

Darlaston Local Neighbourhood Partnership – 14th February 2006

Safer Walsall Borough Partnership - Improving Security in Local Neighbourhoods Programme

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Darlaston LNP of progress made in relation to the following priority LNP sites:

- (a) Pinfold Street Extension
- (b) Broadwaters Avenue
- (c) King Charles Avenue
- (d) Lime Close
- (e) Popular Close

Recommendations

The LNP is asked to note the report and accept a further update on the above sites as the process moves forward.

Background

Improving Security in Local Neighbourhoods Programme

Safer Walsall Borough Partnership manages the Improving Security in Local Neighbourhoods Programme which is funded through the Council's Capital Programme. The programme covers a wide range of situational crime prevention measures including gating, fencing, lighting and vehicle barriers. Not surprisingly the demand for this type of intervention is high and as such a clearly defined prioritisation process was followed in order to come up with an initial list of priority sites. This list included six definitive footpaths the authority is attempting to close under recently introduced legislation. In addition to these sites the partnership were asked to look at a number of sites which did not make it through the process but were considered priorities to the LNP.

Pinfold Street Extension

Pinfold Street Extension has been prioritised under the Improving Security in Local Neighbourhoods Programme and as part of initial work carried out to resolve issues at this site, draft improvement plans have been drawn up. However, further investigation which has included site visits by a Police Crime Reduction Officer, Rights of Way, Walsall Housing Group and Safer Walsall Borough Partnership have identified that a multi agency approach is necessary to address the broad spectrum of problems that have been highlighted. As part of preliminary improvements to the site, the alleyway that runs adjacent to No. 2/3 Pinfold Street has been resurfaced. The Partnerships Anti-Social Behaviour Unit is already in contact with residents who live in the property adjacent to the alleyway to try and address some of the problems they are experiencing. As both alleys at the location are definitive footpaths (whose status is protected by law) they can not be closed without following a clearly specified legal procedure. They are also used regularly by residents, particularly those accessing Pinfold Street Junior School and as such would be very difficult to close.

Steve Gittins/Claire Gwynne 5th February 2007

Once capital funding for the 07/08 programme has been approved Safer Walsall Borough Partnership will be arranging a meeting with the relevant partners to discuss taking this site forward; using advice supplied by a Police Crime Reduction Officer and Rights of Way as a basis for any long term solutions. This site is to be a priority for the programme as we move into 07/08, although it should be noted that we are looking at measures to reduce crime and disorder as opposed to the closure of the footpaths.

Broadwaters Avenue

Broadwaters Avenue was also prioritised for work (not closure) under the Improving Security in Local Neighbourhoods Programme and draft plans have been drawn up to address some of the issues. However, further site visits carried out by SWBP, Regeneration and a Police Crime Reduction Officer has indicated that the initial suggestion of installing a low level fence along the alleyway adjacent to the green open space, would most likely prove ineffective and would not serve to address the problems. More research needs to be carried out to establish the scope and extent of the problems at this site, including which residents along Broadwaters Avenue are directly affected by the issues and what the specific problems are. The site will be discussed with the partnerships Anti-Social Behaviour Unit for any assistance they can offer. Due to the nature and design of this large site, a multi agency approach will also be adopted in order to effectively address the issues raised

King Charles Avenue

The footpath running from King Charles Avenue to Anson Road is a definitive right of way the status of which was protected by law. A Special Extinguishment Order has recently been advertised and confirmed by the Planning Inspectorate after a long and drawn out process the Council was required to follow, using legislation introduced under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The next step is to publicise the confirmation order whilst at the same time looking at the process to achieve physical closure taking into account planning permissions, consultation and other means of solving the problems along the alleyway. This is a positive step forward preceded by a great deal of work and it means that the footpath can now be closed.

Lime Close and Poplar Close

Lime Close and Polar Avenue were not prioritised under the first round of the partnerships programme but remained priorities for the LNP. It was suggested that the LNP would fund any improvements at these sites from their own allocated budgets. Unfortunately there has been insufficient capacity within the programme to undertake more than preliminary investigations into these sites. If these are to be pursued further confirmation of LNP funding would be required or they would need to be prioritised under the next round of the Improving Security in Local Neighbourhoods Programme. Of the two the latter is perhaps the most favourable option but would require significant supporting evidence and of course can not be guaranteed. We are however seeking to make the programme more responsive to residents concerned. In either case we would not be looking at work on these footpaths continuing into 07/08. Again these sites would require detailed investigation and the consideration of a range of available options.

Financial Considerations

Future work on programme sites will be subject to the award of further funding from Walsall Metropolitan Borough Councils Capital Programme. Whilst funding notification has not yet been received it is envisaged that the programme will continue into 07/08. LNP's will be asked to provide details of any priority sites as part of any future prioritisation process. If the LNP wishes the partnership to pursue the delivery of Lime and Polar Close outside the Improving Security Programme further confirmation of funding for both installation costs and any long term maintenance would be required. It should also be noted that until detailed investigation and consultation is undertaken the deliverability of any given scheme is very difficult to anticipate as it depends on a wide range of contributory factors.

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