 2009.
- At the start the scheme received approximately £100k funding (from various sources - Local Authority and GLA funding).
- The costs per 'scheme' or per 'gate' varied depending on the circumstances however the costs would typically amount to a few thousand per gate. This cost covered both implementation of the gate and also the costs of site visits, obtaining residents consent etc.
- The main focus of the alley gating tactic in Enfield is to reduce residential burglary. Alley gating has been part of Enfield's 'Safe as Houses' anti-burglary project.

2.4 Alley Gating in Enfield 2009 – 2012. Process (as in 2009):

- i. Crime analyst identified top streets for rear approach burglary.

- ii. Environmental Officer visited identified streets to identify if viable to install gates and how many would be needed.
 - iii. Neighbourhood Police team engages residents to secure consent from the residents in the street in question.
 - iv. Dedicated Alley Gating Officer (was a full time role) coordinates the above steps, also coordinates applications for planning, publicity and the instillation of the gates. The costs of the scheme/gates were covered by the local authority (i.e. zero cost to residents, except in the case where the gating is on private land rather than land the local authority are responsible for).
- 2.5 Following the above process by 2011, 88 schemes had been implemented (a single scheme may have a number of gates to fully close of an alley or network of alleys). The results analysis carried out by Enfield showed a 46.7% reduction in the targeted streets after the first year (compared to a 7% decrease in the same period over the rest of the borough). Enfield further state that the reduction has been sustained rather than being a short term reduction only.
- 2.6 From 2012 the Enfield process has changed somewhat (see below) and has had significantly less funding than that during 2009-11. This has resulted in a corresponding decrease in the number of gates being installed in Enfield since 2012.
- 2.7 Alley Gating in Enfield 2012 onwards:
- Process same as in 2009 (see above) with the below exceptions:
- a) Due to reductions in funding step (iv) in the above process is no longer able to be carried out by an officer solely dedicated to alley gating, and is instead covered by an Environmental Protection officer as one of their remits.
 - b) Since 2012 there has been a very large reduction in the funds available for the project so the number of schemes able to be implemented has reduced.

3. Costs and benefits

(Review of overall costs and the costs vs. benefits)

Costs

- 3.1 According to publically available information from Redbridge Council: "Typically an alley gate scheme costs in excess of £1,000 the final cost is dependant on how many gates there are within a scheme, the width of the entrances and whether railings are needed as well."
- 3.2 Publically available information from Hillingdon Council provides the below estimates as approximate guidelines:
- Gates £1,450 each
 - Keys £3.50 each

- Lock box £75 each
- Powder coating £280 per gate

3.3 It is to be noted that in addition to the direct costs such as materials and gate installation costs, a universal alley gating delivery model for Barnet would also need to take into account the indirect costs of resourcing the model (for example training to provide staff with the required knowledge to administer the scheme, to advise residents, the analytical support required to ensure evidence is considered prior to installation and evaluation on the impact of the scheme).

Cost benefit reviews

3.4 According to Hamilton-Smith and Kent (2005) three schemes participating in the national Reducing Burglary Initiative conducted cost benefit evaluation of their alley-gating schemes. These demonstrated a cost benefit ratio of £1 invested: £1.17 saved in terms of crime reduction benefits.

3.5 They also found that the cost-effectiveness of different alley-gating schemes was quite variable depending on various factors including: the degree of community consultation required; legal, planning and design work; physical characteristics of the location (i.e. which may require more expensive gates).

3.6 Therefore when implementing a delivery model for alley-gating schemes - careful consideration needs to be given around procurement practices as well as the structure of the delivery model (i.e. who is responsible for what including costs).

3.7 The Barnet alley-gating scheme implemented in Childs Hill in 2011 achieved gross benefits of approximately £10k per year in terms of burglary crime reduction savings. It is to be noted that this does not imply all of this saving is directly realised by the Council - this estimate is based upon the home office produced unit cost estimates for different crime types. The estimates take into account anticipatory costs for example security expenditure, consequential costs (e.g. property stolen, emotional or physical impacts), and response costs (e.g. costs to the criminal justice system).

Marginal benefit

3.8 Given that there is no universal borough wide alley gating offer being delivered by the Council – it is likely that the introduction of even a small scale alley-gating delivery model, by providing an additional Council response option to community concerns, would provide a marginal benefit in terms of the impact on public confidence that the local authority acts to reduce crime and ASB.

4. Ealing's Delivery Model

4.1 This report provided an example of a proposed model should alley gating be considered which is somewhat based on the model operated by Ealing. The

responsibility allocation between residents and the local authority is demarked very clearly in their guidance:

http://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/200030/crime_prevention/717/alley_gating