

Petition Requesting Measures to Address Anti-Social Behaviour on Tachbrook Road and Surrounding Roads

Cabinet Member & Portfolio	Cllr Wayne Bridges - Cabinet Member for Community and Environment
Responsible Officer	Dan Kennedy - Corporate Director of Residents Services
Report Author & Directorate	Richard Webb - Director of Community Safety and Enforcement. Residents Services Directorate
Papers with report	None

HEADLINES

Summary	This report outlines the Council's response to a petition received in August 2024 concerning anti-social behaviour and crime in alleyways in an area of Uxbridge. The report outlines the Council's work in response to the petition and further options available in support of a petition hearing arranged to consider outstanding matters.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: Be / feel safe from harm
Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026	This report supports our commitments to residents of: Safe and Strong Communities
Financial Cost	The petition requests a number of measures be taken to address anti-social behaviour in and around the alleyways in Mill Avenue, Tachbrook Road, Glebe Road, Wescott Way, Austin Waye and Bridge Road. Those measures, if agreed, will have financial costs for the Council. The actual costs will depend on the measures which are implemented as outlined in this report.
Select Committee	Residents Services
Ward(s)	Uxbridge

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member for Community & Environment:

1. Meets with petitioners and listens to their request to take further action to address anti-social behaviour in and around the alleyways in Mill Avenue, Tachbrook Road, Glebe Road, Wescott Way, Austin Waye and Bridge Road.

2. Notes the assessment carried out by Council Officers on the potential viability of installing CCTV in these alleyways.
3. Notes the work carried out by the ASB and Community Safety teams on the reported safety concerns of residents.
4. Notes the assessment by Highways on options to install further measures in the alleyways.
5. Decides whether to instruct officers to proceed with further actions to address residents' requests, subject to budget availability.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

The Petition Hearing will provide a valuable opportunity to hear directly from the petitioners regarding their concerns and suggestions.

Alternative options considered / risk management

Relevant Council teams have already taken actions and considered the requests of local residents. No further options are being considered at this stage.

Democratic compliance / previous authority

This matter is being considered in accordance with the Council's petition scheme.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. In August 2024, the Council received a petition requesting the Council take steps to address anti-social behaviour in and around a number of alleyways in Uxbridge.
2. The petition was submitted on behalf of 78 residents from 48 households in the area. The concerns outlined in the petition related to anti-social and illegal activities in alleyways between Mill Avenue, Tachbrook Road, Glebe Road, Wescott Way, and Austin Waye. The petition stated that there is evidence of drug dealing, drug use, solvent abuse, deposits of human excrement, and fly tipping in the alleyways, as well as use of the alleyways by motorbikes, bicycles and individuals who have stolen cars. These behaviours lead to unsafe conditions for residents, particularly women, in these alleyways.
3. The petition report listed the residents' desired outcomes to include:
 - a. Installation of CCTV cameras at key alley junctions as well as a mirror at a corner of a specific alley.

- b. Improved barriers to prevent motorbike access while allowing wheelchair access.
 - c. Regular waste collection and maintenance of foliage in alleys.
 - d. Enhanced lighting for better visibility after dark.
4. The petition listed a number of community concerns collated following a survey of local residents. These included:
 - a. People loitering in the alleys leading to concern for personal safety, especially among female residents taking and fetching their children to and from Whitehall Schools.
 - b. Evidence of alcohol use with discarded bottles, often smashed, in the alleyways. Concerns for pets and wild animals with broken glass not cleared.
 - c. At night, shouting, fighting and throwing garbage into gardens that back on to the alleys.
 - d. Car theft when residents have been transferring possession from vehicles to their houses, often only leaving the car for some minutes.
5. Following receipt of the petition, the CCTV Manager carried out an assessment of the feasibility of installing CCTV cameras to cover some or all the alleyways and entrances to those alleyways.
6. Due to multiple locations concerned and the likelihood of being able to obtain reliable data from the Police for reports of incidents or crimes in alleyways, it was not possible to fully assess the level of crime and ASB relating to these locations. This assessment would normally be part of any consideration of whether the installation of CCTV cameras would be considered proportionate and pass a privacy impact assessment.
7. The CCTV Manager's assessment was that the alleyways concerned are very small and straight, and apart from Austin Waye to Wescott Way, it is likely to be possible to see if someone was in the alleyway before entering it. Austin Waye to Wescott Waye is the longest alley and includes a dog leg bend.
8. The CCTV Manager's conclusion was that the alleyways border multiple gardens and as such would infringe on privacy of a significant number of residents and visitors to those properties. Therefore, CCTV would be unlikely to be considered unlawful due to the collateral intrusion being high. Even if the property owners consented to the installation of cameras covering parts of their property, there would be intrusion on the privacy of visitors to those properties and the Council would need to monitor property sales/ transfers to ensure any new occupiers also gave their consent. This would not be practicable.
9. In addition, the assessment noted that the lamp columns in the alleyways are not suitable to manage the weight of CCTV cameras. Further, CCTV cameras may not deter some of the behaviours complained about (e.g. motorbikes using the alleyways) since the user could easily take steps to avoid being identifiable.
10. In October 2024, the Community Safety team undertook a site visit to review the matters raised in the petition with the lead petitioner. As a result, the team requested the waste team clear the alleyways and instigate more regular litter picks. They also discussed improving the lighting and gates in the alleys with the Highways team.

11. The Community Safety team also spoke with the Police Neighbourhood team to ascertain the level of reported crime at that time. However, they were advised that reported crimes that could be linked to the alleyways as the location of crime were low, with only 2 reports in the previous 3 months.
12. The Highways team have assessed the alleyways in question and commented as follows:

Street lighting

Following site surveys, we can advise that the current lighting levels are sufficient and fit for purpose. Any additional lighting may attract complaints from residents whose properties may experience the effect of excessive lighting entering their dwellings.

Barriers

The installation of chicane type barriers at locations shown in Figure 1, 3, 4 and 6 (see below), similar to that shown in Figure 2, may resolve the problem of speeding motorised vehicles like motor bikes using the alleys, whilst maintaining safer access for wheelchair and double buggies users. Typically, these barriers cost in the region of £950 per location (supply and install including fees) and the installation at this location is not currently budgeted.

Mirrors in some alleyways

The council does not favour the installation of mirrors for various reasons including liability (claims resulting from accidents related to the mirror) and maintenance issues (costs and ensuring they remain fit for the purpose for which they were installed).

Other measures

Replacement of the cyclists dismount sign with a no cycling sign in figure 2, will make this location consistent with that shown in Figure 1 and 6. This will reinforce that this alleyway is pedestrian only. Typically, these signs cost in the region of £350 (supply and install including fees) and the replacement of signs in this location is not currently planned or budgeted.



Financial Implications

The cost of installation of CCTV cameras in this area has not been assessed since it is not considered to be likely to be lawful to install CCTV cameras around these alleyways. The costs of other measures requested have been summarised above.

Installation of 4 chicane type barriers at a cost of £950 each = £3,800.

Installation of 1 no cycling sign = £350

Total cost = £4,150

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

Introducing measures in the alleyways concerned which may deter crime may be of direct benefit to local residents. However, measures such as mirrors and lights may not directly result in any reduction in misuse of the alleyways since those measures need to be supported by increased Police or Council presence to ensure anyone misusing the alleyways is identified to support the investigation of any crime or ASB that has taken place. Lighting and mirrors may also be damaged and need to be maintained to ensure any benefits are sustained.

Introducing measures which prevent motorcycles entering the alleyways may also have some impact on wheelchair or pushchair users. Therefore, any new barriers need to be of the correct type and carefully positioned to prevent unintended negative impacts.

Consultation & Engagement carried out (or required)

No consultation carried out other than direct engagement with the Lead Petitioner.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

None at this stage.

Legal

Legal Services notes the proposed response to the petition and the arrangements for the petition hearing, confirming that the recommendations fall within the Cabinet Member's delegated authority.

Any decisions arising from the hearing must be made in accordance with administrative law principles including being *Wednesbury reasonable* and be proportionate to the evidence of anti-social behaviour presented.

The report correctly identifies that the installation of CCTV in the alleyways would likely result in significant collateral intrusion into private properties and visitors, making such installation disproportionate and potentially unlawful under the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Any surveillance measures must comply with the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice (issued under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) and be supported by a Privacy Impact Assessment (DPIA) to identify and mitigate privacy risks before implementation.

Physical measures such as barriers and lighting must balance crime prevention objectives with residents' rights under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (right to respect for private and family life). Excessive lighting or intrusive barriers could lead to complaints or legal challenges if they disproportionately affect residents. The Council's position not to install mirrors is reasonable given potential liability for accidents and associated maintenance issues.

Before implementing any physical measures, the Council must ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, including consideration of impacts on wheelchair users and those with pushchairs.

Finally, any measures introduced should be proportionate to the level of anti-social behaviour evidenced. The report notes low levels of reported crime, which should be factored into decisions to avoid disproportionate expenditure or restrictions.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

TITLE OF ANY APPENDICES

Nil