

To the Chief Highways Officer

Date:

Subject: Review of Gating Order – Wellingtons, Bramley

Electoral Wards Affected:

Bramley and Stanningley

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In
(Details contained in the report)

Executive Summary

Leeds Community Safety (LCS) is promoting the installation of gates across *Leeds* to temporarily close highways suffering from persistent levels of crime and / or anti-social behaviour (ASB). As per the current legislation, LCS has carried out an annual review of the Alleygating scheme and any associated Gating Orders to footpaths in the Bramley and Stanningley ward (see Appendix 1 – photos).

1.0 Purpose of this Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Chief Highways Officer of the outcome of the annual review and to support the recommendations made in the review.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Section 129A to 129G of the Highways Act allows for the making of a gating order to temporary closure a highway in response to high levels of anti-social behavior. The legal provision came into effect on 1st April 2006. The adopted status of the highway is unchanged by the order.

2.2 *Gating Order (No.18) was granted for 2 footpaths in the Bramley and Stanningley ward on 18th April 2008. As per requirements set out in the relevant legislation within the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, it is the responsibility of the promoting department to carry out an annual review of the gating order to assess its use in reducing persistent crime and / or ASB.*

- 2.3 As per any gating order to a relevant highway, the status of the highway shall remain unchanged. As a result of the review carried out, recommendations can be made by the promoter to either:
- Continue with gating of the Highway for a further period of time (to be specified);
 - Continue with the gating but keep gates locked open for a period of no less than 3 months to allow for monitoring of the site and to establish if there is further need for the gates; or
 - Revoke the gating order and remove the temporary restriction.

3.0 Main Issues

3.1 The review process - methodology

- 3.1.1 The review process will need to take in several factors in order to satisfactorily assess their use and value. The first stage of the review process is to obtain both recorded and reported crime and ASB adjacent and adjoining the site under review for the 12 months before and 12 months after the gating order came into operation.
- 3.1.2 The views of the local Neighbourhood Police Team Inspector must be obtained in order to assess their opinions regarding the gating order.
- 3.1.3 The views of local ward members should also be gained.
- 3.1.4 A postal consultation, lasting no longer than 28 days, should be carried out with a random selection of residents affected by the gating order(s) unless numbers affected are low enough in order to enable consultation with all affected residents.
- 3.1.5 Where possible, a site visit should be carried out in order to gain a greater understanding of the effect of the alleygates in the area under review. This should take in factors including the appearance of the gated site, any damage to gates, whether gates have been left open, etc.

3.2 The review process – outcomes

- 3.2.1 **Crime Statistics** - The primary reason for the gating up of a highway is to reduce the opportunity to commit acquisitive crime which includes:
- Domestic burglary
 - Burglary other (can include sheds, outbuildings, etc)
 - Robbery
 - Vehicle crime

Alleygating is not exclusively used for these issues and can often be associated with the reduction of other crimes and Anti-Social Behaviour. It is also used to reduce environmental issues such as flytipping and littering.

- 3.2.2 The crime stats for the review area have been obtained for the 12 months BEFORE the gating order (April 2007- 2008), and 12 months AFTER the gating order has been in place (April 2008-2009) (see appendix 2- crime stats).
- 3.2.3 Recorded Acquisitive crime across Leeds for the period 12 months after the gating order was 6% up on the figure recorded 12 months before the order (from 31,746 recorded acquisitive crimes to 33,625) . **Please note: recorded ASB figures were unavailable for request and hence do not figure in this report.**

- 3.2.4 Recorded Acquisitive crime for 2008-2009, across the Bramley and Stanningley ward was also up on the year before by 44% (from 980 crimes to 1,412 crimes). In comparison, recorded acquisitive crime for the gated streets actually fell by 27%. Therefore it can be reasonably assumed that whilst recorded acquisitive crime went up across the city and the ward, the erection of the alleygates in the Wellingtons has helped, in part, in bringing about a reduction in crimes in these streets.
- 3.2.5 In terms of individual Acquisitive crimes for which alleygating is particularly used for, burglary dwelling in the review area dropped 28% (from 7 to 5), damage to dwelling dropped by 75% (from 4 to 1), theft from motor vehicle fell 100% (from 2 to zero), and theft of motor vehicle saw no change (2 recorded crimes both years) . There was no recorded Robbery in the review area before or after the gating order. The only crime to increase was that of damage to motor vehicle which saw an increase of 14% (from 7 up to 8).
- 3.2.6 Compare the drops in individual acquisitive crimes in the review area with that of the considerable increases across both the city and the ward. Burglary dwelling was up 13% across the city whilst across the ward, it has risen by 31%. These figures highlight the benefits that the alleygates are bringing to the review site. Footpaths that were once providing criminals with an alternative means of access and escape are now blocked off and unavailable for use, and hence this may signify a reason for the fall in burglary and damage to dwellings.
- 3.2.7 The only rise in the figures for the review area was in damages to motor vehicles with the majority of these occurring on Wellington Grove, where there is alternative means of escape other than through the two footpaths under review. This method of crime has been an issue to the Police both before and after alleygates and continues to occur due to the fact that parking for the majority of residents in the Wellingtons is on-street parking, and hence alleygates have no affect on this method of criminality.
- 3.3 **Consultation** – Consultation was carried out with all 87 properties directly affected by the gating order. There was a total of 32 replies received, of which 31 were in favour of keeping the gating order in place for a further timescale and 1 opposed to the gating order (see Appendix 3 –resident comments sheet).
- 3.3.1 Of those in favour, many commented that the area had a more relaxed feel about it and that there was a noticeable reduction in vehicle damage and vandalism of property due to restricted access through the footpaths.
- 3.3.2 Of the one person opposed, the worry was that the gates had merely pushed youths onto Wellington Grove, and hence there appeared to be more damage to cars on that particular street, since alleygating.
- 3.4 **Ward Members** – Ward Members were asked to feedback on their thoughts regarding the alleygates. All ward members are in favour of the gating order remaining in place for a further period of time.
- 3.5 **Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT)** – The NPT Inspector has been asked to comment on the gating order. The NPT are in favour of the Gating order remaining in place.
- 4.0 **The Review Process – Conclusions** (see Appendix 4 – table of considerations)
- 4.1 The majority of respondents to the review were in favour of the gating orders remaining in place for a further period of time, but no less than a further year from the end of the current gating order period (April 2009). Both the ward members and the NPT also support the gating orders for a further period of time.

4.2 Although there has been a drop in recorded acquisitive crime figures since the gating order was enforced, this is a clear indication that alleygates in the area appear to be working. Whilst not the sole reason for the decrease, alleygates have been welcomed by local residents as a key crime reduction tool, making a noticeable difference in the area. For this reason, and in the hope that recorded acquisitive crime and ASB will continue to fall in the area, Leeds Community Safety is fully supportive of the gating order remaining in place.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 The Chief Highways Officer is requested to:

- i. Note the content of this report; and
- ii. To approve the continuation of Gating Order No. 18 as recommended by Leeds Community Safety for a minimum of 12 months and then to carry out a further annual review in 2010.