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ACPO Alley-gating Guide 2005/06

### Original Citation

Armitage, Rachel (2006) ACPO Alley-gating Guide 2005/06. Project Report. Association of Chief Police Officers, Huddersfield, UK. (Submitted)

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# ACPO Alley-gating Guide 2005/06

2<sup>nd</sup> Draft

24/02/2006

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# Introduction

## A Word about Gates

Alleys (snicketts, ginnels, backways) are particularly common in British industrial cities and were originally designed to allow access to the rear of properties by coalmen and refuse collectors. Although many alleys are no longer used for their original purpose, they are still useful to allow residents to access the rear of their properties without walking through their house. This can be particularly helpful when gardening or carrying out DIY.

Alley-gating involves the installation of lockable gates across these alleys, preventing access to the alley for those without a key. Although predominantly a crime reduction measure, alley-gating has the potential to do more than reduce crime; it can increase community confidence, improve the aesthetic appearance of an area, re-invigorate schemes such as Residents' Associations and Neighbourhood Watch and reduce levels of worry and fear about crime and anti-social behaviour. Although it has the potential to achieve more than crime reduction, it should be stressed that alley-gating is a crime reduction measure, which is targeted at alleys which are experiencing high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, or are being used to facilitate crime and disorder. It is not designed to limit freedom or constrain legitimate access.

Although alley-gating does involve the installation of lockable gates, it is important that readers do not confuse alley-gating with gated communities. Alley-gating simply closes off the rear or side of properties for those without legitimate access. It does not create a closed community and people can still access the rest of the neighbourhood without using the alley. Alley-gates are rarely installed in alleys which are currently used as through routes, and where this is the case, detailed consideration is given towards the impact on existing users. Although gated communities involve the use of similar security measures, they are very different. Gated communities involve closing whole neighbourhoods to non-residents immediately creating a 'them' and 'us'. In gated communities non-residents are excluded from large spaces which had previously been public open spaces simply because they do not live within the community.

## What Justification for Alley-gating

National crime statistics suggest that for all burglary offences, 46% of properties were accessed via the rear (45% were accessed from the front). For burglary with entry offences this figure increases to 47% - 43% gaining entry via the front of the property (Flood-Page and Taylor, 2003). Although these national figures suggest that offenders are more likely to access a property via the rear, research specific to predominantly terraced streets suggests that this figure could be as high as 72%. Johnson and Loxley (2001) found that for research conducted in Merseyside, 72% of burglary offences involved access via the rear of the property. In addition to these

findings, research suggests that as well as selecting properties which allow ease of access and escape, offenders prefer to offend against targets which they are familiar with - leaving properties located next to footpaths, walkways and alleys increasingly vulnerable to crime. Although crime reduction measures should attempt to block as many opportunities as possible, these findings suggest that reducing access to the rear of properties, particularly those which can be accessed by secluded rear alleys, will have a positive impact on levels of crime and disorder.

### **Purpose of the Guide**

This guide is designed for anyone who is considering the reduction of crime which is taking place in, or is being facilitated by alleyways. It can be used by residents or crime reduction practitioners and is designed a) to help you decide whether alley-gating is the most appropriate response to your crime problem and b) if you decide that it is, how to go about implementing a scheme. The guide is split into three distinct sections – Section One: Does Alley-Gating Work? Section Two: The Process of Alley-Gating and Section Three: Technical Specifications. It is designed to provide a basic knowledge of the relevant research, policy and legislation and where necessary, guidance is provided to support those requiring further details.

### **Scope of the guide**

This guide is aimed at those considering the closure of alleyways in residential areas. Although it does not specifically address the gating of commercial areas, many of the same principles will apply. This guide focuses upon *alley*-gating as opposed to *street* or *neighbourhood* closures. As was highlighted earlier, it is not about gated communities.

Part One  
Does Alley-Gating  
Work?

# Why Would you Expect Gating Alleys to Reduce Crime and Disorder?

Although this guide is designed as a practical tool for assisting those who are considering alley-gating as a measure to reduce crime and disorder, the following section outlines several theoretical messages which should help the reader to understand the importance of crime reduction and the mechanisms through which alley-gating should work to achieve this goal.

## **1. Relying upon the police to reduce crime is misguided and unfair.**

The last two decades have seen a major change in the perception of how crime reduction should be achieved and who should be responsible for that reduction. Although the police have historically been considered as the primary crime reduction functionaries, major changes in policy, legislation and criminological theory have shown this reliance to be both misguided and unfair. Misguided because of the 100% of offences which are committed within England and Wales, only 45% will actually be reported to the police, only 5% will be cleared up and only 3% will result in a caution or conviction (Barclay and Tavares, 1999). Unfair, because legislation in the form of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) now places a statutory responsibility upon local authorities, fire authorities, police authorities and Primary Care Trusts to share this burden.

## **2. Crime is a risk to be calculated and avoided and not a moral aberration to be explained.**

Although it is often easier for society to consider those who offend as moral 'outsiders' whose behaviour needs to be explained, a more realistic and helpful image of (the majority) of offenders is that of individuals who, when faced with the opportunity, give in to temptation. As offenders spend most of their time as non-offenders, engaging in the activities we engage in, rather than dismissing their actions as abhorrent, those attempting to reduce crime should put themselves in the shoes of a potential offender and try to think thief.

## **3. Criminals respond to opportunity and in doing so make rational choices which are influenced by risk and reward.**

Although individuals' propensity to offend may vary, there is no doubt that opportunities influence crime levels and that certain people, places and products are more vulnerable because of the opportunities they present to potential offenders. Consider the difference in vulnerability between a laptop and a fridge freezer. Although both are valuable, one is highly accessible to the offender, often left in parked cars or in luggage compartments of trains, the other is not. One is easy to conceal once stolen, the other is not. One would be easy to dispose of once stolen; the other would be rather conspicuous at the local pub! The majority of criminals select their targets based upon rational decisions

influenced by risk and reward, and given the choice they will select the easy option.

#### **4. Crime can be reduced through the reduction of opportunities.**

Based upon the premise that offenders commit crimes where opportunities exist, it follows that crime can be reduced through increasing the risk and effort and reducing the potential rewards offered to offenders. Research has shown that significant declines can be achieved through altering the environment to ensure that the risks for potential offenders outweigh the rewards (Clarke and Newman, 2005). Examples include simple measures such as the reduction of violent crime through the introduction of toughened glass in British pubs, the reduction of car crime through the introduction of steering column locks or the reduction of burglary through the use of burglar alarms and other target hardening measures.

Even though there is an abundance of evidence to suggest that alley-gating works to reduce crime and disorder, when considering whether or not to implement such a scheme, it will help to understand why or how this reduction has taken place. The mechanisms through which alley-gating reduces crime and disorder fall largely into the following four categories.

##### **1. Offenders select targets which they are familiar with – closing alleys removes those properties from offenders' awareness space.**

As was referred to earlier, offenders like non-offenders, spend much of their time engaging in the same activities that we do – attending school, shopping, socialising with friends and crucially moving between those destinations. For an offender to select a property to offend against they have to know it exists, therefore properties along travel-paths are more likely to become victims of crime<sup>i</sup>. Closing alleys through the introduction of alley-gates means that offenders (or potential offenders) are less likely to become familiar with or notice the properties protected by these gates.

##### **2. Alleys provide easy access or escape for offenders – closing alleys increases the effort and risk.**

Offenders select targets which provide the greatest reward for the lowest effort and risk. They prefer to avoid confrontation and therefore select targets which are likely to allow entry and escape without being seen by neighbours or passers by<sup>ii</sup>. Alleyways provide both the means of that access and escape and the anonymity. Gating alleys removes an offender's ability to enter and exit a property with anonymity. It forces offenders who wish to continue offending against protected properties to enter/exit at the front of the property where surveillance, and therefore risk, is greater.

**3. Alleys are locations which allow for offending in their own right.**

As well as providing easy access and escape routes for offenders, alleyways are also secluded enough to allow for offending to take place without surveillance from neighbours or passers by. This can take the form of drug use and drug dealing, prostitution, arson, litter and graffiti, robbery and general anti-social behaviour. If an alley becomes vulnerable to such behaviour and local residents avoid the area, this avoidance behaviour increases the anonymity provided to offenders and in turn increases the likelihood of further criminal behaviour. Closing alleys leaves these areas inaccessible to potential offenders.

**4. Alleys provide a legitimate excuse for potential offenders to survey properties – closing alleys removes these excuses.**

Alleyways allow potential offenders and non-offenders to walk next to a property, and in the case of offenders, to assess the risks versus rewards. Given the legitimate nature of these footpaths, residents concerned about potential offenders have no legitimate reason to challenge these people. The fact that people are passing the house on a regular basis also makes it difficult to distinguish between neighbours passing en route to school, work or the shops and offenders who are surveying the property. Closing alleys removes the excuses for potential offenders to enter the area, it clarifies who should and who should not be in that area and provides residents the legitimacy to challenge potential offenders.



## The Role of Evaluation

Although this guide is not the appropriate document to discuss the issues of research and evaluation in any depth, the importance of data analysis in making decisions regarding the appropriate crime reduction intervention (pre-intervention) and in assessing the impact of those schemes (post-intervention) warrants a brief overview.

The subject of data analysis, monitoring and evaluation can be off-putting and the mention of statistics is often enough to send any audience to sleep. Those involved in the implementation of crime reduction interventions (be they practitioners or residents) are often very busy people and collecting data can seem like an unnecessary, time consuming and complex task. As such, it is often put to one side until the scheme is complete, or worse still, never completed. It is hoped that this section of the guide will convince you of the importance of evaluation as well as providing tips regarding data collection and evaluation.

Analysis of crime data before and after the introduction of an intervention is vital. Before - to make sure you are doing the right thing, and after - to assess effectiveness and to inform others of what works and what does not.

- 1) **Without analysis of crime data how do you know that alley-gating is the most appropriate intervention?** In many cases, crime reduction interventions such as alley-gating are implemented because they are the latest crime reduction trend, or because money is available for that specific measure. Implementing a scheme without analysis of the crime problem can often lead to failure, not because the intervention is flawed or because those working in the ground were ineffective, but because it was the wrong choice of intervention – this is often referred to as theory failure. For example, alley-gating is unlikely to be as effective if the offenders burgling the target properties live within that block. It is also unlikely to be effective if the main point of entry/escape for offenders burgling these properties is the front door.
- 2) **Evaluation helps to inform others of what works (and what does not).** Crime reduction interventions need to be selected to suit the environment which is being targeted. Different crime reduction measures work in different environments based upon the geography of the area as well as the make-up of residents living there. What suits students may not suit the elderly, what suits home-owners may not suit renters and what suits terraced properties may not suit detached. Evaluation of an intervention allows others to select appropriate interventions to suit the area which they are targeting for a specific intervention.
- 3) **Evaluating the impact of an intervention will help to convince funding bodies that the scheme is worthy of future funding.** Although residents

and practitioners may feel that a crime reduction scheme has worked to reduce crime, anecdotal data are not adequate to convince funding bodies of the effectiveness of an intervention.

The remainder of this section provides some guidance as to what questions should be asked before alley-gating is selected as a crime reduction intervention and, if it is selected, following completion of the scheme.

**Table 1: Questions you need to ask throughout the alley-gating process.**

Analysing the problem – Before alley-gates are installed.	Assessing the Impact – After alley-gates are installed.
Which crimes are you concerned about?	Has the alley-gating scheme reduced police recorded crime?
What time of day are crimes taking place within the target block?	Has the alley-gating scheme reduced self-reported crime?
What day of the week are crimes taking place within the target block?	Has the alley-gating scheme reduced fear of crime?
Are houses on the target block rented or owner occupied?	Has the alley-gating scheme led to any additional benefits?
Who are the victims and have they been victims before?	Has the alley-gating scheme led to any unintended consequences (both negative and positive)?
Who are the offenders?	Has a reduction in crime led to an increase in other crime within the target block?
What proportion of crimes are committed by outsiders (those living outside the target block)?	Has the reduction of crime within the target block led to an increase in crime in the neighbouring area?
How are offenders getting into the properties on the target block – what is their <i>modus operandi</i> ?	Has the alley-gating scheme resulted in a change in offender <i>modus operandi</i> ?
Do you know why offenders are targeting this block – are they passing en route to another location or are these properties a targeted choice?	How many crimes did the alley-gating scheme prevent?
Do you know how much alley-gates will cost?	Has the alley-gating scheme been cost-effective?
Have you explored alternative crime reduction measures?	How was the scheme implemented on the ground – which agencies were involved, who led the project?
Can you explain why alley-gating will be better than alternative crime reduction measures?	What problems emerged and how were these overcome?

It is beyond the scope of this guide to outline how to conduct a post-intervention evaluation, but for anyone looking for guidance, the following points should be borne in mind:

- 1) Before embarking on an alley-gating scheme, consider carefully the data you may need to answer the questions in the table above. Even though you may not be planning an evaluation now, you may need to think about this later (if additional funding is required) and often valuable data are lost after the scheme has been completed;
- 2) When assessing the impact of the scheme on crime reduction, do not simply rely on police recorded data. Not all crime is reported to the police and not all crime is recorded by the police. Police data should be supplemented by survey data which asks residents about their experiences of crime as well as their fears and perceptions relating to crime and disorder;
- 3) In assessing the impact of the scheme on crime reduction, it is not enough to compare before and after crime figures. Any change in crime rates within the target area must be compared with a control/comparison area (a similar area where gates were not installed) to measure what would have happened without the implementation of the scheme;
- 4) Consider the unintended consequences (both positive and negative) which the scheme may have. Positive unintended consequences can include a reduction in crimes other than those that you aimed to reduce - a reduction in crime in neighbouring areas, an increase in house prices, a reduction in graffiti, dog fouling and litter and a reduction in void properties. Negative unintended consequences can include a reduction in burglary but an increase in other crimes, a reduction in entry through the rear but an increase in entry through the front of the property or a reduction of crime within the target area but an increase in neighbouring areas;
- 5) Be realistic about the association between a change in crime and the implementation of the intervention. Are there plausible alternative explanations for the reduction in crime such as a prolific offenders being sentenced to imprisonment or the introduction of another crime reduction scheme?
- 6) Consider allocating a percentage of your budget to research and evaluation. If you require assistance with research and evaluation contact local universities or consultancies to assess whether they can assist with this element of the project.

## Does Alley-Gating Reduce Crime and Disorder?

The previous section highlighted the importance of evaluation for identifying what works and what does not work and for convincing funding bodies that a scheme is worthy of future funding. Unfortunately, although many practitioners and residents believe that their alley-gating scheme has been successful, without an independent, high quality evaluation, opinions and beliefs will not stand the test of rigorous scrutiny.

This section of the guide is designed to inform readers of the potential benefits of implementing an alley-gating scheme in terms of crime and disorder reduction. The findings presented were collected from extensive trawls of crime reduction literature as well as requests posted to crime reduction practitioners on several web-based forums. The review of previous evaluations revealed some extremely positive findings, however; it also revealed a weakness in the methodological quality of a large proportion of studies. Although this guide is not designed as a tool to lecture readers on the importance of methodological quality, it is essential to stress that whilst evaluation is important, weak evaluations are of no value and can represent an important opportunity wasted.

To ensure that readers are aware of the methodological quality of each study reviewed for this guide, table 2 presents the findings of each study alongside a judgement on the quality of the research. The scale used to make this judgement is the Maryland Scientific Methods Scale developed by Farrington, Gottfredson, Sherman and Welsh (2002). This judgement is designed, not as a criticism of those who conducted the research, but as a simple method of communicating to readers the methodological quality of each study whose findings are presented.

The trawl of previous evaluations on the impact of alley-gating as a crime reduction measure revealed 13 studies conducted between 1996 and 2005 (displayed in table 2 below). Of the 13, all revealed positive findings with reductions in burglary ranging from 2.7% (net of changes in wider area) to 65% (gross reduction). Of the 13 studies, only eight monitored possible unintended consequences such as displacement of crime to other areas. Of the eight that measured this, five found a diffusion of benefit to surrounding areas; however two found some evidence of geographical displacement and two found evidence of crime switch displacement.

The findings from this review are summarised in table 2 and explained in more detail in the following paragraphs.

**Table 2: Summary of Research Findings**

Details of Study	Author (s)	Quality of Study III	Year	Location	Number of gates/properties covered	Other Interventions	Impact on crime and disorder	Unintended Consequences	Cost-benefit analysis
Home Office Reducing Burglary Initiative Case Study - Hartlepool	Universities of Liverpool, Hull and Huddersfield	Level 4	2000 (published in 2005)	Hartlepool, Cleveland, England.	Phase one (Home Office funded) included 14 gates protecting 185 properties. Phase two (New Deal) included a further 10 gates.	Part of a Home Office funded scheme which included seven interventions: alley-gating, target hardening, property marking, diversionary schemes, supervision of offenders, education and awareness and community development.	Net percentage reduction in burglary of 13%.	Evidence of diffusion of benefits to surrounding areas rather than displacement of crime.	The cost-benefit ratio was £2.19 saved for every £1 spent.
Home Office Reducing Burglary Initiative Project Summary - Ladybarn	Supplement 6 to Findings 204 (Kodz and Pease, 2003), drafted by McCreith, S based upon report by Christmann, K.	Level 3	2001 (published in 2003)	Manchester, England.	7 gates installed	Part of a Home Office funded scheme which included four interventions - alley-gating, crime prevention	Net percentage reduction in burglary after two years was 35%	Evidence of benefit	The cost-benefit ratio was £7.14 saved for every £1 spent.

Details of Study	Author (s)	Quality of Study III	Year	Location	Number of gates/properties covered	Other Interventions	Impact on crime and disorder	Unintended Consequences	Cost-benefit analysis
						publicity campaigns and target hardening.			
Home Office Reducing Burglary Initiative Project Summary - Rusholme	Supplement 6 to Findings 204 (Kodz and Pease, 2003), drafted by McCreith, S based upon report by Hodgson, B.	Level 3	2001 (published in 2003)	Manchester, England.	3 gates	Part of Home Office funded scheme which included five interventions: target hardening of dwelling, target hardening of the wider area, market disruption and safe storage scheme	Net percentage reduction in burglary after two years was 33.1%	Diffusion of benefit	The cost benefit ratio was £1.67 saved for every £1 spent.
Home Office Reducing Burglary Initiative Final Outcome Report - Liverpool	Universities of Liverpool, Hull and Huddersfield	Level 3	1999-2001 (published 2002)	Liverpool, Merseyside, England.	10 gates covering 125 properties	Part of Home Office funded scheme which included four interventions: target hardening, property marking,	Net percentage reduction in burglary after two years was 2.7%	Some geographical displacement of crime as well as crime switch to theft from	The cost benefit ratio was £1.50 saved for every £1 spent.

Details of Study	Author (s)	Quality of Study III	Year	Location	Number of gates/properties covered	Other Interventions	Impact on crime and disorder	Unintended Consequences	Cost-benefit analysis
						offender-interventions and alley-gating		car	
The Prevention of Domestic Burglary	Hamilton-Smith and Kent	N/A	2005	Reviews previous studies including 7 schemes which included alley-gating in the National Home Office Burglary Reduction Initiative, Armstrong (1999), Young (1999) and	N/A	N/A	Evidence from four studies suggests that alley-gating has a 50-60% gross reduction in burglary.  The net reduction from all seven Reducing Burglary Initiative schemes was 15% (ranging from +5% to -59%).	N/A	For seven Reducing Burglary Initiative schemes the cost benefit ratio was £1.17 saved for every £1 spent.

Details of Study	Author (s)	Quality of Study III	Year	Location	Number of gates/properties covered	Other Interventions	Impact on crime and disorder	Unintended Consequences	Cost-benefit analysis
				Bowers <i>et al</i> (2003).					
Forest Fields Project in Nottingham	Renewal.net	Level 2	No date	Nottingham, England	Gates were installed in 20 roads/streets	No	After gates were installed, burglary fell by 41% in the target area	Not included in study	No
Dukeries in Hull	Renewal.net	Level 2	1999-2001	Humberside, England.	47 gates	No	Following installation of gates, domestic burglary fell by 65%	Reduction in vehicle crime, fear of crime reduced, fly-tipping and dog fouling reduced in alleys and noise previously caused by youths subsided	No
Evaluating Situation Crime Prevention: The	Young, C., Hirschfield, A., Bowers, K., and Johnson, S.	Level 3	2003 (gates installed in 1999-2001)	Liverpool, Merseyside, England	208 gates covering 3442 properties	No	In the six year period 1995/1996 to 2000/2001 burglary rate reduced by 37.5% in the police force	Some evidence of displacement to buffer zones 200,	No



Details of Study	Author (s)	Quality of Study III	Year	Location	Number of gates/properties covered	Other Interventions	Impact on crime and disorder	Unintended Consequences	Cost-benefit analysis
Merseyside 'Alley-gating Schemes'							area, 32.8% in the concentric buffer zones and 53.3% in the target areas.	400, 600 and 1000 metres (600 showed worst levels of displacement).	
Closing Off Opportunities	Bowers, K., Hirschfield, A., and Johnson, S.	Level 3	2004	Liverpool, Merseyside, England	3178 gates covering 106 blocks	No	Net burglary reduction of 37% relative to comparison area	Overall diffusion of benefits with some evidence of displacement in 5 <sup>th</sup> (500metres) and 6 <sup>th</sup> (600 metres) buffers.	£1.86 saved for every £1 spent
The Effects of Situational Crime Prevention on Residents: A	Johnson, S., Bowers, K. and Hirschfield, A.	Level 3	Unpublished – research took place in 2002/03	Liverpool, Merseyside, England	This is a follow up to the above study so covers the same area	No	Installation of gates increased residents' perceptions of safety	N/A	N/A

Details of Study	Author (s)	Quality of Study III	Year	Location	Number of gates/properties covered	Other Interventions	Impact on crime and disorder	Unintended Consequences	Cost-benefit analysis
Case Study of Alley-gating									
Creating Defensible Space	Newman, O.	Level 3	1996	Dayton, Ohio, USA	35 streets and 25 alleys were closed	In addition to gates, three other measures were taken, these were: police crackdown, improvement of code enforcement procedures and measures to encourage first time home ownership	Within a year of gates being installed, total crime reduced by 26% and violent crime by 50%. By comparison, crime in Dayton increased by 1%.  53% of residents thought that there was less crime.	Diffusion of benefit to surrounding areas.	N/A
Biting Back at Crime with the Alley-gaters	Reed, J., and Nutley, K.	Level 2	1998	Abbey, Merton, London, England	170 gates	Alley-gating was just one part of crime reduction programme	One year after gates were installed, rear entry burglary reduced by 50%	N/A	N/A
Alley Gates: To Gate or Not to Gate	Green, R.	Level 2	2005 (gates installed in 2003-	Burnley and Preston, Lancashir	Burnley: 43 streets. Preston: 17		Burnley: 2004 figures (gates installed in May 04 but data are only	Burnley: 2004 figures (gates	N/A

Details of Study	Author (s)	Quality of Study III	Year	Location	Number of gates/properties covered	Other Interventions	Impact on crime and disorder	Unintended Consequences	Cost-benefit analysis
			2004)	e, England	streets		<p>presented for full year) show a 42% reduction in rear entry burglary compared to the previous year of 2003.</p> <p>Preston: First set of gates were installed in March 2003. Full year figures for 2003 (data not broken down any further) show a 41% reduction in rear entry burglaries compared to the previous year. The second set of gates were installed in October 2004. Full year figures for 2004 (data not broken down to before and after) show a further 20% reduction in rear entry burglaries compared to the previous year.</p>	<p>installed in May 04 but data are only presented for full year) show a 42% 63% increase in front entry burglaries compared to previous year of 2003.</p> <p>Preston: First set of gates were installed in March 2003. Full year figures for 2003 (data not broken</p>	

Details of Study	Author (s)	Quality of Study III	Year	Location	Number of gates/properties covered	Other Interventions	Impact on crime and disorder	Unintended Consequences	Cost-benefit analysis
								<p>down any further) show a 13% increase in front entry burglaries compared to the previous year. The second set of gates were installed in October 2004. Full year figures for 2004 (data not broken down to before and after) show a further 78% increase in</p>	

Details of Study	Author (s)	Quality of Study <sup>iii</sup>	Year	Location	Number of gates/properties covered	Other Interventions	Impact on crime and disorder	Unintended Consequences	Cost-benefit analysis
								front entry burglaries compared to the previous year. <sup>iv</sup>	

## **A Summary of the Findings**

### **Home Office Reducing Burglary Initiative Individual Projects**

Round one of the Home Office Reducing Burglary Initiative took place between 1998 and 2001 and provided funding for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to develop innovative programmes to reduce domestic burglary. Although only seven areas actually succeeded in installing gates (and some as few as 3 gates), because the programme was subject to an intense three year independent evaluation, the findings are extremely valuable and reveal a great deal about the process of setting up an alley-gating scheme and the potential crime reduction benefits which can be achieved. Whilst these findings have been included in this Guide, it is important to remember that the advances in both policy and legislation since 1998 suggest that it is unlikely that the delays experienced by these projects would be experienced by schemes commencing in the ensuing years.

Hamilton-Smith and Kent (2005) summarise the findings of the three separate evaluations of this national scheme (North, Midlands and South) and conclude that areas which implemented alley-gating saw a net reduction in domestic burglary of 15% - this ranged from a reduction of 59% to an increase of 5%. Because these figures are net of the change in burglary within the wider police force area, although more valid, they often mask more positive findings. Nationally, alley-gating schemes were found to be cost-beneficial with £1.17 saved for every £1 spent.

### **Rusholme, Manchester**

The Rusholme Burglary Reduction Project included five interventions, one of which was alley-gating. The project achieved a net reduction in domestic burglary after two years of 33.1% and was found to be cost-effective – £1.67 was saved for every £1 spent. Rather than displacing the reduced crime to neighbouring areas, the installation of gates resulted in reductions in burglary in neighbouring areas which did not have alley-gates installed. In addition to the obvious crime reduction benefits, Rusholme also saw a re-invigoration of the local Neighbourhood Watch scheme. During the community consultation for the alley-gates, the Neighbourhood Watch team rallied to support the initiative and strongly contested the assertions of some of the civic societies objecting to the gates.

Although the project team originally identified ten locations for the alley-gates, only three were successfully installed. There were significant delays in the implementation of the alley-gates because of the substantial legal problems encountered. Not only did the Ramblers' Association nationally agree to obstruct any such intervention at the commencement of the Burglary Reduction Programme, but there were also local action groups who raised objections to the gates.

### **Ladybarn, Manchester**

The Ladybarn Burglary Reduction Project included four interventions, one of which was alley-gating. The project achieved a net reduction in domestic burglary after two

years of 35% and was found to be cost-effective - £7.14 saved for every £1 spent. In addition to the reductions in burglary within the project area, the project appears to have produced a diffusion of benefits, with burglary reducing in the neighbouring areas which did not have alley-gates installed.

Seven alley-gates were installed in the project area and whilst the burglary reduction results were extremely positive, the severe delays experienced in the implementation phase of this project reveal some valuable lessons for future gating schemes. The first delay was a result of the time required to post planning notices required when obtaining a Closure Order; the second was a result of BT lines which needed to be repositioned and the third related to problems with Operational Services and Greater Manchester Waste. It had originally been agreed that they would act as key-holders and enter the gated area to collect bins themselves. However, concerns regarding lost keys, changes to contracts due to addition responsibilities and the slowing of collection times, the agreement was reneged and the project team had to spend a further £3,500 recessing the newly erected gates to allow for larger bins to be placed in front of the gates.

#### **Liverpool, Merseyside**

The Liverpool Burglary Reduction project included four interventions, one of which was alley-gating. The project achieved a net reduction in burglary after two years of 2.7% and was found to be cost-effective with £1.50 saved for every £1 spent. Unfortunately, this project did result in some geographical displacement of crime to the neighbouring areas which did not have gates installed. There was also some evidence of crime switch - with burglary reduced, but theft from cars increasing.

Although the project team planned to install 69 gates, the delays of applying for Closure Orders and consulting residents resulted in just ten gates being installed (these gates protected 125 properties). Although the gates which were successfully installed were placed on unadopted highways, avoiding the need to apply for Closure Orders, the remaining 59 gates (which covered adopted alleys) were installed after the lifetime of the Home Office project.

#### **Hartlepool, Cleveland**

The Hartlepool Burglary Reduction project included seven interventions, one of which was alley-gating. The project achieved a net reduction in burglary after two years of 13.2%; this is compared to an increase of 0.7% in the comparison area (which was selected for its similarities to the experimental area). Rather than displacing crime, the neighbouring areas surrounding the gated properties also saw a reduction in burglary offences. Overall, the project was considered to be cost-effective with £2.19 saved for every £1 spent. In addition to the reduction in burglary within the gated areas, the project also resulted in a diffusion of benefit with burglary reduced in the surrounding areas not covered by the gates. In addition to the crime reduction benefits, the enthusiasm for the gates acted as a catalyst to apply for further funding and 10 more gates were soon installed using New Deal funding.

Although 14 gates were eventually installed in the project area (protecting a total of 185 properties), the project team did encounter delays relating to residents' objections, legal processes and the logistics of developing gates which were wide enough (the alleys were wide enough to allow vehicular and pedestrian access). However, the project team overcame these difficulties and after demonstrating the benefits which other schemes had seen (through photos, crime statistics and even an organised visit) the residents began to accept that the benefits would outweigh the costs.

### **The Dukeries Alley-gating Project (Hull)**

The Dukeries project was initiated in response to local crime pattern analysis which revealed that the terraced houses in this area were experiencing high levels of burglary with a rear entry *modus operandi*. 47 gates were installed using the community safety budget of £9,000. Overall, the project resulted in a gross reduction in domestic burglary of 65%. This figure does not account for the reductions seen in the wider police force area and as such will appear much more significant than the net figures presented. In addition to the reductions in burglary, the project resulted in reductions in vehicle crime, fear of crime, fly-tipping and dog fouling and noise from local youths. The project also resulted in greater community involvement from residents with a Community Association established in the gated area.

### **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% of the population was experiencing 22% of the crime in the borough and that burglary was 50% 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.

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

### **Alley-gating in Liverpool, Merseyside**

Three excellent studies have been published on the impact of alley-gating in Liverpool (Young *et al*, 2003; Bowers *et al*, 2004 and Johnson *et al*. unpublished). Young *et al* (2003) report on the impact of alley-gating in Liverpool between 1999 and 2001, a period which the authors refer to as the 'transition period' as the scheme was still only partially implemented. Bowers *et al* (2004) discuss the full impact of the scheme up to June 2003 and the findings presented in Johnson *et al* (unpublished) compliment this by highlighting the effects of the scheme on residents' perceptions of safety and awareness of crime and disorder.



Due to the methodological standard of the evaluations, the large number of alley-gates included in the target area and the focus upon one intervention (as opposed to the Home Office projects which included alley-gating as part of a package), these three studies are by far the strongest evaluations of alley-gating to date. As was highlighted within the previous section, evaluations should compare crime and disorder data pre and post-gating with a suitable control area. They should assess the impact of the scheme on the areas surrounding the gated zone, has there been a displacement of crime or have neighbouring areas seen a diffusion of benefit? They should establish whether reductions in one crime type have resulted in an increase in alternative crimes (crime switch) and whether a reduction in offences using a particular *modus operandi* (i.e. entry through the rear door) have resulted in increases in offences committed using an alternative *modus operandi* (i.e. through the front door). Rigorous evaluations should also consider perceptions of safety as well as recorded crime data and ideally include a cost-benefit analysis of the scheme. The Liverpool evaluations presented below have included these elements and more and as such the findings presented should be considered the most valid indications of the impact of alley-gating on crime, disorder and levels of fear of crime.

#### **Young *et al* (2003)**

This evaluation reports on the impact 208 gates covering 3442 properties in Liverpool, Merseyside. Crime data for the pre-gated period April 1995 to April 1998 is compared with the implementation/transition period (Post 1998) where gates were progressively being introduced. The results reveal that even though not all gates had been introduced, alley-gating appears to have been effective in reducing the recorded burglary rate by 50% compared to the years when the gates had not been installed. Analysis of crime data in 10 concentric 200 metre buffer zones (up to 2000 metres) revealed that there was some geographical displacement of burglary to the 200, 400, 600, 800 and 1000 metre buffer zones.

#### **Bowers *et al* (2004)**

This evaluation reports on the impact of 3178 alley-gates in 106 blocks (each block typically containing approximately 362 properties). Crime data for the gated area is compared with a suitable comparison area for periods pre, during and post implementation of the gates. The evaluation also compares crime data in the gated area with seven 200 metre concentric buffer zones to establish whether the scheme was displacing crime to neighbouring areas. In addition, the evaluation examines *modus operandi* data to ascertain whether offenders were changing their offending patterns, whether the scheme was cost effective and finally whether the reductions in crime actually coincided with the periods in which gating was most intense.

The results revealed that relative to the comparison area, burglary in the gated areas reduced by 37%. Importantly, this reduction was net of the general changes in the surrounding areas. Overall, the findings revealed a diffusion of benefit to the areas

surrounding the gated zones, therefore the scheme can be judged to have impacted positively on the crime rates for areas that did not receive gates (as well as those that did). The first buffer zone (0-200 metres) experienced a high level of diffusion of benefit, the next three buffers also experienced a diffusion of benefit but less so than the first. In the fifth and sixth zones there was some evidence of displacement and in the seventh there was very little change. The evaluation concluded that the alley-gating intervention had prevented 875 burglaries and for every £1 spent £1.86 had been saved. Crucially, analysis of the reductions in crime against the levels of intensity of the scheme revealed that the intensity of the implementation was highly associated with the reductions in burglary. This was supported by analysis of offenders' *modus operandi* which found that following implementation of the scheme, relative to the comparison area, there was a reduction in the number of burglaries for which access was gained via the rear of the property.

#### **Johnson, Bowers and Hirschfield (unpublished)**

The findings from this study compliment those presented above in that they reveal the impact of alley-gating scheme on residents' perceptions of safety (as opposed to police recorded levels of crime). Surveys were conducted with a total of 566 residents living in the gated areas as well as suitable control areas. The results revealed that the presence of alley-gates increases perceptions of safety in the home, in the alley and on the street/in the neighbourhood.

#### **Dayton, Ohio, USA**

Newman (1996) presents the findings of defensible space modifications to the area of Dayton, Ohio. Although the modifications included street and alley closures (35 streets and 25 alleys), the scheme also included several additional interventions which make it difficult to ascertain which elements impacted upon crime and disorder. Other interventions included a police crackdown, improvements in code enforcement procedures and measures to encourage first-time home ownership.

The results revealed that within a year of creating the min-neighbourhoods, cut-through traffic was reduced by 67%, overall traffic volume reduced by 36% and traffic accidents reduced by 40%. Total crime reduced by 26% and violent crime by 50%. By comparison, in the wider Dayton area not covered by the interventions, total crime increased by 1%. A residents' survey also revealed that 53% of residents thought that there was less crime and 45% felt safer following the introduction of the street and alley closures.

#### **The Benefits of Alley-Gating**

Alley-gating is a crime reduction intervention which the research presented within this guide suggests can reduce crime by up to 65% gross (Dukeries, Hull) or 37% net (Bowers *et al.*, 2004). In addition to these benefits, alley-gating has been shown to produce crime reduction benefits in neighbouring areas which are not covered by the gates (Home Office Burglary Reduction Projects - Hartlepool, Ladybarn and Rusholme as well as Bowers *et al.*, 2003 and Newman, 1996), increase perceptions of safety

(Johnson *et al.*, unpublished), re-invigorate Neighbourhood Watch schemes within gated areas (Home Office – Rusholme), reduce crimes not directly targeted by gates (Dukeries, Hull), reduce arson (Johnson and Loxley, 2001), increase community involvement (Johnson and Loxley, 2001) and improve the aesthetic appearance of alley (Johnson and Loxley, 2001). Where schemes utilise the services of ex-offenders/drug users to manufacture the gates, this intervention can also reduce the likelihood of re-offending and increase future employment potential of offenders.

## **When Alley-Gating Might Fail**

One of the main barriers to successfully implementing an alley-gating scheme is the process of obtaining the consent of residents and legally closing the alley (where required). However, even where gates are successfully installed, there are still obstacles to success which must be considered from the outset. These are a) theory failure – where inadequate pre-intervention analysis results in a failure to match the crime problem to the appropriate intervention, b) implementation failure – where the selected intervention may be appropriate to the problem, but the scheme has not been properly implemented on the ground and c) displacement of crime.

### **a) Theory Failure**

Where a crime reduction intervention is implemented without adequate consideration of the problem or appropriate matching of problem and response, there is a greater probability of failure. In the case of alley-gating, this could include installing gates where the majority of offences are committed by residents living within the block or where rear-entry from an alley is not the main offender *modus operandi*. Alley-gating must be implemented following a comprehensive review of the crime problem and selected only because it is the most appropriate response.

### **b) Implementation Failure**

As is highlighted by Hamilton-Smith and Kent (2005) the long term efficacy of alley-gating depends largely upon the co-operation of local residents. Gating will not work if residents prop open the gates or lend their keys to inappropriate non-residents. Minimising the likelihood of implementation failure includes ensuring that residents want the scheme and that it is not imposed upon them. Consideration should also be given to the type of residents living within the area. Research from the phase one of the Home Office Burglary Reduction Initiative found that the effectiveness of schemes could be jeopardised where gated areas had a high student population.

### **c) Displacement**

A possible negative consequence of alley-gating is displacement. Displacement can be geographical – where crime is reduced in the gated area but increases in the neighbouring areas which do not have gates; target – where offenders respond to an intervention by selecting another type of target; temporal – where offenders switch their offending to a different time of day; tactical – where

offenders change their *modus operandi*, crime switch – where offenders commit a different type of crime to avoid crime reduction interventions and finally perpetrator – where apprehended offenders are replaced by new ones. Although a common criticism of situational crime prevention measures such as alley-gating, there is a considerable body of evidence to suggest that a diffusion of benefits is a more likely outcome of crime reduction schemes (Eck, 1993 and Hesselting, 1995) and where displacement does occur it is rarely complete (Hesselting, 1995) and need not always be negative (Barr and Pease, 1990). Although the possibility of unintended consequences such as displacement should always be considered and measured, it should not be viewed as an inevitable consequence of blocking opportunities for crime.

# Part Two – The Process of Alley-gating

## Which Legislation and Policy Documents can Assist the Process of Installing Alley-Gates?

Before embarking upon legal action to install alley-gates and close an alley, the first step you must take is to establish who owns the alleyway or footpath. The Land Registry will be able to provide information regarding the ownership of the alley. Generally, there are just two types of alleyway. There are adopted alleys which are owned by the local authority and unadopted alleys which are owned by the residents adjacent to the alley.

Unadopted alleys are owned by the households whose property abuts the alley. The Land Registry or deeds to your house will provide more detailed information regarding exact ownership. If an alley is unadopted the local authority will not be responsible for its maintenance i.e. street lighting and drainage. If an alley is unadopted it will not be designated as a right of way and can therefore be closed with the written consent of all homeowners adjoining the alley and will not require any further legal interventions (unless the gates require planning permission).

Although adopted alleys are owned and maintained by the highways authority, the public have a right of way to use these footpaths. Because the highways authority owns these alleys, they cannot be gated without legal permission to do so. There are several legislative options to use when applying to close an adopted alley including Sections 116 and 118 of the Highways Act 1980, Section 118B of the Highways Act or the new Gating Orders to be introduced in the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005. Although the closure of adopted alleys can be more costly (in terms of legal costs) and timely (in terms of data collection and legal delays), where appropriate procedures are followed, there are no reasons why adopted alleys which are either deemed unnecessary or deemed to be affected by or facilitate crime and disorder, should not be closed.

### Planning Permission

When planning the design of the gates you are going to install, you should consider that planning permission is required if the gate exceeds two metres. Although this is a relatively simple process, you should consider the trade-off between simplicity and lower costs (where gates do not require planning permission), and the risks that offenders will overcome the security should you choose a lower gate. This decision should be made in consultation with the planning department and the local Crime prevention Design Advisor or Architectural Liaison Officer who will be able to provide information on the *modus operandi* of offenders as well as additional environmental considerations. Although gates can be up to two metres high and not require planning permission if they are not immediately next to a road that cars drive along, where a gate does join a road used by cars, the gate cannot exceed one metre without planning permission.

### **Highways Act 1980**

Sections 116 and 118 of the Highways Act 1980 allow footpaths, bridleways or highways to be extinguished, stopped up or diverted (depending on the relevant section) if they are deemed to be unnecessary i.e. they are no longer used by the public. This Act allows an alley to be closed (if it is deemed unnecessary) without proof that it is a high crime area. Key points which should be borne in mind are that the closure requires an application to the Magistrates Court (as well as associated costs). An additional consideration is that following the extinguishment of the right of way, the land becomes the property of the residents adjoining it. This can cause concern for residents who are worried about the ongoing costs of maintenance and insurance.

### **Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000**

Paragraphs 8 and 12 of Schedule 6 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act inserted new sections 118B and 119B into the Highways Act 1980. This allows highway authorities to close (special extinguishment order) or divert (special diversion order) rights of way for the purposes of crime prevention. These powers can only be used in areas which are designated as 'high crime areas' by the Secretary of State following the submission of an application. Designated areas will have to meet specific conditions which include: a) Premises adjoining or adjacent to the highway are affected by high levels of crime; b) The existence of the highway is facilitating the persistent commission of crime; c) The order would be consistent with the Crime and Disorder Strategy; d) There are reasonably convenient alternative routes; e) The police authority have been consulted and f) Other methods to reduce the crime problem have been examined.

The powers introduced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act enable local authorities to close highways without the need to prove that they are no longer necessary. In practice, this means that the footpath can still be being used as a through route. An application for designated area status is submitted to the Secretary of State (as opposed to Magistrates Court). If an objection is received, the application will be sent to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Inspectorate. If the objection is upheld, the decision will be made at a public inquiry.

Before considering this option, local authorities should consider whether they want the area in which the alley-gating scheme is to be introduced to be labelled as a 'high crime area'. They should also consider that the application process requires detailed crime and disorder statistics and that the process can be lengthy and time-consuming.

### **Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005**

The Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005 introduced Gating Orders which allow local authorities to restrict a public right of way where: a) The premises adjoining or adjacent to the highway are affected by crime or anti-social behaviour; b) The existence of the highway is facilitating the persistent commission of crime or

anti-social behaviour; c) It is in all circumstances expedient to make the order for the purposes of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. Gating Orders do not require an application to the Magistrates Court and can be awarded by a special panel convened by the relevant local authority. The only agencies with the power to request a Public Inquiry are an NHS Trust, Fire and Rescue Authority or Police Force.

Although Gating Orders require proof that the properties adjoining or adjacent to the highway are affected by crime and anti-social behaviour or that the highway is facilitating crime or anti-social behaviour, the area (unlike the Countryside and Rights of Way Act) does not have to be designated as a 'high crime' area. Unlike the existing legislative provision, Gating Orders do not permanently extinguish the highway; therefore the land can remain under the ownership of the local authority. One of the most useful powers provided by this Act is the provision for local authorities to continue gating an alley where objections are made, as long as it is deemed that it is in the best interests of the community to do so. For areas such as Wigan whose alleys can often consist of nearly 100 houses, this will allow gating to continue where 100% consent cannot be achieved.

### **Planning Policy**

In addition to legislation, you should also consider how an application to close a footpath fits with national, regional and local planning policy. National policy documents which may assist the closure of a footpath for the purposes of crime reduction include Safer Places – The Planning System and Crime Prevention (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Home Office, 2004) and Better Places to Live by Design (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2001). In its Access and Movement section, Safer Places states that: "Crime and anti-social behaviour are more likely to occur if: streets, footpaths and alleyways provide access to the rear of buildings and if there are several ways into and out of an area – providing potential escape routes for criminal activity" (p.16). This section also states that: "It is desirable to restrict public access to the rear of buildings. Secluded footpaths or alleyways, in particular, should not run along the rear of, and provide access to, buildings or gardens" (p.19). In addition, Safer Places states that: "Rear alleys are rarely a good thing" (p.89).

Better Places to Live by Design: A Companion Guide to PPG 3 also refers to access and the issue of safety and security. Within the Canning Street and Jesmond case studies, the Guide states that "The back alleys are also a point of concern. Although well-maintained and well-lit, providing a suitable location for bin collection and servicing, they also create concerns on safety and security issues".

In addition to national policy, regional and local planning policy documents may refer to crime and disorder as an issue for consideration in design and planning.



**Table 3: Overview of Relevant Legislation**

Legislation	Which areas does it apply to?	What can we do?	What can't we do?	How does this help alley-gaters?	Procedure	Why might this be rejected?	Additional Points
Highways Act 1980  Section 116	The appropriate authority are: a) In relation to a metropolitan road, the local authority for the area in which the road is situated acting with the consent of the Greater London Council; b) In relation to any other highway, the highway authority for the highway.	If the Magistrates Court agrees that a highway (other than a trunk road or a special road) is a) unnecessary or b) can be diverted so as to make it nearer or more commodious to the public, they may by order	Close a highway which is deemed necessary i.e. it is still used as a through-route.	This legislation allows you to close an alley without having it designated as 'high crime' or without proof that the area has high crime.	The application must be submitted to Magistrates Court who will authorise (or not) the highway to be stopped up/diverted.	If the footpath is deemed to be necessary i.e. people are still using it.	Section 116 does not require the alley to have high crime.  Section 116 does require the footpath to be unnecessary.  Section 116 does require an application to the Magistrates Court.  Section 116 does require a reversion of land, so the footpath becomes the property of the

Legislation	Which areas does it apply to?	What can we do?	What can't we do?	How does this help alley-gaters?	Procedure	Why might this be rejected?	Additional Points
		authorise it to be stopped up or diverted. This section of the Act can stop up or divert a highway (for the purposes of all traffic) or a footpath/bridleway.					residents/properties adjoining it. This can be unpopular with residents who are concerned about maintenance and insurance costs.
Highways Act 1980 Section 118	The appropriate authority are: a) In relation to a metropolitan road, the local	Where it appears to a council that it is expedient that a path or way	Close a footpath/bridleway which is deemed necessary i.e. it is	This legislation allows you to close an alley without having it designated as	The application must be submitted to Magistrates Court who will authorise (or not) the footpath to be extinguished.	If it is considered that the footpath is still necessary for public use.	Section 118 does not require the alley to have high crime.  Section 118 does require the

Legislation	Which areas does it apply to?	What can we do?	What can't we do?	How does this help alley-gaters?	Procedure	Why might this be rejected?	Additional Points
	authority for the area in which the road is situated acting with the consent of the Greater London Council; b) In relation to any other highway, the highway authority for the highway.	should be stopped up on the ground that it is not needed for public use, the council may by order made by them and submitted to and confirmed by the Secretary of State, or confirmed as an unopposed order, extinguish	still uses as a through-route.	'high crime' or without proof that the area has high crime.			<p>footpath to be unnecessary.</p> <p>Section 118 does require an application to the Magistrates Court.</p> <p>Section 118 does require a reversion of land, so the footpath becomes the property of the residents/properties adjoining it. This can be unpopular with residents who are concerned about maintenance and</p>

Legislation	Which areas does it apply to?	What can we do?	What can't we do?	How does this help alley-gaters?	Procedure	Why might this be rejected?	Additional Points
		the public right of way over the path. This order is referred to as a public path extinguishment order.					insurance costs.
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000  Paragraphs 8 and 12 of the Act insert new sections 118B and 119B into the Highways Act 1980	Any relevant highway, footpath, bridleway for which the council are the highway authority and which is in an area designated by the Secretary of State.	These powers enable local authorities (following consultation with the relevant police authority) to close (special	Use these powers to close highways/ footpaths which are not within areas designated by the Secretary of State as 'high	This is the first legislation to enable footpaths to be closed/diverted for the purposes of crime prevention.	The council should (following consultation with the police authority and local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership) submit an application for designated area status to the Secretary of State. This submission should draw upon local knowledge as well as	A submission may be rejected if the submission does not prove that: a) The premises adjoining or adjacent to the highway are affected by high levels of crime; b) The existence of the highway is facilitating the persistent commission of crime; c) the special extinguishment order would be consistent with	Special extinguishment orders can only be used in areas designated by the Secretary of State as 'high crime areas'. This requires a detailed and often lengthy submission supported by

Legislation	Which areas does it apply to?	What can we do?	What can't we do?	How does this help alley-gaters?	Procedure	Why might this be rejected?	Additional Points
		<p>extinguish ment order) or divert (special diversion order) rights of way for the purposes of crime prevention. These orders can only be used in areas designated by the Secretary of State (see procedure).</p>	<p>crime areas'.</p>		<p>that of relevant partners. The submission must demonstrate that there are rights of way in the area that are demonstrable causes of a persistent crime problem and that realistic alternative option to tackle these causes have been examined.</p> <p>The submission should outline: a) The nature of the crime problem (supported by crime statistics); b) The location of the problem; c) The occurrence of the problem; d) The effect</p>	<p>the local Crime and Disorder Strategy; d) That a reasonably convenient alternative route is available; e) That the council have consulted the relevant police authority; f) That alternative crime reduction measures have been examined.</p> <p>Any person can object to a special extinguishment/diversion order and opposed orders will be referred to the Secretary of State with the opportunity for a public hearing or inquiry.</p>	<p>crime statistics.</p> <p>The negative consequences of labelling an area as 'high crime' should be considered before this option is used.</p> <p>This process does not require an application to the Magistrates Court, the submission is sent to the Secretary of State. An appeal will be considered by the Department</p>

Legislation	Which areas does it apply to?	What can we do?	What can't we do?	How does this help alley-gaters?	Procedure	Why might this be rejected?	Additional Points
					<p>of the problem, and e) Mitigation of the problem (i.e. other methods which have been considered/used).</p>		<p>for Environment Food and Rural Affairs Inspectorate. If this is upheld, the appeal will be heard by a Public Inquiry.</p> <p>Special extinguishment orders do not require the footpath to be unnecessary.</p> <p>Special extinguishment orders do not require a reversion of land i.e. the land within the closed</p>

Legislation	Which areas does it apply to?	What can we do?	What can't we do?	How does this help alley-gaters?	Procedure	Why might this be rejected?	Additional Points
							alley can remain the property of the local authority.
Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005.  Part 1, Section 2 – Gating Orders inserts Section 129A-G after Section 129 of the Highways Act 1980.  The Act	129A – A council may make a Gating Order in relation to a relevant highway for which they are the highway authority.  Before making a Gating Order, the local authority must be satisfied that: a) The premises	Section 129B states that a Gating Order can restrict a public right of way at all times, at some specific times, days or periods and that it can exclude certain people/agencies (this	Section 129B states that a Gating Order cannot restrict the public right of way over a highway for occupiers of premises adjoining or adjacent to the	This legislation inserts new sections into the Highways Act 1980 which enables local authority to gate highways similar to the existing powers but: a) It does not require the area to be designated as High Crime by the Secretary	Before making a Gating Order a council must notify the occupiers of premises adjacent to or adjoining the highway as well as any other person likely to be affected by the proposed order. They should publish the Order on their website, in a newspaper and erect signs adjacent to the highway: a) Identifying the highway; b) Setting out the effect of the Order; c) Setting out a draft of the proposed Order	Section 129A (3) (c) states that the local authority must be satisfied that in all circumstances it is expedient to make the order for the purposes of reducing crime. The 'circumstances' refer to: a) The likely effect of making the order on the occupiers of premises adjoining or adjacent to the highway; b) The likely effect of making the order on people in the locality; c) Where highway constitutes a through-route, the availability of a reasonably convenient	The highway does not cease to be a highway and the Gating Order does not permanently distinguish the rights of way. It is possible to revoke the restrictions.  To close an alley the local authority must be satisfied that the alley and the houses adjacent to it are

Legislation	Which areas does it apply to?	What can we do?	What can't we do?	How does this help alley-gaters?	Procedure	Why might this be rejected?	Additional Points
received Royal Assent in April 2005. The relevant sections of the Act are unlikely to be introduced before April 2006	adjoining or adjacent to the highway are affected by crime or anti-social behaviour; b) The existence of the highway is facilitating the persistent commission of crime or ASB; c) It is in all circumstances expedient to make the order for the purposes of reducing crime or ASB.	exclusion is likely to take the form of issuing keys to the erected gates). This section also states that a Gating Order can authorise the installation, operation and maintenance of a barrier(s) for the	highway. In addition to this, it cannot restrict the public right of way over a highway which is the only means of access to any dwelling.	of State; b) It enables gating to take place where highways suffer from crime and anti-social behaviour (or where alleys are seen as facilitating crime); c) It enables local authorities to continue gating an alley even where objections are made (if it is in the best interests of	and d) Inviting representations within a period specified in the notice (not less than 28 days). Copies of the notice should be given to occupiers of the premises adjacent to the highway, every council, police force, fire and rescue authority and every NHS Trust through which the highway passes. In addition, a copy should be given to any statutory undertaker who maintains services in the locality, any provider of gas, electricity or water services and any	alternative route. With the following exceptions, a Gating Order may not, either before or after it has been made, be questioned by legal proceedings. A person can apply to the High Court questioning the validity of a Gating Order on the grounds that: a) The council had no power to make it; b) Any requirement was not complied with. A public inquiry must also be held if an NHS Trust, Fire and Rescue Authority or Police Force through which the highway passes	experiencing crime or ASB or that the highway is <i>facilitating</i> the commission of crime and ASB. In this instance, crime or ASB may not be taking place on the alley (and police statistics may show that the alley has low levels of crime). However, intelligence may suggest that the alley is being used as an access/escape route.



Legislation	Which areas does it apply to?	What can we do?	What can't we do?	How does this help alley-gaters?	Procedure	Why might this be rejected?	Additional Points
		purpose of enforcing the restriction.		the local community to do so).	communications provider in the locality.		

## Preparing for Problems: the Barriers you may Face

The benefits of alley-gating are wide ranging, from a reduction in crime and disorder and fear of crime through to increased community involvement and improvements in the aesthetic appearance of an area. The research presented throughout this Guide displays the potential alley-gating has as both a crime reduction measure as well as a means of increasing community cohesion and reviving schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch and Residents' Associations.

Although it is clear that the benefits of alley-gating outweigh the potential negative outcomes, it is worth considering at the outset the barriers or obstacles which you may face. The table below outlines some of the problems raised in the literature and in the case study visits. Remember, these are examples of obstacles you may come across and are not necessarily going to occur; however, forewarned is forearmed!

**Table 4: Potential Problems and Possible Solutions**

Potential Problems/Concerns	Possible Solutions
Neighbours may be concerned about a displacement of crime	Read the review of academic research (part one) and present concerned residents with the facts! A diffusion of benefit (crime reduced even in areas without gates) is a more common outcome than displacement. Displacement is not an inevitable consequence of alley-gating.
Objections from Civic societies	Civic societies such as the Ramblers' Association or Open Space Society may be concerned about closures of rights of way. It is important to liaise with these societies as soon as possible and to reassure them that you are closing alleys that experience or facilitate large amounts of crime. Be prepared to talk and to compromise.
Noise from gates slamming	Noise does not need to be a concern. As you will see in part three of the Guide, noise dampening can easily be achieved by using rubber bushes on the gate and frame and by placing a rubber stop on the house wall.
Concerns about maintenance and insurance	If residents are concerned consider either using legislation which does not require a reversion of land (this way the Local Authority will maintain ownership) or setting up a Service Level Agreement with Environmental Services to enable the alley to maintained to a certain standard. Even if the land is owned by residents, retaining some responsibility for

	<p>maintenance will allow the local authority to ensure that the gates are maintained and therefore last longer.</p>
<p>Concerns about refuse collection</p>	<p>These concerns can be overcome by ensuring that all parties agree with the refuse collection system proposed. This may mean that refuse collectors carry keys to access the alleys, that residents put their bins at the end of the alley on refuse collection day, or that residents bring their bins to the front of the property. Whatever you decide, you must accommodate everyone.</p>
<p>Access for dogs/cats</p>	<p>Concerns over access for pets can be addressed through inserting a small cat-flap, ensuring that the gap between the bottom of the gate and the floor is wide enough for pets to access but not wide enough for potential offenders. It is rarely the case that cats cannot access the alley through another route i.e. over a wall or through the front of the property. Dogs should not need access without their owners as they should not be roaming free.</p>
<p>Access for disabled</p>	<p>The gate must allow for disabled access and be wide enough for a wheelchair. Access issues should be discussed with all residents.</p>
<p>Concerns regarding stigmatisation</p>	<p>Involve residents in the design of gates. This will help to allay concerns regarding the aesthetics of the gate. The vast majority of gating schemes have enhanced the appearance of the area, particularly those which take the opportunity to turn the alley into a useable public space. If residents are concerned, show them pictures of schemes where flowers have been planted and benches placed in the alley, creating a pleasant public space.</p>
<p>Concerns that the gate will block light</p>	<p>To avoid blocking natural light and the natural surveillance from passers by/other residents, gates should not be solid and should allow a clear line of sight down the alley. You should also consider installing a light above the gate.</p>
<p>Concerns that the gate will be inconvenient</p>	<p>If all concerns are addressed, the inconvenience of gates should be minimised. Where issues such as refuse collection or key replacement are dealt with in advance and systems set up to limit problems, the benefits will far outweigh any inconveniences.</p>

Dissent amongst neighbours

Where the alley is unadopted and owned by the residents adjoining the alley, all residents must agree to the scheme. Where the alley is owned by the local authority, different areas require different levels of consent – some insist upon 100%, other follow the greater than 51% rule. Although it is extremely frustrating (especially in areas with long alleys) where one resident's refusal means that 99 others must go without, you must remember that for a scheme to work, everyone has to use the gates properly. If you go ahead without 100% agreement, although you have got your scheme, that one dissenting resident may jeopardise its effectiveness.

# How to Implement an Alley-Gating Scheme

The process of implementing an alley-gating scheme will vary according to whether you are a resident, a member of a local Neighbourhood Watch scheme/Residents' Association or whether you are a crime reduction practitioner. It will also vary according to the resources available. Whatever the motive for considering alley-gating, you must think carefully about whether this intervention is a suitable option to address the crime problem you are experiencing.

Table 5 below makes some attempt to outline the steps which you will need to work through when implementing an alley-gating scheme. Please bear in mind that every scheme is different and these steps are presented as a guide.

**Table 5: Step-by-Step Guide to Alley-Gating**

Step	Action	If you are a crime reduction practitioner	If you are a local resident
Step 1 – Process for selection	If the alley-gating scheme is being set up by the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (as opposed to the residents themselves), one of the first decisions you will have to make is how are you going to select which areas should be gated? Some areas have used the bottom-up approach of waiting for residents to request gating and (other than publicising the scheme) only intervening once a request has been made. Some areas have taken a more targeted approach of selected areas based upon crime statistics or funding and then hoping that the residents want alley-gates. Other areas have used a combination of the two. This decision may be influenced by funding availability, it may also be influenced by your aims and objectives i.e. do you want to reduce crime or install a lot of gates?		
Step 2 – Conduct an in-depth analysis of the local area	You will need to establish:  1. Whether alley-gating is the appropriate response to the crime and disorder problem. Key questions to consider are: Is burglary is a problem? Do offenders live on the street you want to gate? Are offenders entering and exiting properties from the rear?  2. Whether residents living on the street are likely to	Crime data can be collected from the police crime pattern analyst or from Crime and Disorder Audits and local fear of crime surveys.  Socio-demographic data can be collected from the local authority or from	It is unlikely that the detailed crime data which you need will be in the public domain. Therefore you should contact your local police Crime Prevention Officer or the local authority Community Safety Department to discuss whether crime data suggests that alley-gating

Step	Action	If you are a crime reduction practitioner	If you are a local resident
	<p>use alley-gates. Key questions to consider are: Do the majority of residents own or rent the properties? Does the street contain a high proportion of students? Does the street have a high resident turnover?</p> <p>3. Whether the environmental design of the area is suitable for alley-gating. Key questions you need to consider are: Does the street have a rear alley? Is the design of the alley suitable for gating?</p>	<p>census data (National Statistics). Information relating to the environmental design of the area can be collected from your local Police Architectural Liaison Officer/Crime Prevention Design Advisor.</p>	<p>would be suitable.</p> <p>Data relating to the socio-demographic make up of your neighbourhood will be available from the census; however, it is likely that you have enough local knowledge to answer this question.</p> <p>Contact the local police Architectural Liaison Officer or Crime Prevention Design Advisor to discuss whether the design of the alley would suit alley-gating.</p>
Step 3 – Previous measures	You need to establish whether there have been previous attempts to address this crime problem. If so, what were they? Did they fail or succeed?	This information should be available from the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.	Contact your local Community Safety Department at the local authority.
Step 4 – Availability of funds	If the data analysed in steps 2 and 3 suggest that alley-gating would be a suitable intervention, you need to consider the funding options. Do you have funding available which is tied to certain criteria being met i.e. high crime, geographical areas, and high student population?	<p>Contact the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and Government Office.</p> <p>Contact residents to discuss whether they would be willing</p>	Contact the local Crime and Disorder Partnership to discuss the availability of funding. If there are insufficient funds, consider whether residents would pay for their own scheme.

Step	Action	If you are a crime reduction practitioner	If you are a local resident
	If your funding is limited to certain criteria, consider whether the location in question meets any of these. If not, consider other funding options.	to fund their own scheme.	
Step 5 – Funding decisions	Make a decision as to whether the scheme in question will be funded by the local residents or through other means. This information will need to be finalised before commencing the consultation phase.		
Step 6 – Consult residents	Consult residents to ascertain levels of support.	Either convene a meeting at a local venue, arrange a meeting to coincide with another local meeting i.e. Residents' Association or visit residents in person.	Convene a meeting at a local venue, arrange a meeting to coincide with another local meeting i.e. Residents' Association or visit each of your neighbours.
Step 7 – Establish legal status of alley	Contact Land Registry to ascertain the legal status of the alley in question. If the alley is unadopted it is likely that it will be owned by the residents adjoining the alley. If it is adopted, the local authority will own the alley. The result of this stage will influence your next steps.	Contact land Registry	Contact land Registry
Step 8 – Legally close the alley	If the alley is adopted consider the most appropriate method for	Contact Legal Department, Highways	

Step	Action	If you are a crime reduction practitioner	If you are a local resident
	<p>closure. This may be Sections 116 or 118 or 118B of the Highways Act 1980 or through the use of a Gating Order.</p> <p>Be prepared for lengthy delays and consider whether your funding is time limited.</p>	Department, Community Safety Team.	
Step 9 – Decide on ownership of alley and gate	Depending on the legislation used to close the alley, you will either be signing the alley and the gate over to the residents or retaining ownership. Whichever option you choose, you need this information before commencing the consultation.	Make a decision in consultation with the Legal and Highways Departments regarding ownership of the alley and gate.	
Step 10 – Maintenance Service Level Agreements	If you are signing the alley and the gate over to the residents, it may be a good idea to set up a Service Level Agreement with the local authority Environmental Team. If they are willing to retain some maintenance of the alley and the gate, this may allay some of the concerns raised by residents (it is also likely to avoid Health and Safety concerns and ensure that the gates last longer).	Contact your Environmental Services Department.	
Step 11 – Consultation	Assuming step 8 has been completed, you will need to consult all residents to a) let them know about the proposed gates and b)	You can conduct the consultation yourself, employ another company to, ask the local	You can conduct the consultation yourself, employ another company to, ask the local



Step	Action	If you are a crime reduction practitioner	If you are a local resident
	<p>gain their consent.</p> <p>If the alley is unadopted, you will need consent from all owners of the alley. If the alley is adopted by the local authority, you will need to make a decision about what proportion of residents need to agree before you go ahead with the scheme. Some areas insist on 100% agreement, others apply a &gt;51% rule.</p> <p>Make a decision as to who is conducting the consultation exercise.</p>	<p>Residents' Association or recruit local Street Representatives to take on the task.</p>	<p>Residents' Association or recruit local Street Representatives to take on the task.</p>
<p>Step 12 – Reluctant Residents</p>	<p>It is unlikely that you will meet your target for consent in the first wave of consultation (whether this is 100% or &gt;51% agreement). Therefore, you will need to visit these residents to answer specific questions/concerns. You may need to hold another public meeting.</p>	<p>Reluctant residents should be visited by those who can answer specific technical or legal questions. This is likely to be the local police Crime Prevention Officer, police Architectural Liaison Officer or Crime Prevention Design Advisor. It may also be helpful to take along a representative from the Community Safety Team.</p>	<p>Reluctant residents should be visited by those who can answer specific technical or legal questions i.e. police or local authority staff.</p>
<p>Step 13 – Local</p>	<p>Contact public service providers such as local</p>	<p>Contact all services/agencies</p>	<p>Contact all services/agencies</p>

Step	Action	If you are a crime reduction practitioner	If you are a local resident
Service Providers	authority refuse collectors, emergency services and agencies that hold under-soil rights i.e. electricity, gas, water, cable to ascertain permission to install gates. It may be that you can establish an agreement which avoids repeating this stage for every gating scheme.	who may need to access the alley.	who may need to access the alley.
Step 14 – Agree design and construction of the gates	<p>Once you have permission to close the alley you will need to consider the design of the gates. This should be done in consultation with residents taking into account specific requirements.</p> <p>At this stage you should also consider the height of the gates. If the gates exceed two metres you will need to apply for planning permission. This decision should be made in consultation with the residents, the Planning Department and the police who will give advice on the likely impact of gates on offenders.</p>	Consult residents, gate manufacturers, police and Planning Department.	Consult residents, gate manufacturers, police and Planning Department.
Step 15 – Planning Permission	If you select a gate which exceeds two metres you will need to apply for planning permission.	Contact Planning Department.	Contact Planning Department.
Step 16 – Installation	Consider who should install the gates. This should be done in consultation with residents. Some areas have	Consult residents, local installation companies and Probation	Consult residents, local installation companies and Probation Service.

Step	Action	If you are a crime reduction practitioner	If you are a local resident
	utilised the services of those serving Community Payback.	Service.	
Step 17 – Maintenance	You should have already made a decision (step 10) about the status of the alley and gates and whether Environmental Services are willing to maintain the area (for health and safety issues). Whether the land and gates remain the property of the local authority or the residents, you need to establish a maintenance policy and communicate this to all involved. This may involve employing a local company or setting up a scheme management committee.	Consult Environmental Services, local companies and residents. Once a maintenance policy has been agreed, ensure this is publicised.	Consult Environmental Services, local companies and residents. Once a maintenance policy has been agreed, ensure this is publicised.
Step 18 – Key distribution	It is a good idea to hold several key distribution days which are an opportunity not only to distribute keys, but also to remind residents of management and maintenance issues.	Hold at least two events – one in the daytime and one in the evening.	Hold at least two events – one in the daytime and one in the evening.
Step 19 – Monitoring and Evaluation	The effectiveness of the scheme should be monitored on a regular basis to establish whether the gates are reducing crime and fear of crime and whether there are any positive or negative unintended consequences.	Contact the local authority, police, local University or private consultants to discuss research and evaluation.	Contact the local authority, police, local University or private consultants to discuss research and evaluation.

## Gating in Practice: Case Study Examples

As a means of illustrating many of the issues discussed throughout this Guide, the section below outlines the processes used in four case studies to set up (and maintain) alley-gating schemes. The four areas vary greatly in terms of their location, the structure of the alley-gating team, resources allocated to gating and the processes utilised to implement gating schemes. The areas were selected for two reasons. Firstly because they were recommended as examples of good practice by local Architectural Liaison Officers, Crime Prevention Design Advisors and Crime Prevention Officers accessing the Designing out Crime (DOCA) forum, and secondly because they demonstrate different scales of alley-gating schemes.

### Manchester City Council

The first of the five case studies is Manchester City Council's alley-gating team which is co-ordinated by five officers and three administrators and based within the local authority's Private Sector Housing. The responsibility for alley-gating was transferred in 2003 and in the two financial years 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 628 gates have been installed, protecting 6321 properties. Although alley-gating is co-ordinated by Private Sector Housing, the process involves a variety of partner agencies including Groundwork, Greater Manchester Police and the council's Highways and Legal Services.

The team have two distinct processes of selecting alleys for gating. The first relies upon residents to complete an application pack requesting alley-gates. In this instance, much of the responsibility for co-ordinating responses is placed upon the residents themselves and unless applicants request that the team visit reluctant or apprehensive residents to answer queries or concerns, their involvement in the consultation phase is limited. The second more targeted approach is led by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Burglary theme group who select locations experiencing high levels of repeat burglary based upon crime pattern analysis. In the second approach, the consultation process for larger schemes is managed by Groundwork. In both approaches the residents do not contribute financially to the gates, unless they require additional/replacement keys (for which they charge a fee of £15).

Unlike many of the other case study areas, the Manchester alley-gating team do not prioritise based upon the legal status of the alley. Because the majority of Manchester's alleys were adopted by the local authority in the 1960s, almost all of the alleys gated by the team have been adopted. The team have used both Section 116 of the Highways Act (1980) and Section 118B of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (1998) as the legal means of closing alleys. For the closures using Section 116, the team must prove that the alley is no longer necessary; therefore alleys used as rights of way cannot be closed using this law. Section 116 also involves a reversion of land with the gate and the land behind it becoming the property of the

residents. Although this can raise concerns regarding maintenance of the gates and the area surrounding them, the team have signed a Service Level Agreement with Environment & Operations Department, which ensures that gates are maintained where they become a health and safety problem. This also addresses the issue of alleys which residents are failing to maintain – the alley-gating team recognise that the introduction of a crime reduction measure must not result in other environmental problems and this Service Level Agreement is just one example of the team's proactive approach. Section 118B of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (1998) has also been successfully used to close alleys and 25 areas are currently designated as high crime. Whichever legal method used by the team, a gating scheme will not go ahead without 100% agreement from the residents abutting the scheme and written permission from emergency services and other service providers. In addition, all gates must receive planning permission from the local authority as the gates used by the team exceed two metres.

The main problems encountered by the alley-gating team in Manchester have been the objections raised by the Civic Societies whose negative approach to raising objections has resulted in delays and costs encountered, as well as the loss of individual schemes to residents. In most cases the delay caused by an objection will also cost the team financially as funding for schemes is often linked to a financial year and a delay can mean that a scheme is not completed within the relevant time-frame. The team are eagerly anticipating the introduction of Gating Orders (Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act, 2005) and hope that the current exclusion of Civic Societies from the list of agencies who can require an appeal to be taken to a public inquiry is maintained. If this position is preserved, the costs currently swallowed up by legal expenses and time delays can be devoted to the purpose intended – that being the reduction of crime and disorder.

## Tameside

The second case study focuses upon Tameside's alley-gating team which is based within the local authority's Community Safety Unit. The team has just two members of staff whose time is not exclusively devoted to alley-gating. At the time that this case study was written, the team had installed 214 gates protecting 3379 dwellings.

The process of alley-gating within Tameside has been extremely successful. One of the reasons for that success lies in the team's recognition that due to limited resources, their system has to be straightforward, well-organised and community-led. Up until April 2005, the process of selecting alleys for gating was entirely resident led and relied upon residents contacting the team to request gates. If the resident's alley met the team's criteria in that the alley was vulnerable to crime and was unadopted, that resident would be recruited as the Street Representative and would take responsibility for consulting all residents and gaining consent for the gates to be introduced. The alley-gating team would only become involved where reluctant residents required reassurance or to answer technical/legal queries.

Post April 2005, the selection process became more targeted with Greater Manchester Against Crime (a multi-agency group) using a problem-oriented approach to identify the most vulnerable locations and sending their recommendations to the alley-gating team. Once the team receive these suggestions, the process remains the same with adopted alleys or those still used as a right of way being excluded. Residents residing in the remaining areas are sent an introductory letter asking them to contact the team if they are interested. If a resident contacts the team expressing an interest, as before, they are recruited as the Street Representative and asked to co-ordinate the collection of consent forms. As before, the alley-gating team do not ask the Street Representative to deal with reluctant residents, who are visited by the police Crime Prevention Advisor as well as the alley-gating team. Where 100% agreement cannot be achieved a scheme will not go ahead. In all cases the residents contribute 50% of the costs of the scheme (as well as all maintenance costs once the gates are installed and become their own property). Residents take the first initiative in requesting the gates, they lead the consultation phase which requires consent forms to be collected, they pay 50% of the costs and must agree to pay for future maintenance of the gates and are also asked to decide which contractor is used to manufacture/install the gates (from four quotes provided). The alley-gating team believe that residents must want the gates to make them work, in this instance the team have ensured that the scheme is resident led and entirely required.

Due to their selection process, which avoids alleys which are classified as adopted, the Tameside team have not utilised any legal procedures for closing alleys. Tameside's reluctance to gate adopted alleys lies firstly with their recognition that their resources are limited, therefore cannot be wasted on complex cases, but also with their reluctance to stigmatise areas by designating them as 'high crime', making closure under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act impossible. Requests which are made by residents living on adopted alleys are not ignored and the team currently have a list of 50 locations which will be prioritised once Gating Orders are introduced. As a means of avoiding further complications, costs and delays, all gates are kept below the height which requires planning permission. In addition, the team have a blanket agreement from the emergency services that gates can be installed throughout the borough, requiring the team simply to send a grid reference of the gated area to Response Planning once the gates are installed.

## **Wigan**

In the third case study area of Wigan, the alley-gating team is led by a Project Manager seconded from Community Safety, yet based within the Rights of Way Section of the local authority's Engineering Services. This multi-agency approach ensures that full advantage is taken of the Manager's knowledge of community safety, as well as the department's legal and technical expertise. The trial phase of

the scheme, which focused predominantly upon research, began in mid-2004. The Project Manager started in January 2005 and since then the team have installed 62 gates protecting approximately 486 properties.

The process of selecting alleys for gating utilised both crime pattern analysis – to identify properties vulnerable to burglary and repeat burglary using a rear entry *modus operandi*, as well as an assessment of the environment – to ensure that the areas would benefit from gates. The areas selected for gating in the pre-programme selection were split into three phases, the first two (Wigan) containing the more straightforward unadopted alleys and the third (Leigh) being predominantly adopted. Where alleys are unadopted, the process involves sending letters to all residents abutting the proposed alleys. Where residents do not reply, a second letter is sent. Where there is still no reply, a seven-day letter is sent stating that a failure to reply will presume agreement. Where residents do not consent to the gates, the alley-gating team visit to try and answer any queries and reassure any concerns. If the team cannot secure 100% agreement, the scheme does not go ahead. Because the alleys in phases one and two have been unadopted and gates have been kept to below the two metres required for planning permission, no further legal procedures have been required.

For the more difficult third phase where alleys are adopted, the alley-gating team have used the Countryside and Rights of Way Act. One problem with this process of applying for closure of alleys is that consent still needs to be gained from 100% of the residents before the gates can be installed. Therefore, a team could spend months applying for designated area status only to find that residents do not want the gates. The risk of conducting the process in reverse i.e. consulting before applying for designated area status, may save resources, but if the application failed, residents could be left disappointed and disillusioned. Although the whole consultation process for phases one and two were conducted by the small team of one police officer, the General Highways Manager (when they had a spare hour amongst their other responsibilities) and later the Project Manager, for the third phase, the team have recruited the services of the local Residents' Association.

For the gates which have been installed, residents have not contributed towards the costs of the gates (unless they require additional keys); however, as the gates are owned by the residents, they are required to fund their own insurance as well as future maintenance of the gates. As one of the main obstacles to gaining consent has been the concern regarding future maintenance and insurance costs, a decision has been made to retain ownership of the gates. The team believe that this will help to increase future consent as well as avoiding the problems of failure to maintain the gates which have been installed.

The Wigan alley-gating team have applied a pragmatic approach and achieved a vast amount with very few resources; however, one of the major problems facing the

team (which cannot be addressed until Gating Orders are introduced) is the size of the alleys within Wigan, which can serve as many as 99 properties! With the current legal position, if one resident objects to the gates, 98 have to go without. As well as the time-consuming nature of consulting such a large number of residents (only to find that the gates cannot be installed), this is frustrating for residents who believe that the gates will solve their crime and disorder problems.

### East Folkestone

The final case study area focuses upon a small scheme of 12 alley-gates installed as part of an SRB programme between 1998 and 2001. This case study highlights that alley-gating does not have to involve vast numbers of gates or large teams, but can simply involve a one-off decision to protect a vulnerable area. The East Folkestone alley-gating scheme was led by a local police officer who whilst conducting crime pattern analysis of repeatedly victimised properties within a deprived part of the town, found that the *modus operandi* suggested that the rear alleys were facilitating much of the burglary and that alley-gating might be the answer.

Although the police drove the scheme, the early identification of community champions meant that the scheme was largely community led. As the area was unadopted and gates were under the two metres required for planning permission, not legal procedures were required to close the alleys. This largely straightforward scheme resulted in huge reductions in crime and disorder, with only three burglaries committed since the gates were installed (two being front entry and the only rear entry relating to a resident who was moving house and left the gate to aid the move).



## A Basic Checklist: The Dos and Don'ts of Installing Alley-Gates

Although the following table risk repetition, it feels appropriate to end this Guide with 10 simple dos and don'ts which have become apparent through discussions with alley-gating teams.

**Table 6: 10 Dos and Don'ts**

Do		Don't
1	Ensure that you have analysed our crime problem and make sure that you are choosing alley-gating because it is the most appropriate response.	Do not implement an alley-gating scheme just because others have or because there is funding available.
2	Recruit local champions.	Do not be scared of the complex legal process. What may seem complicated to you will not be complicated to your legal department. Enlist the help of all relevant partners.
3	Consult with all residents and service providers at an early stage.	Do not impose a gating scheme upon residents who do not want it. Without their support, the scheme will fail.
4	Ensure that residents want the scheme. Even if your crime pattern analysis reveals that alley-gating is the most appropriate response, it will not work if residents don't use it.	Do not avoid consulting with those who are likely to oppose the scheme. It is essential that you build a good relationship with civic societies and show that you are willing to compromise.
5	Liaise with civic societies an early stage.	Do not try to do this on your own. There are a variety of people and partners who will be able to help.
6	Engage the support of partners, residents and local organisations to conduct time-consuming tasks such as residents' consultation.	Do not implement a scheme without completing the necessary legal requirements. This could results in legal action and wasted costs if the gates have to be removed.
7	Use the local Community Safety Team or Police Crime Analysts to prepare any crime data you need. Good quality crime data will assist the legal procedures as well as helping to convince reluctant residents.	Do not assume that gating schemes have to be large scale. The case study examples demonstrate that s scheme with as few as 2 gates can have a dramatic impact upon the residents involved.
8	Consider the needs of all residents	Do not ignore the concerns of neighbours

	and ensure that the design process is inclusive.	who are not receiving gates. They may be worried about a displacement of crime. Present them with the facts and assure them that crime is unlikely to be displaced.
9	Check whether your funding is time-limited and avoid losing funding due to legal delays.	Don't be put off! Alley-gating can be extremely effective and this Guide should make the process relatively straightforward.
10	Monitor your alley-gating scheme on a regular basis.	Do not assume that a successful scheme will automatically sustain that success. Continue to monitor a scheme's effectiveness and take relevant action to improve the scheme.

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<sup>i</sup> This is supported by Letkemann (1973); Brantingham and Brantingham (1984); Beavon (1984); Feeney (1986); Gabor et al (1987); Taylor and Nee (1988); Poyner and Webb (1991); Rengert and Wasilchick (2000) and Wiles and Costello (2000)

<sup>ii</sup> This is supported by Reppetto (1974); Bevis and Nutter (1977); Taylor and Gottfredson (1987); Cromwell et al (1991); Poyner and Webb (1991); Brown and Bentley (1993); Beavon, Brantingham and Brantingham (1994) and Rengert and Wasilchick (2000)

<sup>iii</sup> Maryland Scientific Methods Scale:

Level 1 - Correlation between a prevention programme and a measure of crime at one point in time (e.g. areas with alley-gates have lower crime rates than areas without alley-gates).

Level 2 - Measures of crime before and after the programme with no comparable control condition (e.g. crime decreased after alley-gates were installed).

Level 3 - Measures of crime before and after the programme in experimental and comparable control conditions (e.g. crime decreased after alley-gates were installed in an experimental area, but there was no decrease in crime in the comparable area).

Level 4 - Measures of crime before and after the programme in multiple experimental and control units, controlling for other variables that influence crime (e.g. victimisation of areas with alley-gates decreased compared to victimisation of control areas after controlling for features of areas that influenced their victimisation).

Level 5 - Random assignment of programme and control conditions to units (e.g. victimisation of areas randomly assigned to have alley-gates decreased compared to victimisation of control areas).

<sup>iv</sup> Figures in this study appear to be numbers of offences rather than rates (per property). As the introduction of more schemes will mean more properties are included in the study area an increase in total numbers of burglary may not be a negative finding if this figure was divided by the number of properties.