Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee
Alley Gates
SBC Housing & A Fairer Stockton on Tees response to the key lines enquiry

Your department's awareness of / involvement in / experience of this community safety measure

The **Selective Licensing and Private Sector Housing teams** respond to housing disrepair complaints and inspect rental properties. This includes an assessment of external areas, yards, outbuildings and the safe exit from a building.

As part of the Thornaby Town Deal funding programme, the **Housing Regeneration Team** received funding to tackle poor-quality housing and deliver environmental improvements across North Thornaby.

Any feedback from landlords / private sector tenants on their experiences of this community safety measure (e.g. issues that have arisen, complaints / compliments, value / effectiveness)

The **Selective Licensing Team** has advised that there are alley gates within all three of boroughs selective licensing areas of Central Stockton, North Thornaby and Newtown.

It is the view of the team that their presence has contributed to reduction in anti-social behaviour, fly-tipping, burglary and criminal damage by restricting unauthorised access to rear alleyways. Officers report that this has improved the environmental quality of rear service areas and provided residents with greater reassurance regarding safety and security.

Alley gates also assist private landlord licence holders in complying with licence conditions relating to 'the management of external areas, waste and prevention of nuisance'. The team can request that landlords provide tenants with keys to ensure secure and convenient access is maintained.

Alley gates support the wider Selective Licensing objectives to create safer, cleaner and more attractive neighbourhoods, alongside improving housing and environmental conditions.

Similar feedback has been provided by the **Private Sector Housing Team**, with many residents suggesting many they feel safer where alley gates are in place.

The service has also received complaints from residents when gates have become damaged or inoperable, with concerns commonly relating to increased fly-tipping, anti-social behaviour and reduced feelings of security.

A key element of the North Thornaby Town Deal project undertaken by the Housing Regeneration Team was an environmental improvement programme which includes a comprehensive scheme of repairs and repainting works to alley gates within the Victoria and Mandale Ward. The works were undertaken to improve the appearance, functionality, and security of the alley gate network, helping to reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour and enhance the local environment.
The programme included:

- Servicing and maintenance of all gates, including greasing hinges and rollers and carrying out repairs to locking mechanisms.
- Repainting of all alley gates.
- Replacement of gate signage, with four signs installed per gate where signs were missing, faded, or damaged.
- Replacement of broken locking mechanisms where required.
- Replacement of damaged barrels where required.
- Replacement of drop pins and end retainers where required.
- Renumbering of all gates where numbers were missing or had deteriorated.

Installation of four new replacement gates where existing gates were beyond economical repair.

In total, 83 alley gates were repaired and refurbished, including the installation of four new gates. The total cost of the programme was £44,905.75.

The project has contributed to improving the appearance of the area, enhancing community safety, extending the lifespan of the alley gate infrastructure, and supporting the wider regeneration objectives of the Thornaby Town Deal programme. Feedback from residents was very positive.

Any other views relating to this scrutiny topic from a SBC Housing Services :

Whilst formal surveys have not been undertaken, operational experience suggests that alley gates are generally viewed positively by residents and landlords and contribute to positive property and neighbourhood management and community safety objectives.

Key contacts:

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