



Sedgley Police Station
Vicar Street
Sedgley
DY3 3SD

Switchboard: 0345 113 5000*
Tel. Ext: 7901 6000
Please ask for: Insp Richard Jones
Direct Telephone:
Facsimile:
Email: jones_3491@west-midlands.police.uk
Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111
Our Reference:
Your Reference:

Mr Phil Tart
Director of Law and Property
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
3 - 5 St James' Road,
Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 1HZ

Date: 27th September 2010

Proposed Designation Order for Gornal Under Section 12 Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001.

Dear Mr Tart,

I would be extremely grateful if you would give consideration to the included proposal, made under Section 12 (2) of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001.

Included in the proposal are supporting statistics and a map defining the proposed geographical area of the order.

I really believe that that the introduction of this order would greatly improve the quality of life for many residents and visitors to the Gornal area.

Yours sincerely

Richard Jones
Inspector 3491
Dudley Police Station.

21 OCT 2010
PJ

Introduction

Lower Gornal is in the Dudley area and is a popular traditional area which has a central shopping area, park area, library and a small sized bus station. The area is currently attracting popular national retailers such as Sainsbury's and Spar and has several smaller retail outlets run by local business owners. There is a variety of fast food and take away restaurants' which generate a healthy night time economy. It is a popular location for local people to enjoy going out to the many public houses to enjoy consuming alcohol safely and considerately.

The town centre is bounded by several housing estates which comprise of private and local authority owned dwellings. There are approximately 7500 households in the area. There are approximately 17500 people who reside in Lower Gornal and approximately 10000 people of this number are aged between 30 – 75 years old. There are approximately 3000 people aged 10-25 years old.

The central park area is in a good state of repair and many local people enjoy using the facility. The park contains a central play area which has seats and is a natural gathering place for younger people in the community. There are several houses whose rear gardens back onto the park also.

Over the years quality of life in Lower Gornal, as other wards in Dudley, has been increasingly affected by a noticeable increase in individuals and groups of people consuming alcohol in public places. The increase in alcohol consumption has directly led to greater problems experienced by residents of the area. There are now several incidents/acts of anti social behaviour which have resulted in complaints to both Police and to the local authority. These have directly impacted on the quality of life for residents and the purpose of this report is to address the issues caused by excessive drinking of alcohol in public places. It can be seen that the behaviour has caused problems with noise, violence, damage to property and an increase in litter in the very areas designed to make Lower Gornal a nicer environment for residents. Several residents regularly report that they feel intimidated and threatened by groups of drunken youths in the area who loiter in areas that everyone uses.

It is evident that both people over and under 18 are consuming alcohol in public areas. It is also believed that over 18s are supplying younger friends and family members with alcohol – who will then proceed to consume alcohol in public places. The nuisance behaviour is also fuelled by groups taunting locals with their drunken behaviour. At present there are no powers to deal with people consuming alcohol in public places in Lower Gornal, unless they are under 18.

Local retailers have been spoken to, to prevent alcohol being served to these groups but this has not solved the problem. Test purchases have been run in conjunction with the local authority but this still leaves the area with issues. Regular patrols have been conducted by uniformed officers and officers in plain clothes to target the behaviour. There have been several seizures of alcohol in the area but this again is only scratching the surface of the issues. Several residents have voiced their concerns to Police and local councillors regarding the issues at meetings held in the locality. We are now also finding that in addition to people who reside in Lower Gornal, the introduction of bans in other areas have caused extra people to migrate into the area,

thus making the issue greater. One group has even stated to officers that is a sole reason they come into Lower Gornal.

The issues are further worsened by the amount of damage caused to the environment. Regularly there are several empty beer cans, signs of urination and glass bottles left strewn over the area. This then becomes a health hazard for people in the area as it is untidy and unhealthy. This clean up operation also puts extra strain on public services and ruins the appearance of the town to residents and visitors.

All of the above mentioned factors are obviously having a detrimental effect on the image of Lower Gornal.

It is greatly believed that this increase of issues can be quelled by the introduction of a drinking ban in public areas of Lower Gornal. Other areas such as Dudley, Brierley Hill and Sedgley have benefited greatly from this type of legislation. The areas report less anti social incidents that are fuelled by alcohol and a general sense of well being for communities that were experiencing issues. In fact there are no negative points raised that would suggest that the bans were a problem.

Summary

In order to reduce crime and disorder and to make our communities feel safer it is requested that areas where issues are occurring in Lower Gornal are designated as areas where there is a restriction of the consumption of alcohol. This will increase the trust and confidence that our communities have in the Police and Local authority.

Appendix 2 – Proposed prohibition areas

Please see attached map that shows the proposed area for the prohibition. The area covers:

The Straits – Incorporating Cotwall End Valley
Gornal Wood,
Lower Gornal,
Ruiton,
Coopers Bank – Incorporating Hunts Mill Nature Reserve.

The area will border the existing prohibition that currently covers Sedgley. This would then create good cover and not leave any areas out. This is so that no area is left undesignated between the two boundaries.

There is a particular onus on the local authority to publicise the making and effect of this order. Any areas that are deemed not be suitable for the designation should be discussed and the map area may be altered to comply with valid reasons.
(Section 13 (5) CJPA 2001.)

Appendix 1 – Details of Police incidents that provide evidence of the issues.

The two tables below show the incidents that have been reported to police between 1st January 2009 and 1st August 2010 (20 month period).

The first table shows how many incidents are directly linked to ‘alcohol.’ This will include incidents of street drinking, anti social behaviour etc that have been recorded as alcohol linked.

The second table covers the same time period but this covers ‘disorder’ incidents. These incidents are created by reports of violence, anti social behaviour etc which in many cases will be linked to alcohol excessive consumption.

When an incident is reported to police the incident is given a ‘qualifier’ such as ‘alcohol’ or ‘disorder.’ The actual qualifier is decided at the time of the call by the police operator. Sometimes logs linked to alcohol are given the ‘disorder’ qualifier and vice versa. Therefore to show a truer picture of the scale of the issue I have included both ‘disorder’ and ‘alcohol’ logs. Undoubtedly there will be other qualifiers used where alcohol is involved, but the vast majority are included with the two I have chosen.

Alcohol related incidents between Jan 2009 and August 2010 in the Gornal Area (DYAC)	
Date Period	Number of Logs
01/01/2009 - 01/08/2010	232

Disorder related incidents between Jan 2009 and August 2010 in the Gornal Area (DYAC)	
Date Period	Number of Logs
01/01/2009 - 01/08/2010	1387

Introducing an alcohol prohibition area in Lower Gornal would have a large impact on of the total disorder and alcohol related incidents reported to police. This would also greatly improve the quality of life for local resident that live in the area, thus improving Trust and Confidence in the Police service and satisfaction with the Local Authority.

With the prohibition in place this would save valuable policing resources that could then be utilised to tackle other issues that may cause problems.

There would fewer calls for service from residents who suffer with late night noise issues into the early hours of the morning.

The local authority would benefit as there will be less litter, less damage to property, fewer reports of noise issues in the area late into the night.

