

Alleygating Phase I

Residents Satisfaction Survey

**A Report
June 2006**

1. Introduction

The Alleygating Phase I Project was completed in the Spring of 2005. The aim of the Alleygating Project was to provide a design led solution to help reduce the risk of crime, anti-social behaviour and nuisance by reducing common areas and pathways by increasing resident control and ownership of these areas. In doing so, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour is also reduced.

It was decided to measure the impact of this project by carrying out a customer satisfaction survey in the areas affected. The area covered by Alleygating Phase I, is locally referred to as 'South'hawk' and includes:

- Brede Close
- Beckley Close
- Manor Way
- Whitehawk Road
- Hamsey Close
- Henfield Close
- Ansty Close

2. Methodology

The customer satisfaction survey took the form of a door knocked questionnaire to homes across the South'hawk area. Interviews were conducted between the 7th – 12th June 2006 and were spread across households in the area to reflect the size of each close/road and the scale of work in each area.

Questions were a mix of both quantitative & qualitative, to ensure that impact of the project could be measured and any additional benefits/problems could be captured. Qualitative responses were gathered under recurring themes, using residents own words to illustrate and evidence these findings.

54 residents were interviewed as part of the customer satisfaction survey.

3. About this report

The report splits into 3 main sections:

SECTION ONE: highlights the key finding of the research including the improvements and difficulties experienced as a result of the Alleygating project.

SECTION TWO: records the questions put to residents and gathers their responses under recurring themed headings, using residents own words.

SECTION THREE: provides a summary of the findings and an analysis based on these findings.

SECTION ONE

1.0 Key Findings

1.1 Improvements:

76% of people interviewed felt that safety had been improved in the area as a result of the Alleygating project:

Improvements included:

- reduced fear & intimidation
- more security and less opportunity for crime
- increased quality of life
- improved environment
- greater feeling of safety
- reduced nuisance, anti social behaviour & noise
- better place to live/stronger community

62% of people interviewed felt their personal safety had increased as a result of Alleygating.
66% of people said their feeling of safety had increased by between 70-100%

1.2 Difficulties

The main difficulties residents experienced as a result of Alleygating were:

- reduced access
- need for additional key
- repairs not completed
- plans altered when contractors were site
- new public areas not being cleaned
- specific issues were raised regarding current difficulties in Hamsey Close

1.3 Consultation

76% of people felt they were consulted on plans for Alleygating

63% of people felt fully consulted on plans

young people & children felt excluded from consultation

SECTION TWO
Residents Feedback

1. Do you think the changes brought about through the alley gating project have improved safety (and/or reduced opportunity of crime) in this area?

YES	NOT SURE	NO
41	8	5 (4 Hamsey Cl. Residents)

If YES, please give an example of how safety has been improved.
Comments in order of priority:

a. Reduced fear & intimidation

stopped yobs coming through after the pubs, breaking fencing, urinating in alleyway - kids don't hang around - no longer get gangs - kids on motorbikes not coming through - children not running back and forward in front of house - stops groups of young people hanging around & drinking (*comment by two young people*) - no longer get unknown people wandering through - people more visible - used to get young people outside front door, drinking, kicking door, all stopped - no idiots running round alleys - before it felt like could be followed and attacked in alleyway, this fear has gone

b. More security, less opportunity for crime

don't get anyone around the back of house - more Secure - if being chased I can come straight to my house, (*comment by a child*) - people used to climb over the wall, all stopped - if police are called people can't run away - no car crime - people can't escape - no place for people to hide - only one way out of close, nowhere to go - no escape route when pursued by police - if problem happens you know where it is coming from, more contained - has forced people out onto the main road, where they can be picked up by CCTV

c. Better quality of Life

can now let my children play outside the house - quieter - no problems at night - less noise - can go to bed without worrying - no longer feel intimidated - no trouble at all - don't have people running up & down past house at night - peaceful & quiet - a lot quieter

d. Reduced access

people not cutting through from pub on the w/end - stopping people who don't live here coming through - less people coming up alleys - people don't walk through/quieter - stopped idiots walking through - closes are now 'closes' - only people who live round here, come round here

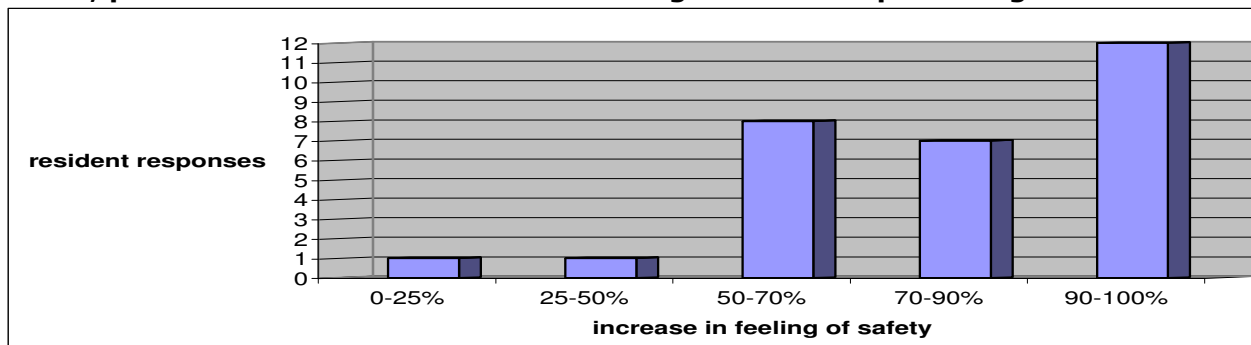
e. Improved environment

less litter, cans & bottles - vandalism to fences has stopped - less rubbish - no beer bottles, used condoms thrown into garden - stopped vandalism, there was a lot more damage before

2. Do you personally feel safer as a result of Alleygating?

YES	NO	Not an issue	Unsure
32	6 (5 Hamsey)	9	5

If YES, please estimate the increase in feeling of safe as a percentage



Comments:

- Yes, although not at the moment due to neighbour problems
- Don't feel safe due to young people gathering in Hamsey Close
- Before I used to feel I was being followed, don't anymore - (*comment by child*)

3. Are there any other benefits & improvements as a result of the alley gating project?**If YES, please give example:****Comments in order of priority:****a. Quality of Life**

can now sit in the garden & relax - fantastic, has changed our lives - have lived here all my life, people are now wanting to improve their homes - less noise & people - peaceful - more neighbourly - feels like more of a community - made it look better - quieter - improved place - more comfortable - reduced feeling of isolation - made more of a private close - can now sit in front garden, wouldn't have done so before for fear of intimidation - stopped people from screaming - more community spirit

b. Environmental

wildlife has returned to area - don't get cans, rubbish in alley - mum has better garden - reduced fly tipping & dog mess - no broken bottles - tidier - less vandalism - no broken glass everywhere - lovely garden out the back - people are now looking after their gardens - used to have to clean alley for dog mess, condoms, don't need to anymore - more wildlife, squirrels, birds - bigger garden - improvement to green areas - got decent fencing, after 25 years - stopped people dumping stuff in alley- a lot less litter in close - looks nicer

c. Safety

husband works nights, feel much safer alone in the house - people used to steal things from our garden, this has stopped (*comment from a child*) - no large groups Fri/Sat night cutting through after the pub - stopped unknown cars driving into the close - can leave garden furniture out without fear it will be taken - feels safer for the kids - safer for children - feel safer leaving home, before wouldn't know who was in the close

4. Have you experienced any difficulties or problems as a result of Alleygating?**Comments in order of priority:****a. Access**

walking up the hill - have to walk all the way round, but advantages outweigh inconvenience - can't cut through to see friends, have to go all the way round - how will emergency services gain access - a bit further to walk, not worth it for safety - longer walk to shops/bus stop - there was a problem with emergency service finding property, but sign has been put in now - difficult to access rear garden - loss of access to rear of house - have to walk further, but price worth paying - getting to home, have mobility issues - pain in the neck, not be able to walk round to see friends - if fire no rear garden escape - less short cuts

b. Keys

only one key, disabled, asked for additional key but never received - only allocated one key - one key per household, have mobility issue, been unable to get additional key - requested a key as help elderly neighbour in a joining close, still waiting - need another key to access car park

c. Plans & design

gate in wrong place, should have been at top of alley - didn't follow plans when on site - improvements were promised that didn't happen, plans changed when builders were on site - work not completed/railed fence not painted - didn't have say over front railing, not finished properly - inconsistency in fencing, not uniform - trees were removed from back garden when were assured this would not happen, broken fence has not been made good, and appointments to discuss these problems were cancelled - fence was meant

to be put on wall, didn't happen - fence was meant to be replaced where broken, didn't happen, also promised trestle, didn't happen

d. Maintenance & repairs

alleys are not being cleaned by council - cleaning of paths is being neglected where access has changed and in newly created areas - council aren't maintaining public areas - repairs not done to gate, cheap job - promised repairs, didn't happen

e. Hamsey Close

hasn't reduced kids hanging around - kids now hang about in close, as they can't move about the estate - young people gather in car park, football going to gardens, taking till late, young people can no longer move freely around the estate - the young people are from off the estate - young people climbing into gardens to retrieve football, anti social behaviour, police came when called on Sunday night - easier to use Hamsey than Brede they, (young people), can see police coming & use escape route, no improvements around here - kids are now gathering in just one place, as can't move around, no longer using Brede to play football - still get trouble - kids are not from around here - there is still some fly tipping in Hamsey

f. Safety

was safer to walk through alleyways, then on main road - people getting chased get hurt as no escape route - not sure of advantages of gate - can't see car from home, fear it may get damaged

h. Other

address change, had to pay to get mail redirected, were still receiving mail to old address - problem finding parking

5. What has been the most positive impact that has resulted from the Alleygating project in your area?

Comments in order of priority:

A. Reduced opportunity for crime and increased security

feel safe - offer no escape route to criminals - safer for the kids - people only come to our close if they need to be there, stopped people cutting through - personal safety - greater security - strangers not coming into the estate - safe & less vandalism(*comment by children*) - children feel safer - feel reassured that I am safe

B. Reduced nuisance & anti social behaviour

no drunks coming past (*comment from young people*) - no kids running through
no more noisy people running through - stopped trouble - no people coming through pissed after the pub - has stopped young people hanging around, drinking, causing a disturbance - not getting bottles thrown into garden - reduced noise levels - stopping big groups of kids drinking, making noise (*comment from young people*) - more peaceful - has stopped the abuse & harassment from young people - not hanging around outside, a lot quieter - lack of people coming through - less through traffic - less intrusion

C. Better place to live

lived here all my life, feels more of a community in this area than we ever had before - peace & quiet - more pleasant place to live - a lot quieter, all used to come down in droves, all stopped - safer & happier environment - can sleep at night - major improvement - done something we have been asking for, for years - can sit in garden in peace - general peace & quiet - bigger garden - better peace of life

6. Were you consulted on the plans for Alleygating?

Fully Consulted	Not at all	Read or heard about it	New to area	Unsure
30	9 (6 Young people)	6	5	2

Comments included:

spoke to my mum, but not me - people who did consultation did it for us and responded to our needs - fully consulted but plans changed when contractors were on site - some changes to drawings not told about - yes, although feel plan was already in place - saw people individually instead of a group - always felt had the information, never felt in the dark - never agreed final draft of plans - yes but changes were made when on site - all down to parents, young people not consulted - everyone was kept informed - amount of information given to residents was ample

7. Do you have any other comments to add?**a. Additional comments**

whatever eb4U has done has been for the residents - brilliant that flying bedroom has been closed off - been a good thing - what a good idea to ask people what they think the effect of the project has been - overall really great - contractors were top line, efficiency, always kept residents informed - I knew it was a good idea, and it proved its point it was a good idea - it was done properly - contractors were really good, minimum disturbance & considerate - eb4U has listened to the residents and done what we wanted - done a marvellous job - works were disruptive, lost some services when lines were cut through, but worth it

b. Suggestions

remove ugly contractors/eb4U boards - could look at open gate during day, locked at night, as hard for older people, but neighbours don't agree - take down billboard - should have been a statutory duty, waste of money - would like an additional key - need to remove bright/white light from old alleys as no longer needed

SECTION THREE**Summary and Conclusions**

- The majority of children, young people & adults living in South'hawk felt the Alleygating project had been successful. They felt it had succeeded in reducing the fear & opportunity for crime in the area, increased a sense of security and returned the estate to a place where people could live in peace and take a pride and enjoyment in where they live.
- Residents felt the project had responded to their needs and the needs of the area, and that they had been able to play an active role in deciding the shape and scope of the project. Some residents felt that the project had altered when the contractors started work on site and plans were changed, without additional consultation or discussion. Young people and children had been excluded from the original consultation, although interviews with children & young people in the area demonstrate they have the same fears, concerns and community safety interests as adults living in the area.
- Current problems in Hamsey Close, have impacted on how residents in this area viewed the success of the Alleygating project. Because of current difficulties residents in this area were unable to identify any benefits of the Alleygating project and this position should be considered when looking at the overall results of the survey. It would be hoped that the current difficulties experienced in Hamsey Close may prove easier to address and target as a result of the Alleygating project, containing the problem to one area, enabling a concentrated of resources and a focused response. NB
- Residents have experienced some difficulty with the restricted access and loss of short cuts, but for many the benefits far outweigh this sacrifice. Some works were not completed and in some cases the expectations of the project may have been beyond what could realistically deliver.

- There are some outstanding issues regarding the maintenance of public paths and areas, it would be hoped some of these issues could be addressed through the Service Level Agreement. Some residents with special circumstances had yet to have been issues with additional keys, it would be hoped this could be followed up as a response to this survey.
- Residents felt the contractors had responded well to the needs of residents and the quality of work had generally been high. It was commented that eb4U had delivered a successful project that had responded to the needs of the community.
- The project has succeeded in reducing the difference between residents in living in South'hawk and other parts of the City. It has provided an environment where the majority of residents, (both young & old), feel they can live with low level fear of crime and nuisance, where they can take a pride in where they live and expect a safe and secure neighbourhood enjoying a good quality of life and with a minimum disruption.

NB. The eb4U Community Safety Team are aware of the difficulties with young people in Hamsey and are undertaking action in this area.

End
Fintan Tynan
Community Involvement Team 14/6/06