



Alley Gating PSPO - 2026 Consultation Report

Findings by Consultation & Engagement Team
October 2026

1. Background and methodology

Between 7th September and 27th September 2026, the Council ran a public consultation, seeking to engage residents with alley gates, and partner organisations, voluntary groups and other relevant stakeholders, in sharing their reflections on the proposed re-introduction of the Alley Gating PSPO which was last reviewed in 2023 and is due to expire in October 2026. There were no new gates proposed for this proposal. During that period a comprehensive communication plan was implemented to raise awareness of the proposal across the borough, with a strong emphasis on engaging residents with alley gates. Letter notices were added to all alley gates to inform residents of the consultation, and the consultation was published on the Bolton Council website. Respondents were able to comment via email. Supporting documentation was made accessible on the Council's consultation webpages, with the details of the alley gate schemes being proposed and the PSPO.

2. Consultation responses

a. Responses

An inbox was provided to respondents to comment on the proposal, suggest alternative approaches to the proposed PSPO and to outline the support needed if the proposal was approved.

Throughout the consultation period the following responses were received: three responses from residents and five responses from organisations and professional representatives. A total of eight residents and stakeholders took part in the survey, outlining their reflections on the proposed re-introduction of the Alley Gate PSPOs.

Resident responses

Response 1.

Hello - My biggest fear of gates being used is the movement of people should the town suffer with Fires and uncontrollable flooding and if like the last war quick get aways.

Access by alternative routes for Fire Engines & Ambulance have to be of great concern and whilst the miss use of these Alleyways may prove problematic, I think at some point in the future they may be needed. The first priority has to benefit the vast majority of the Public and in this case Safety overrides all other problems.

One other major concern has to be the long-term effect on the under growth and maintenance of the Alleyway. The alternative has to be increased penalties and ordering fly tippers to clear away their own rubbish into Council Wagons watched over by enforcement officers and shamed in the Local Papers.

Response 2.

I fully support the extension of this Order.

Response 3.

Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) Gating Review – Formal Representation and Urgent Environmental Health Complaint Regarding Alleyway Adjacent to the above address

I am writing to submit a formal representation regarding the current review of the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) restricting access to the alleyway adjacent to my property at the above address in Harwood. While the lockable gates were installed to prevent anti-social behavior, the council has completely failed to manage the interior space. This alleyway has been left entirely unmaintained for 12 years. Because the opening points are locked under a council-mandated PSPO, access is restricted, meaning the local authority has effectively blocked any external ability to manage the land, while simultaneously abandoning its own upkeep responsibilities.

*I have attached detailed photographic evidence taken today showing that the alleyway has deteriorated into an absolute sea of mature stinging nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and deep-rooted brambles.*

I request that this email is formally logged as part of the active PSPO review consultation and routed immediately to the Community Safety, Highways, and Environmental Health departments based on the following grounds: [1]

- 1. Failure of Asset Management Under PSPO Legislation: The statutory guidance for PSPOs requires councils to ensure restrictions do not disproportionately impact residents' quality of life. Leaving a gated, locked public space to become a hazardous jungle for over a decade completely undermines the purpose of the order. [1]*
- 2. Hazardous Health & Safety Obstruction: The overgrowth consists of mature stinging nettles reaching several feet high. Because of the stinging toxins, the path is dangerous and impassable.*
- 3. Total Restriction of Property Maintenance: The nettle infestation is densely packed directly against my wooden perimeter fence and concrete boundary posts. Because the council keeps these gates locked under the PSPO, and the weeds are completely unchecked, I am physically barred from accessing, treating, or repairing my own property boundaries without being subjected to widespread injury.*
- 4. Structural Damage and Nuisance: The sheer volume of vegetation is pressing into my wooden fence panels, trapping moisture and accelerating rot. Furthermore, this heavy biomass acts as a severe environmental hazard, trapping litter and creating harborage for vermin. [1]*

My Formal Stance on the PSPO Review:

I strongly object to the renewal or extension of this PSPO in its current form unless a strict, legally binding maintenance and clearance schedule is attached to the order. The council cannot legally use a PSPO to restrict a space and then allow it to become an unmaintained health hazard that damages adjoining properties. [1]

If the alleyway is an adopted highway, the council retains a statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980 to keep it clear. If it is unadopted, the council holds clear enforcement powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to clear waste and nuisances on gated land. [[1](#) [2](#)]

Please consider this formal notice that I require an urgent site inspection by a code enforcement or anti-social behavior officer. I look forward to your response within 14 days outlining when clearance works will take place, and how this severe neglect will be rectified as part of the PSPO review process.







Statutory responses

Response 1: Reform Councillor, Tonge with the Haulgh:

Many towns across the UK have this gated system and it seems to work well.

I know that many Bolton residents would like the security of these to the rear of their homes so yes I'm all in favour as long as we are not paying stupid figures to buy and install them and preferably using a local company would be great.

Response 2: Byways and Bridleways Trust

Thank you for your notice. Due to the number of notices received, we will not necessarily respond.

Response 3: Greater Manchester Police, Bolton South Neighbourhood Inspector

In relation to the suggested proposal to install and maintain lockable alley gates as an extension of the PSPO I would fully support this proposal. The issue of alley gates is raised continuously on Community meetings that are attended by the Police and consistently residents are in favour of adopting this in their areas as a reduction to crime and anti-social behaviour.

Access and egress routes to alleyways should be restricted to residents there is very little requirement for generic access to the public and the adoption of these measures will help to prevent crime and ant social behaviour in the area.



Response 4: Public Rights of Way Officer response

I wish to make the following representations regarding the proposed Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO).

I believe that the PSPO affects the following Public Rights of Way:

- *KER022 (Sulby Street)*
- *BOL198-196 (Ainsworth Lane)*
- *BOL124 (Alders Lane)*
- *BOL126 (Cartmel Crescent)*
- *TBS046 (Ruins Lane)*

In order to provide a reasoned response to the proposals, I would be grateful if you could provide evidence demonstrating that the alleged nuisance behaviour is persistent, continuing, and unreasonable, and therefore meets the relevant statutory tests for the making of a PSPO.

I would also welcome clarification on the following points:

1. *Has the PSPO demonstrably reduced anti-social behaviour, or has the behaviour merely been displaced to another location?*
2. *Have alternative/less restrictive measures been considered, such as improved signage, education, or targeted enforcement action against specific individuals, rather than imposing restrictions through a PSPO?*

3. *How has the Council balanced the need to address anti-social behaviour against the public's right to access.*

Whilst I understand that anti-social behaviour is a serious problem, it is important to ensure that any restrictions imposed are a proportionate response to the issues identified. The affected routes form part of the Public Rights of Way network and provide lawful public access. Care should therefore be taken to ensure that the actions of a minority do not unduly restrict the ability of the wider public to enjoy and use these rights of way.

Response 5. Greater Manchester Police, District Commander

I fully support this extension of the PSPO to extend lockable gates.

Can I just ask what the current and proposed provision is for police officers to be able to access these locations in an emergency?

Is there a universal master key which could be used to access all gates or is it one key per gate. A universal key could be added to all of our vehicle keys making the sites immediately accessible to officers.

