

# Alley Gating in Hillingdon



## **A review by the Residents' Services Select Committee**

**Councillors on the Committee:** Councillors Wayne Bridges, Colleen Sullivan, Scott Farley, Janet Gardner, Ekta Gohil, Sital Punja and Peter Smallwood

**2022/2023**



**HILLINGDON**  
LONDON

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## Chairman's Foreword



On behalf of the Residents' Services Select Committee, I am pleased to present this report relating to the Committee's review of Alley Gating in Hillingdon. The Council's alley gating scheme assists local residents in securing their privately-owned alleyways against intrusion by others and anti-social behaviour.

On 19 October 2022, the Select Committee elected to undertake a major review of the Council's alley gating scheme. This review aimed to consider ways in which the current scheme could potentially be improved to better meet the needs of local residents using them.

Having received evidence from Hillingdon Council officers, importantly residents of the Borough, the Metropolitan Police and representatives of the neighbouring London Borough of Ealing, the Select Committee concluded that the Council could potentially offer additional support to the Borough's residents in a number of practical ways as detailed within the body of this report.

Through all its information gathering, the Committee was mindful of the need to find cost-effective, workable solutions, hence the recommendations in this report are endorsed as prudent, effective actions to improve the resident experience.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those officers who have given up their time to help the Committee in reviewing this topic and commend them for their continued hard work to support residents in the Borough.

Councillor Wayne Bridges

**Chairman of the Residents' Services Select Committee**

## Summary of recommendations to Cabinet

Through the witness sessions and evidence received during the detailed review by the Committee, Members have agreed the following recommendations to Cabinet:

**1**

**Scheme awareness**

That updated signs be installed on all alley gates to include the following information:

- a) that residents must keep the gates clear and closed when not in use;
- b) that residents are responsible for maintenance of the gates; and
- c) providing a Council contact email / website address where residents can access further details about the scheme in general.

**2**

**Scheme awareness**

That the alley gating scheme be promoted in Hillingdon People.

**3**

**Lead resident communications**

That, when sending its annual emails to verify the lead resident of each alley gating scheme, the Council's expands this communication:

- to include a review of any issues with the gates and any ASB which the Council could potentially assist, and;
- to arrange to send the lead resident a batch of flyers (after verification) to be dropped through letter boxes informing any new neighbours about the alley gating scheme in their area.

**4**

**Lead resident communications**

That, in addition to the annual check, for brand new alley gating schemes officers seek feedback from the lead resident six months after the gate has been installed.

## Background to the review

### Aim of the review

On 19 October 2022, Members of the Residents' Services Select Committee elected to undertake a major review of the Council's alley gating scheme. The purpose of the review was to consider ways in which the current alley gating scheme, which had been in operation for more than 17 years, could potentially be modified to better meet the needs of Hillingdon residents.

### Context and Key Information

#### What are alley gates?

The Committee received research and data regarding the purpose and effectiveness of alley-gates. As defined in a research paper by the College of Policing dated 16 March 2016: "Alley gates are lockable gates installed to prevent access by offenders to alleyways, such as those which run along the rear of older-style terraced housing in the UK. While normally a burglary prevention tool, alley gates can also prevent other crimes such as littering and anti-social behaviour by preventing access to alleys by non-residents and better controlling the space." <sup>1</sup>

Alley gates are usually made of iron or steel and are bespoke in relation to the requirements and specifications of an individual alley. The residents of homes adjacent to the gated alley operate the gates, using either keys or a key code.

#### Effectiveness of alley gating schemes

Research indicated that alley gates can be extremely effective in the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour. In the paper 'Alley-gating revisited' Armitage & Smithson 2007 a review of studies which assessed the impact of alley gating on burglary found that "Previous studies of Alley-gating schemes and their crime reduction impacts have revealed positive findings. These studies focused mainly on the reduction of burglary in the scheme areas, with reductions ranging from 37% (net of changes in the wider area) to 65% (gross reduction)." <sup>2</sup>

Moreover, a study conducted by Dr Colin Rogers on behalf of the Centre for Crime and Justice in the autumn of 2007 found that the introduction of alley gates in Cadoxton, South Wales "had a positive and sustained impact on not only delivering solutions in the period immediately following their introduction, but also, into the future." <sup>3</sup> The table below further evidences this:

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<sup>1</sup> [Alley gating | College of Policing](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Alley-gating revisited 2007](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Alleygating - preventing crime or isolating communities?](#)

Table 1 Residents' perceptions <sup>(1)</sup> of the effectiveness of alley-gates in tackling local problems

	Those who perceived that the introduction of the alley-gates would reduce the problems.	Those who perceived that the alley-gates had reduced the problems six months after their erection.	Those who perceived that the alley-gates had reduced the problems two years after their erection
Yes	84%	86%	85%
No	9%	8%	12%
Uncertain	7%	6%	3%

(1) Based on a sample size of 100 residents.

Table 2 Residents' perceptions <sup>(1)</sup> of levels of crime and disorder after the introduction of the alley-gates

Residents' perceptions	In the first six months following installation of the alley-gates	In the period two years after installation of the alley-gates
Crime levels had not changed	41%	26%
Crime levels had risen	12%	10%
Crime levels had fallen	21%	52%
Uncertain about changes in crime levels.	26%	12%

(1) Based on a sample size of 100 residents

## Hillingdon's Chrysalis Community Safety Private Alley Gating Scheme

Members of the Committee welcomed that each year the Council makes some £1m available through its Chrysalis programme to assist residents and community groups in improving local facilities. Within the overall Chrysalis programme, around £30k is earmarked each financial year to support alley gating and community safety schemes which enhance public safety.

The Council's private alley gating scheme, first introduced approximately 17 years ago, assists residents in securing their privately owned alleyways. Not only do the gates reduce the likelihood of burglars gaining access to the rear of properties, but they also protect the alleyway from the risk of fly-tipping and other anti-social behaviour.

Chrysalis funding contributes up to 90% of the cost of alley gates to successful applicants. Once the gates have been installed, future maintenance and ownership are the responsibility of the residents themselves.

From 2008-09 to 2017-18, a total of 112 alley gating schemes were implemented across the Borough. Over the years, extensive positive feedback has been received from residents who have benefitted from the increased security which the alley gating scheme provides. In December 2020, further to the installation of four gates to protect over 70 households in the then Cavendish Ward, the following feedback was received from the Lead Resident:

*"The gates are fabulous, and I would like to pass on our thanks from all the residents to those in Hillingdon Council that made this happen."*

## Maintenance of alley gates

The Committee heard that the gating of private alleyways was a self-help scheme which residents organise themselves with the financial support of the Council. Residents accepted direct responsibility for the security of the keys and for the upkeep and repair of the gates once they have been installed. All ongoing maintenance including damage to, or loss of, the gates was the sole responsibility of the residents. All gates were installed with a minimum of 12 months' warranty against construction failure.

The Council did not have a mandate to hold keys for privately owned property, hence spare keys were not held for any gating scheme. Residents were recommended to seek advice on public liability insurance for the gates in the event of future damage. Guidance provided recommended that, once a scheme has been approved, a designated bank account should be opened to collect the contributions. Lead residents are advised to collect a small amount of extra money from each household so as to establish a sinking fund to cover any future repairs and maintenance.

When a new resident moves into an alley gated area, the responsibility for providing the key to the gate lied with the previous owner of the property. If a key is not provided, the new resident is advised to speak to a neighbour to get a key cut. Alternatively, officers may offer to contact the Lead Resident to ask them to provide a master key which can be cut.

Newly introduced since April 2022 and applicable to schemes installed more than ten years ago, there is a discretionary option for the Cabinet Member to agree to support the repair or replacement of gates based on the standard 90% Chrysalis contribution to a new scheme. This ensures that residents who have maintained the alley gates in good working order for ten years are not financially disadvantaged. This discretionary option also assists in sustaining the wider community benefits of reducing the likelihood of burglaries and protecting the alley from fly-tipping and other anti-social behaviour.

## Legislative / national context

Members of the Committee were briefed on the legislative aspects of alley-gating. Nationally a considerable number of alley gating schemes were in operation to assist residents in securing their private alleyways. Whilst Government legislation existed in relation to the gating of public highways, it did not apply to the installation of alley gates on private land. In respect of public highways, the Explanatory Memorandum to the Highways Act 1980 (Gating Orders) (England) Regulations 2006 No. 537 <sup>4</sup> affirms that:

Powers to close alleyways were introduced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act 2000); <sup>5</sup> this enable alleyways, which are also rights of way, to be closed and gated for crime prevention reasons. However, they do not enable alleyways to be gated expressly to prevent anti-social behaviour and they exclude many alleyways that are public highways but not recorded as rights of way. Also, under these provisions the removal of rites of passage is irrevocable.

The procedure for gating under the CROW Act 2000 is often protracted and resource intensive

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<sup>4</sup> [The Highways Act 1980 \(Gating Orders\) \(England\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000](#)



for local authorities. This is because, the Secretary of State first must designate an area that can be subject to a gating order, which can take a long time. In addition, the trigger for gating is confined to 'crime' only – the local authority must demonstrate that crime is present which is shown by police evidence of recorded crime and therefore it does not include anti-social behaviour and if one person objects to the proposal (regardless of whether they live in the locality), the proposal must be withdrawn.

Because of the inherent difficulties in using the existing system, new provisions (sections 129A to 129G of the Highways Act 1980) were introduced by section 2 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. <sup>6</sup>

The new provisions now enable a local authority to gate a highway in a similar manner to the existing power but it:

- a) does not first require the highway to be designated by the Secretary of State
- b) enables gating to take place if highway suffers from crime and/or anti-social behaviour
- c) enables the local authority to continue with a gating order, even if objections are made (if it is considered in the best interests of the local community to do so).



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<sup>6</sup> [Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005](#)



## Evidence & Witness Testimony

The Select Committee held three witness sessions at which Members had the opportunity to receive testimony from local residents, the Metropolitan Police, Hillingdon Council officers and representatives of Ealing Council's alley gating team.

### Hillingdon residents

The first witness session, held on 15 February 2023, was attended by three local residents of Hillingdon East Ward who provided the Committee with an invaluable insight into their personal experiences of some of the Borough's older alley gating schemes. Hillingdon East Ward has a significant number of alleygating schemes so it represented a good area to seek feedback.

### Positive feedback

Members were informed that the wide alley ways to the rear of properties to the east of Long Lane had previously been very susceptible to burglary and fly tipping, hence Chrysalis funding had been applied for and gates installed in the late 1990s / early 2000s. Further to their installation, it was reported that burglary numbers had reduced significantly.

Additionally, gates at Denecroft Crescent, Woodcroft Crescent and Grosvenor Crescent in Hillingdon East Ward had been installed in 2008 in response to problems with burglaries and fly tipping in the area. Other gates including those in Windsor Avenue and Burleigh Road had been installed two years later in 2010. The Committee was pleased to note that the installation of these gates had had a positive impact on the area.

Councillors heard that the Parkfield Avenue alley gating scheme had been introduced approximately 17 or 18 years previously in order to reduce burglary, fly tipping and drug use in the area; the results had been positive, and the issues previously experienced had reduced significantly.

### Challenges encountered

Committee Members sought clarification as to the ways in which the current alley gating scheme could potentially be improved and how the Council could assist with this. It was confirmed that the main challenges experienced by residents centred on the following themes:

- ***Maintenance of alley gates***

The Committee was informed that maintenance issues tended to centre around damage to locks and gates; locks were ground off, broken, or removed, and gates sometimes dropped or needed to be re-set. All these repairs came at a cost to the maintenance funds, many of which were now dwindling. It was reported that gates were also sometimes left open or unlocked thereby compromising the security of the residents. It was likely that some residents, particularly those

new to the area, lacked understanding of the functioning of the alley gating scheme and the rules that applied thereto.

- ***Maintenance of up-to-date records***

The Select Committee heard that many of the residents who had originally been part of older schemes had since moved away. It was unclear who should assume responsibility for the maintenance funds and the upkeep of details relating to the alley gating schemes when key keepers moved out of the area.

In respect of the older alley gating schemes, it was affirmed that a paper-based system had been in use at the time. However, it was noted that the system had since been updated and officers now held a central list of all new schemes together with contact addresses for key holders.

- ***The handling of keys when people moved away / new people moved in***

Members were advised that, when a resident moved out of a gated area, ideally the keys to the gates would automatically be passed on to the new owner/occupier. However, it was acknowledged that this was not always the case and new residents were often obliged to ask a neighbour for a key to enable them to make their own copy. With the passage of time, the recutting of keys could lead to problems with broken locks or keys which failed to work.

- ***Access to bank accounts***

It was confirmed that, when a new alley gating scheme was set up, residents paid a sum of money into a maintenance account. However, inevitably the funds dwindled as the years progressed, and it was reported that, in one case, the bank account had now become dormant and inaccessible. It was noted that Nationwide no longer offered Treasurer's accounts and had ceased to do so in December 2022. However, other banks including Metro Bank, HSBC and Lloyds TSB continued to offer similar types of accounts.

## **Anti-Social Behaviour and the Reduction of Crime**

A second witness session, held on 15 March 2023, was attended by both Adam Stitson, the Council's Team Leader for Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Environmental Protection, and Inspector Dan Lipinski of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).

### **The Anti-Social Behaviour Team**

Members were pleased to discover that alley gating schemes had resulted in a reduction in levels of certain crimes across the Borough, and that complaints about fly tipping and similar issues tended to reduce following the installation of alley gates. Nevertheless, it was noted that the effectiveness of alley gates was largely dependent on the compliance of residents in using them properly and ensuring they were locked at all times when not in use. Moreover, it was recognised that, the longer a scheme had been in operation, the more likely it was that problems would be encountered as those residents responsible for coordinating keys moved out of the area.

It was confirmed that localities-based action was frequently undertaken by the Council to address reports of ASB in a given area and that, if successful, an alley gating scheme would not necessarily be required. Evidence was needed to be able to tackle instances of fly tipping and other crimes and identify the perpetrators. In these situations, the Council could write to all households in the area, but these generic communications tended to have limited effectiveness as they were impersonal and easy to ignore. The content of fly tipped rubbish was sometimes examined in an attempt to establish the identity of the perpetrator, but this would not happen in every instance. At times the waste collection service removed and disposed of the offending items before they could be examined.

Concern was expressed that problems with fly tipping in alleyways sometimes persisted despite the existence of alley gates; this then fell to the residents to resolve as it was effectively on private land. Members were reassured that, in such cases, officers would engage with residents to help them to resolve these issues themselves. If this were not possible, consideration could be given to the installation of CCTV to gather further evidence and identify perpetrators of large-scale fly tipping who might be linked to other instances in the Borough.

It was noted that there was a balance between expecting residents to deal with issues themselves and the responsibilities of the Council. The Council was reliant on residents involved in an alley gating scheme to cooperate and make the system work. The Council would offer residents information and advice rather than intervening, unless the fly tipping was on a very large scale.

The Select Committee heard that, whilst footage from the video doorbells of properties in the vicinity of an alley gate could be used to gather evidence in the event of a crime having taken place, it would not be feasible cost-wise for the Council to install a video doorbell on the gate itself as access to Wi-Fi would also be required. It was recommended that action taken needed to be risk and intelligence led and Inspector Lipinski confirmed that the Police routinely requested footage from neighbours' video doorbells during the cocooning process.

## **The Metropolitan Police (MPS)**

Members were informed that police interaction with the Council's ASB team was somewhat limited as the team was largely autonomous. However, the MPS worked with the ASB and Community Engagement teams when required to do so and undertook intelligence led patrols. The Design Out Crime team had significant expertise in identifying preventative measures that could be taken to address crime.

It was confirmed that, prior to the installation of a new alley gating scheme, the Council contacted the MPS through the relevant Safer Neighbourhood Team to establish whether the police had any concerns. It was reported that Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) officers were wholly supportive of alley gating schemes stating that they helped to reduce fly tipping and were very effective if the gates were kept locked when not in use.

Whilst the Council maintained a list of current alley gating schemes in Hillingdon, it was noted that, while more experienced police officers had an awareness of the scheme, junior officers

would not necessarily be familiar with it. Where there was an issue, an MPS Design Out Crime Officer (DOCO) could be assigned to make crime prevention recommendations which could include alley-gating.

The Select Committee heard that incidences of crime were dependent on a myriad of factors. It was noted that areas which were cared for and well-kept were sometimes less likely to attract anti-social behaviour. The installation of alley gates gave the impression that residents in the area were security-conscious hence potential perpetrators of crime might decide to move on.

## Ealing Council

A third and final witness session which was held on 12 April 2023 afforded Committee Members an opportunity to receive evidence from representatives of neighbouring Ealing Council; namely Elleni Yangu, Gating Officer and Yasmin Basterfield, Safer Communities Team Leader.

Members were informed that Ealing's Alleyway Gating Scheme allowed residents to apply to have secure steel gates installed in private alleyways in an attempt to deter acts of anti-social behaviour and crime from taking place. The scheme was resident led and, once the gates had been installed, they became residents' responsibility to manage, fund and maintain. Alley gates were only gifted to residents on private land and in anti-social behaviour hotspots.

Ealing Council did not hold keys to any gates that were gifted to residents. Ownership and accountability by the residents and, in particular the lead resident, were promoted and expected. This fed into the long-term sustainability of schemes, with the additional benefit of often creating better networked communities of neighbours. Members were advised that records of key holders' details were retained for approximately one year after an application had been received; this information was deleted after a year for GDPR reasons. Ealing always used the same contractor and residents were referred to said contractor directly to obtain keys in the first instance.

With regards to bank accounts, Members were interested to learn that Ealing bore the full initial cost of providing alley gates in the Borough; thereafter ongoing maintenance costs were the sole responsibility of the residents. Generally, one lead resident would be responsible for setting up a bank account and it was reported that no known issues with frozen bank accounts had been experienced to date.

Councillors heard that, in Ealing, the consent of all homeowners was required prior to installation of alley gates. In cases where a resident, or residents, did not wish to consent, officers would contact them directly to establish why this was the case. If landlords were out of the country, the approval of managing agents or whoever was residing in the property would be sought.

Members were informed that cases where there had previously been high levels of anti-social behaviour prior to installation of alley gates were monitored. In one such case a significant reduction in burglary had been observed following installation of gates in a particularly problematic area.

The Select Committee was interested to learn that Ealing Council had initiated a scheme whereby

signs were installed on completed gating schemes to remind residents that the scheme was resident led and the gates belonged to them. Signage currently used by Ealing Council is attached as Appendix A to this report. It was confirmed that further information in relation to Ealing's alley gating scheme was viewable on the Council's website. <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> [Alley gating | Alley gating | Ealing Council](#)

## The Committee's Findings

### General conclusions

Having heard from a variety of interested parties / partners (the Metropolitan Police, the Council's ASB and Community Engagement Teams, residents with personal experience of alley gating schemes in Hillingdon and representatives of Ealing Council) and having given due consideration to the entirety of the evidence presented to them, Councillors concluded that Hillingdon's alley gating scheme appeared to be operating efficiently at present.

It was apparent that the scheme had evolved considerably since its inception and had been modernised and adapted in recent years to better meet the needs of residents. Notwithstanding this, Members concluded that there were a few potential areas for improvement; notably in respect of scheme awareness and lead resident communications.

During their deliberations Members sought to focus primarily on the key challenges faced by residents and interested parties as identified during the review witness sessions, namely;

- ***Maintenance of alley gates / Scheme Awareness***

Whilst acknowledging that some residents had encountered significant challenges in relation to the ongoing maintenance of their alley gates, Members recalled that the Council's alley gating scheme was designed to be a self-help scheme whereby ultimate responsibility for the maintenance of the gates lay with the residents themselves. Notwithstanding this, Members welcomed the fact that, when specific issues arose in relation to certain schemes, Council officers would attempt to assist residents wherever possible. It was noted that any issues reported to the Council regarding alley gating schemes in the Borough would be responded to and, if appropriate, residents could be signposted to another service.

Members were pleased to note that a review of the older alley gating schemes in the Borough was being undertaken to establish whether any repairs were required or to highlight any other issues encountered by residents in relation to their gates. The introduction of a discretionary option agreed by the Cabinet Member to support the repair or refurbishment of gates where schemes had been successfully running for over 10 years was welcomed by the Committee. It was noted that residents could apply for this discretionary financial support and, if agreed, funding would be allocated on a 90/10 basis - 90% Chrysalis funding with a 10% contribution from residents.

The Select Committee acknowledged that, as highlighted by residents during the witness sessions, alley gates were occasionally being mismanaged and used incorrectly thereby compromising the security of residents. This was a matter of some concern, and it was deemed essential that residents be encouraged to keep the gates clear, closed and locked at all times when not in use.

Members observed that, at the start of the process, residents received a wealth of support and guidance. Once the gates had been installed, however, it was recognised that there was often a high turnover of residents with people moving out, new tenants or owner/occupiers moving in and changes to the scheme. The Select Committee felt it would be helpful to consider ways in which residents could be better informed about the operation of their alley gating schemes, noting that some residents, particularly those who were new to the area, could potentially be unaware of the parameters and functionality of the scheme. To this end, Members indicated that they were supportive of a similar scheme to that recently introduced by officers at Ealing Council whereby additional signage was installed on alley gates to serve as a reminder to residents that their alley gating scheme was resident-led and to provide additional useful information in relation to it.

The Select Committee Members were pleased to note that an alley gating information pack was available to residents both on the Council's website<sup>8</sup> and in hardcopy. Councillors noted that the pack contained comprehensive information and guidance regarding the Council's alley gating scheme and the online information was regularly updated. Members felt it would be beneficial if the alley gating scheme could also be further promoted via the inclusion of an article in the Council's Hillingdon People magazine which was widely circulated to residents throughout the Borough.

- ***Keeping up-to-date records / lead resident communications***

Councillors recalled that, during the witness sessions, residents had indicated that an overarching organisation to keep records and assist in the running of the alley gating schemes would be invaluable. With regard to the older schemes, Members noted that a paper-based system had been in use at the time. However, in relation to the newer alley gating schemes in the Borough, the Committee welcomed the fact that the Council's recording systems had now been updated and officers held a central list of all new schemes together with contact addresses for key holders. The importance of ensuring that this information was kept up-to-date was highlighted by Members.

Members were pleased to learn that a database of keyholders had been set up; said keyholders would be contacted on an annual basis to check their contact details and verify whether they wished to continue to act as keyholder / lead resident. Members agreed that this annual communication would also be an ideal opportunity to establish whether residents were experiencing any issues with their gates which the Council could assist with and to arrange for low cost informational flyers to be sent out for circulation to any new neighbours. The Select Committee observed that it would also be beneficial to seek early feedback from residents in respect of any new alley gating schemes thereby ensuring that potential issues could be addressed in a timely manner.

- ***Access to bank accounts***

Councillors on the Select Committee noted the reported difficulties encountered by one resident in relation to his inability to access alley gating maintenance funds due to the bank account having

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<sup>8</sup> [Secure your alleyway - Hillingdon Council](#)



become dormant. However, Members concluded that this appeared to be an unusual case. It was acknowledged that it would unfortunately not be possible for officers to recommend a specific bank account which residents should use or oversee banking accounts on behalf of residents, but the Select Committee welcomed a review of the information currently on the Council's website to clarify this.

## The Committee's recommendations to Cabinet

Having received evidence from local residents and from officers during the review witness sessions, it became apparent to Members that some alley gates across the Borough were not being used correctly; it was possible that this misuse could be attributed to a lack of understanding of the scheme. Moreover, as the review progressed, it became evident that some residents, particularly those new to an alley-gated area, may not be fully aware that sole responsibility for the maintenance of their alley gates lay with the residents themselves.

Members indicated that they advocated Ealing Council's idea of installing signage on alley gates thereby furnishing residents with useful information as to how to use the gates to best effect and explaining that residents had ultimate responsibility for the maintenance of the gates. The Select Committee also felt it would be advisable to include contact details to enable residents to easily contact the Council should they wish to seek further clarification about the scheme in general.

On that basis, it is recommended:

**1**

### **Scheme awareness**

**That updated signs be installed on all alley gates to include the following information:**

- a) that residents must keep the gates clear and closed when not in use;**
- b) that residents are responsible for maintenance of the gates; and**
- c) providing a Council contact email / website address where residents can access further details about the scheme in general.**

Another initiative proposed by the Select Committee related to the inclusion of an article in Hillingdon People magazine, noting that this flagship Council communication was delivered to homes across the Borough every two months and had a wide readership, hence was an invaluable source of helpful information to residents. It was felt that the suggested article would provide a useful opportunity to raise awareness of Hillingdon's alley gating scheme; both for those residents in alley-gated areas and for other residents across the Borough who may be unaware of the existence of the scheme.

On that basis, it is recommended:

**2**

**Scheme awareness**

**That the alley gating scheme be promoted in Hillingdon People.**

During the witness sessions, Members of the Select Committee welcomed the fact that Hillingdon Council officers already communicated with lead residents / keyholders of each alley gating scheme on an annual basis. It was suggested that this correspondence would also provide a useful opportunity for officers to invite residents to air any difficulties or challenges they were experiencing in relation to their alley gates and to raise any concerns they may have in respect of antisocial behaviour which the Council could potentially assist with. Noting the aforementioned potential lack of awareness of the scheme, particularly amongst those residents new to an area, it was also felt it would be beneficial to use this communication tool as an opportunity to make arrangements with lead petitioners for simple low-cost flyers to be circulated to any new residents in the alley-gated area.

On that basis, it is recommended:

**3**

**Lead resident communications**

**That, when sending its annual emails to verify the lead resident of each alley gating scheme, the Council's expands this communication:**

- **to include a review of any issues with the gates and any ASB which the Council could potentially assist with; and**
- **to arrange to send the lead resident a batch of flyers (after verification) to be dropped through letter boxes informing any new neighbours about the alley gating scheme in their area.**

In addition to the above-mentioned annual communication with lead residents, Councillors recommended that, following the installation of any new alley gating schemes, it would also be advisable for officers to actively seek feedback in relation to the new schemes, thereby enabling them to address, in a timely manner, any potential areas of difficulty experienced by residents.

On that basis, it is recommended:

**4**

**Lead resident communications**

**That, in addition to the annual check, for brand new alley gating schemes officers seek feedback from the lead resident six months after the gate has been installed.**

## About the review - witnesses and activity

The following Terms of Reference were agreed by the Committee from the outset of the review:

1. to gain a thorough understanding of the Council's current alley gating scheme and what it entails;
1. to scrutinise a service that was established some 17 years ago and review its effectiveness;
2. to explore ways in which the current alley gating scheme in Hillingdon could be improved in terms of its efficiency and ability to meet the security needs of local residents;
3. to look at other local authorities and housing organisations that have established similar schemes for any best practice;
4. To review the success of older gating schemes in the Borough and explore if there are challenges faced by residents; and
5. subject to the Committee's findings, to make any conclusions, propose actions, service and policy recommendations to the decision-making Cabinet.

### Witnesses

1. Helena Webster, Community Engagement and Town Improvement Manager – LBH
2. Neil O'Connor, Community Engagement Project Officer – LBH
3. Natasha Norton, Community Engagement Project Officer – LBH
4. Adam Stitson, Team Leader for Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Environmental Protection – LBH
5. Inspector Dan Lipinski, The Metropolitan Police
6. Jane Turnbull, Chair of Oak Farm Residents' Association (OFRA)
7. Paulette McGowan, Lead Resident for various alley gating schemes in Hillingdon East
8. Raj Jhuti, local resident in an alley gated area of Hillingdon East
9. Elleni Yangu, Gating Officer – Ealing Council
10. Yasmin Basterfield, Safer Communities Team Leader – Ealing Council

## References

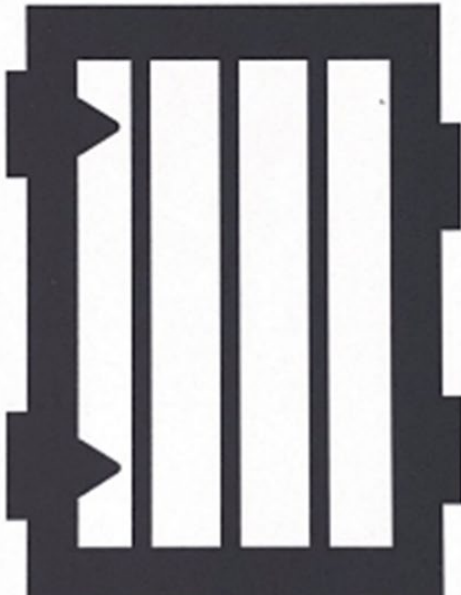
- 1 *College of Policing (narrative prepared by UCL Jill Dando Institute and co-funded by the College of Policing and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), 16 March 2016 - [research paper by the College of Policing](#)*
- 2 *'Alley-gating revisited: The Sustainability of Residents' Satisfaction?' by Rachel Armitage and Hannah Smithson (Internet Journal of Criminology 2007)*
- 3 *'Alley-gates: Preventing Crime or Isolating Communities?' by Dr Colin Rogers, (Police Sciences Division, University of Glamorgan), Centre for Crime and Justice, Paper Number 69, Autumn 2007*
- 4 *Explanatory Memorandum to the Highways Act 1980 (Gating Orders) (England) Regulations 2006 No. 537*
- 5 *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act 2000)*
- 6 *CROW Act 2000*
- 7 *(Sections 129A to 129G of the Highways Act 1980) introduced by section 2 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005*
- 8 [Alley gating | Alley gating | Ealing Council](#)
- 9 [Alley gating scheme - Hillingdon Council](#)

## Appendices

**Appendix A – Ealing Council Signage used to provide residents with information in relation to their alley gating schemes.**

**This gate was gifted by Ealing Council  
to local residents following an application  
to the alleyway gating scheme.**

It is the residents' responsibility to maintain  
and manage this gate, its lock and the alleyway.



For information on how to apply for  
the private alleyway scheme,  
visit: [www.ealing.gov.uk/gating](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/gating)

**EALING COUNCIL**

