



Making a difference where you live

# **A GUIDE TO ALLEYGATING IN COUNTY DURHAM**

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# Introduction to Alleygating in County Durham

Gating of private and public alleyways has been undertaken for a number of years, particularly in the inner city areas where burglary and anti social behaviour are most prevalent. Where alleygates have been the appropriate solution to a problem, the reduction in crime as a result of alleygates has been significant.

In addition to the prevention of burglary, gates stop alleyways being used for all kinds of anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping, littering, drug and alcohol misuse etc. The effect of gating has meant that alleys became safe places for children to play and can be enhanced with the introduction of planters and other amenity items.

Alleygates are not always the most appropriate or cost-effective method to preventing a crime or anti-social behaviour problem and some environments, such as large open plan estates with many thoroughfares, do not lend themselves as effectively to alleygating schemes as the rear of terraced properties. Gating of any thoroughfare will require an appropriate alternative route.

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## Gating Orders

Safer communities are important to the people of County Durham and to Durham County Council. Since 1 April 2006 new legislation has enabled Durham County Council to gate a highway in order to prevent crime or anti-social behaviour from occurring.

Durham County Council will consider all applications for Gating Orders on public highways where residents are experiencing crime and/or anti-social behaviour problems. Alleygates will remove the opportunity for the crime and anti-social behaviour to be committed in the alley. However, it should be remembered that alleygates will not tackle the root cause of crime and anti-social behaviour in the community and they are not the only solution. You should therefore consider these key questions before you apply:

- **Do you have evidence that the alley itself is causing the crime and/or anti-social behaviour problem or making it worse?**
- **Have you considered or tried other crime prevention methods to try and solve the problems?**
- **Do you have the support of your local Community Safety Partnership for the scheme?**

The following guide provides all the information you need to apply for a 'Gating Order'.

**Please read the guide carefully before making an application.**

# At a glance guide to Alleygating

Approval for alleygate schemes will be dependent upon Durham County Council following procedures laid down by government, which are designed to ensure all relevant interests are considered. You should be mindful that this will mean a scheme could take at least a year to implement from start to finish.

## These points are all expanded later.

1. Contact Community Safety, by telephone (0191) 3708734/8738/8739 or email [community.safety@durham.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@durham.gov.uk) for an informal discussion or for further information on the scheme. They will provide your alleygating pack including application forms, alleygating guide or you can download them directly from the County Council's website [www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk).
2. Consult with your neighbours, in writing, using the forms included in your pack. You should aim for full agreement to the scheme from residents bordering the alley. Allowance will be made for empty properties, but residents should endeavour to contact the owners of all properties. Durham County Council will also need to consult with members of the public and interested parties, who may object to the application.
3. Arrange a formal meeting with neighbours and set up an Alleygate Committee to take overall responsibility for the scheme.
4. Secure funding for the scheme, remembering the advertising costs, maintenance costs etc.
5. Complete all application forms and submit to the Community Safety Team at Durham County Council. Remember to include all the relevant information with your application and that you have the support of your local Community Safety Partnership.
6. Should your application be successful the Highway Maintenance section will contact you to discuss your choice of gate design. Durham County Council will then engage the contractor to measure up, fabricate and install the gates.
7. Durham County Council will arrange for the distribution of the keys prior to installation of the gates.
8. Organise a clean up of the alley and implement measures to improve the appearance of the alley.



# Residents Responsibilities

## Costs

Applicants will be required to fund the Alleygate scheme themselves therefore they will be responsible for the following costs (please note these costs are estimated and actual costs will be used in all cases):-

- **Advertising** - Durham County Council is required to advertise any proposed gating orders in a local newspaper, on its own website and at either end of the highway affected. Current costs vary from a minimum of **£275** to a maximum of **£800**.
- **The Gates** - It is estimated that each gate will cost between **£1500** and **£2000 plus VAT** depending upon the type, size and specification chosen from the list of approved gates.
- **Maintenance of the Gates** - a Commuted sum of **£250** will be provided to Durham County Council which will be used for future maintenance of the gates.

Durham County Council will fund all other associated costs in relation to the application and implementation of a Gating Order.

Some funding may be available from Community Safety Partnerships, District or Parish Councils, Community Groups etc but it is the applicant's responsibility to secure such funding. Durham County Council will not consider any applications that do not have funding secured. The costs will need to be paid once the application has succeeded but before the gates are erected.

## Setting up an Alleygate Committee

Residents will be expected to set up an Alleygate committee which will assume overall responsibility for the scheme. Existing Residents Associations or Neighbourhood Watch may assume this role and responsibility.

## Consent

As the scheme will affect not only you but your neighbours the Alleygate committee will be required to gain approval of all parties directly involved. Any valid objections from directly affected residents will delay implementation of the scheme and may render the scheme unworkable.



## Step 1 - Help and Support from Durham County Council

Durham County Council's Community Safety Team will help and support you throughout this process. They will provide you with all application forms, information packs and guidance notes. They can also assist with contacts for your local Community Safety Partnership.

Community Safety can be contacted on the following details:

Address: Community Safety  
Adults and Community Services  
Durham County Council  
Rivergreen Centre  
Aykley Heads  
Durham  
DH1 5TS

Tel: **(0191) 370 8734 / 8738 / 8739**

Fax: (0191) 3708896

Email: [community.safety@durham.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@durham.gov.uk)

Website: [www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk) – look under the A to Z for Alleygates

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## Step 2 - Consulting with your Neighbours

You are required to contact everyone whose home is adjacent to the alleyway to find out if they support the idea of gating it off and whether they are prepared to contribute financially to the scheme. Help and support from your neighbours is vital at the beginning of the alleygating scheme.

An example consultation form is included in your alleygating pack and this can be photocopied as many times as required. It is recommended that you use this form as this will give you all the information you require at this time and will also provide a written agreement for the scheme to go ahead.

You should endeavour to achieve agreement from all those living adjacent to the alley but if there are any objectors then you should try to resolve any issues raised. This will negate any need for a public inquiry which will delay the scheme. There is no laid down minimum percentage agreement required for any scheme but it is anticipated that less than 80% agreement from those affected will generally result in an application being rejected.

Durham County Council will, as part of the decision making process, write separately to all those involved to gain their agreement for the scheme.

## Step 3 - Setting up an Alleygating Committee

It is recommended that you set up an Alleygating Committee that fairly represents the local community who will be able to take responsibility for the application and implementation of the scheme.

A neighbourhood watch group or residents association may be able to take on this role but if not then a new group should be set up as soon as possible. This is best done at a public meeting where everyone concerned with the scheme is invited and can include local neighbourhood

wardens, police crime prevention officers etc. At this meeting you should elect a chairperson, secretary and treasurer who will form the executive members of the committee.

If the scheme is to be funded by residents then you may need to set up a bank account in the name of the scheme to cover all scheme and advertisement costs.

In addition the committee will be required to organise and administer meetings where information concerning the alleygates is passed on to residents and other interested parties.

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## Step 4 - Secure Funding for the Scheme

Funding is possibly the most important aspect of an alleygating scheme.

At this stage you should be able to decide on the type and configuration of gates you would like installed and estimate the approximate costs for design, fabrication and erection of the same. This estimate along with the costs for advertisement, publication of the order and a commuted sum for future maintenance should be added together and this will form the basis of your total costs for the scheme. Help and advice is available from the Community Safety Team at Durham County Council.

You may want to raise your own money through fundraising activities although there are many external sources of funding for schemes of this nature:

- Home Office Safer Stronger Communities Fund allocated to Community Safety Partnerships
- Single Regeneration Budget
- Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
- District or Parish Councils
- ...and many more

If external funding cannot be secured then the scheme must be funded jointly by the residents themselves

## Step 5 - Complete Application Forms

Application forms are available as described in Step 1 and should be completed and returned to the County Council as soon as possible. A form is attached as Appendix A.

All relevant information must be included with the application and should include:-

- **A 1:1250 scale OS plan with the boundaries of the scheme clearly marked showing where the Alleygates are to be installed.** Durham County Council will only consider applications on public highways. Maps can be obtained from the Highway Maintenance Office - 0191 3833428.
- **Evidence that the alley is facilitating a persistent and problematic level of crime and/or anti social behaviour.** The following data, based across a minimum period of two years should be submitted where appropriate. If possible information should be provided to show that the alley has facilitated the crime, i.e. burglaries through the rear of the property.
  - **Police Crime statistics for**
    - Burglary Dwelling
    - Burglary Other Than Dwelling (such as sheds, garages)
    - Criminal Damage (including motor vehicles)
    - Theft of/from Motor Vehicles
    - Vehicle Interference
    - Robbery
    - Drugs Offences
  - **Police / council incidents for anti-social behaviour** (including environmental problems of litter, graffiti, fly-tipping, vandalism and sharps finds).
- **Evidence that other alternative means have been considered or implemented without success before the decision to apply for Alleygates was taken.** Alternative means can include:
  - Improved street lighting
  - CCTV
  - Youth diversionary schemes
  - Increased uniformed presence of police and wardens in the community
  - Environment enforcement of fly-tipping, dog fouling etc
  - Targeting known perpetrators of crime and anti-social behaviour
- **Support from the local Community Safety Partnership must be shown by the signature of the Chair or delegated officer on the application form.**
- **Evidence of how the scheme is to be funded including any associated costs of implementing the scheme.**
- **The number and addresses of all properties associated with the alleygating scheme. Copies of the signed agreement forms should be included with the application.**



## Step 6 – Durham County Council Decision Making

Durham County Council will consider the application for alleygates against the information provided in the application form. In order for the application to be successful:

- The application must meet all the criteria as detailed in Step 5
- Other residents and members of the public will not be significantly affected by the alley being gated
- The health implications of the gating scheme will not outweigh the crime reduction benefits
- Disabled users of the highway will have appropriate alternative access routes

## Step 7 – Public Consultation

Durham County Council will have to advertise the proposed Gating Order for members of the public:

- On the highway
- On the Durham County Council website
- In the local press
- At County Hall

Consultation must also be carried out with key agencies such as:

- The local parish / district / borough council;
- The Police Authority;
- The Fire Authority;
- NHS Trusts;
- Utilities providers;
- The Ramblers Association;
- The British Horse Society;
- The Open Spaces Society and
- The Local Access Forum.

**Some objections to a proposed Gating Order may result in a Public Inquiry or the abandonment of the scheme.**

## Step 8 -Design, Fabrication and Erection of Gates

Should the application be successful you should contact the Highway Maintenance Section to discuss your particular choice of gate. Durham County Council will then engage the contractor who will visit the site to measure up and provide a detailed, comprehensive estimate for the scheme.

The alleygating committee will then be required to pay Durham County Council a sum equivalent to:-

- The cost of design, fabrication and erection of the gates (up to £2,000 plus VAT per gate)
- The cost of advertising and notices (up to £800)
- A commuted sum for maintenance of the gates (£250)

Once this amount has been paid to Durham County Council we will engage the contractor on your behalf to carry out the works.

On completion of the works the total bill will be paid to the contractor by Durham County Council using the finance previously provided by the residents.

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## Step 9 - Distribution of Keys

Durham County Council will arrange for distribution of keys prior to the installation of the gates. There will be a deposit of £10 charged for the key, which will be refundable when the key is returned to the Area Office by the resident.

**Please Note! Residents will be expected to abide by the conditions under which the keys have been issued and reproduced below:**

- In normal circumstances only one key per household will be issued.
- Residents should provide two separate forms of identity, which indicate the address of the property for which the key is being claimed. This can be Utility bill, passport, or driving licence.
- Residents should lock the gate after use and keep it locked at all times. Failure to do so may result in the gates being removed.
- Residents will be asked to sign an undertaking that they will abide by these conditions.

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## Step 10 - Organising a Clean Up

Once the gates have been installed you can begin to make the alleyway more presentable and pleasant. Residents and the local authorities can organise a clean up day to get rid of any unsightly rubbish and remove any graffiti using approved graffiti removal kits.

Although you are not allowed to place any permanent obstructions in the alleyway you may wish to purchase planters and seats that can easily be removed when necessary and which can enhance the appearance of the alley. Advice should be sought from Durham County Council.



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## Appendix A – Application Form

Before submitting a proposal read ‘A Guide to Alleygating in County Durham’

### CONTACT DETAILS

Name:

Address:

Organisation/Agency (if relevant):

Telephone No:

Email Address

### REQUEST FOR ALLEYGATING SCHEME

Define the area to be subject to the proposed scheme and attach a 1:1250 scale OS plan with the boundaries of the scheme clearly marked showing where the alleygates are to be installed. Maps can be obtained from the Highway Maintenance Office of the County Council - 0191 3833428.

## REASON(S) FOR THE PROPOSAL

State as fully as possible the reasons for the proposal and how it meets the criteria as set out in 'A Guide to Alleygating in County Durham':

1. Please provide details of the problems caused by the alleyway. In order for an application for a Gating Order to be successful, evidence that the alley is causing a persistent and problematic level of crime and/or anti-social behaviour is required.

2. What other measures have been considered (or implemented without success) to tackle the problem?

**REASON(S) FOR THE PROPOSAL**

**3. Please provide details of how the alleygates will be funded.**

**4. Please provide the number of properties that will be affected by the scheme and the addresses of all properties associated with the alleygating scheme. Please remember to include copies of the signed agreement forms with this application form.**

**CONFIRMATION DETAILS**

**This alleygating proposal has been approved by the Community Safety Partnership:**

**Community Safety Partnership Chair (or delegated representative)**

.....

**Community Safety Partnership**

.....

**Applicant Details:**

**Signed**.....

**Name**.....

**Date**.....



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## Appendix B – Consent Form

<b>Name</b>	<b>Are you the Home Owner?</b>
<b>Address</b>	<b>Landlords Details (name, address and telephone number)</b>
<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Do you have a right of way over the alley?</b>
<b>Email</b>	<b>Any Comments/Objections?</b>
<b>Signature</b>	

<b>Name</b>	<b>Are you the Home Owner?</b>
<b>Address</b>	<b>Landlords Details (name, address and telephone number)</b>
<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Do you have a right of way over the alley?</b>
<b>Email</b>	<b>Any Comments/Objections?</b>
<b>Signature</b>	



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If you need this information summarised in another language or format such as Braille or talking tape, please call the number below.

إذا اردت معرفت ملخص هذه المعلومات باللغة العربية اتصل علي الرقم التالي

*Arabic*

আকারে এই তথ্যটি পেতে নিচের নম্বরে ফোন করুন:

*Bengali*

假如您需要這份資料的中文摘要，請致電下面的號碼。

*Chinese*

यदि आप यह जानकारी का संक्षेप हिन्दी में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निचे दिए हुए नम्बर में सम्पर्क करें ।

*Hindi*

Jezeli potrzebujesz streszczenia tych informacji w jezyku polskim zadzwon prosze na ponizszy numer

*Polish*

ਜਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਖ਼ਬਰ ਦਾ ਨਿਚੋੜ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਥੱਲੇ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ।

*Punjabi*

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات اردو میں درکار ہیں تو اس نمبر پر کال کیجیے۔

*Urdu*



(0191) 383 8786