

Newsletter

barbicanassociation.co.uk

January 2022

New councillors wanted to challenge City



**ELECTION
SPECIAL**

New volunteers sought to stand for BAGC



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VOTE, vote, vote for a better Barbican

The 2022 Guildhall election gives residents the opportunity to make their X on the ballot paper count.

This Election Special highlights why a new and distinctive approach is needed - the objectives radical and modern.

The vision is one of renewal of an estate of 4000 people with shared values, purpose, drive and energy - all united in facing the difficult challenges that lie ahead.

The Barbican Association wants a future we all have a stake in. If there's the courage to change, the March election will create a new way of dealing with the City Corporation.

A TIME FOR CHANGE

Dear Neighbours

The Barbican Association needs a stronger voice and more influence at Guildhall.

Our wish is that the candidates standing for election as Common Councillors in the Cripplegate and Aldersgate wards are sympathetic to the aims of the people who live here. We want people who love the area, people with a passion for the Barbican and Golden Lane.

It's so important because the City of London is run by the business vote and as residents we don't get a fair crack of the whip. It's vital to give residents a greater say.

So we're taking a new approach: we want new people to stand – new blood. To this end the BA will be holding a workshop to explain what is involved with the help of a couple of existing councillors.

Aldersgate has five seats up for grabs while Cripplegate has eight. Both wards also have one alderman each. Nominations close on March 1.

The BA will be holding our own Hustings. It's the first time the BA will be inviting prospective candidates to talk to us and we'll be asking for their views on our manifesto. Residents will then have the chance to question them on it, giving the prospective councillors the opportunity to sell themselves.

Why? It's because we want our councillors to get more involved in looking after the Barbican, both its fabric and its ambience.. We want to see a stronger residential voice looking after residential interests.

The City Corporation has always prided

MANIFESTO

The Barbican Association believes it can represent the interests of the residents of the Barbican more effectively by working together with Cripplegate and Aldersgate ward councillors (CCs) to achieve common objectives.

Our main priorities are protecting and enhancing the amenities provided by the whole estate and its immediate surrounds. In particular its physical presence, the mix of culture, residences and education, its community, its heritage and its sense of peace and tranquillity.

Specific objectives:

To be more proactive in our dealings with the City Corporation.

- Influencing planning decisions.
- Ensuring proper maintenance of the buildings and public realm.
- Environmental enhancement and resilience to climate change.
- Good and constructive relations with all other occupiers of the Estate.
- Updating and enforcing the byelaws relating to the public realm..
- Ensuring City Corporation pays due care, attention and respect to its residents.

To achieve this, we propose:

- Prior to elections CC candidates should be aware of the BAs objectives and indicate at hustings whether or not they will support them.
- Post-election we invite elected members to a workshop to share and agree our objectives and explore how they might be achieved.
- BA and CCs meet regularly to agree and update common objectives and plan their prosecution and make joint communications to residents.
- GLERA is included in joint meetings with Cripplegate where appropriate.
- BA recognises CCs independence, but also recognises that BA and CCs working together will carry greater weight in Guildhall and will assist us in being more proactive in our dealings with the City Corporation.

itself on being a-political. Very few common councillors are sponsored by political parties, most are independent. But that doesn't mean they can't work in partnership with us to be a more effective influence.

As a Common Councillor you have a real chance to shape events. It's not an easy ride, but it's stimulating.

So why not walk in the footsteps of Dick Whittington and do your bit to foster the unique place where we are lucky enough to live?

Yours sincerely,

Adam Hogg

Chair, Barbara Association

BARBICAN UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT?

By MARK BOSTOCK

**ELECTION
DAY
24 MARCH**

THREE YEARS

Common Councillors are usually elected for four years, but because the 2021 election was postponed for a year due to Covid this year's intake will sit for only three.

BA'S OWN HUSTINGS

For the first time voters will have the opportunity to quiz candidates at our own hustings in week beginning 14 March.

CANDIDATES

For the 2022 election the City has set targets: 30% of candidates must be women and 15% ethnic minorities.

POSTAL VOTE

You can get a postal vote if you apply before 9 March.

IN 2017 ...

One hundred and forty four candidates contested the 100 seats at Guildhall, with 26 returned unopposed, including all six in Aldersgate.

The Barbican estate is hopefully going to be under new management. But making sure residents have a proper say in how their £10 million service charge is spent won't be happening tomorrow.

A new Barbican management structure has emerged as a result of the Lord Lisvane Report on a comprehensive Governance Review of the City Corporation started in 2019.

After a year-long inquiry, Lisvane concluded that the City Corporation needed radical reform. He suggested that the Guildhall was in danger of being its own worst enemy with slow decision making, poor accountability, ineffective political co-operation and a lack of transparency and diversity.

In recommending abolishing the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC), Lisvane said: "The committee's task, according to its terms of reference, is entirely one of management. If that is the case, I cannot see why it should exist as a Corporation committee. So far as the interests of the Corporation are concerned, that function can be dealt with by officers. The internal arrangements can surely be made by the residents themselves."

He added: "It may be that in the wake of abolishing the BRC the Corporation will review its mechanisms for consulting and engaging with residents."

At the same time, Lisvane acknowledged that the Residential Consultative Committee (RCC) wasn't a committee of the City Corporation. So instead of the BRC, a new Housing Committee has been proposed by the Policy and Resources Committee (the City's Cabinet) which will take over the remit for landlord matters together with dealing with strategy and policy.

Hopefully, it will not deal with any service charge issues. These should be the responsibility of a restructured Residential Consultative Committee, presently made up of house group representatives. It was acknowledged that "one particular area where residents were keen to see additional involvement was enhanced input on how

their management fee is spent (in relation to the upkeep of the estate)." However, it was caveated by saying that any "decisions on expenditure must be fully democratic, transparent and reflective of the will of all residents (not simply a small number of delegates or representative associations)".

Interestingly, the in-principle proposals sent to the Court of Common Council for consideration at the 9 December meeting also included the establishment of a dedicated Barbican User Consultative Group to address the questions of collaboration, communication and consultation.

It was suggested that the engagement of all the estate users, including the Arts Centre, St.Giles' Church, City of London School for Girls, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the library, the Residential Estate and various commercial businesses would provide an opportunity for a cohesive overview of the Barbican Conservation Area, its Grade II listed estate's management and forward planning.

These proposals are a triumph for the Barbican Association which has led a campaign for change on how the estate with over 4000 residents is run.

But the devil is always in the detail. Surprisingly, the Court at its meeting decided to remove any consideration of the proposals for a new Housing Committee to replace the BRC. It decreed that more preparatory work was needed to establish its composition and terms of reference.

This is a setback, but it does create an opportunity for residents and the Barbican Association to put their views forward on how landlord issues should be dealt with by the new Housing Committee.

And, importantly, how the newly restructured Residential Consultative Committee will best be responsible for overseeing the way in which our annual £10 million service charge is spent...

* Mark Bostock has represented Cripplegate since 2017.

HOW YOU COULD BECOME

A COMMON COUNCILLOR

Q+A

What qualifications are needed to stand?

Self confidence is the key, but an ability to speak in public is an asset together with an interest in the City of London.. If you're 18, a British/Commonwealth citizen, a City Freeman, or registered in the ward you live, you're good to go. Or being a freeholder/leaseholder in the City/having lived 12 months in the Square Mile.

How do you become a Freeman?

Again, this is not an arduous process. If you have been on the electoral register for a few years, it's a simple application which is free. Otherwise, you just need to get in touch with a couple of current Common Councillors to vouch for you and there is an application fee of £100. For further information call the Chamberlain's Court on 020 7332 3055.

How do you get nominated?

Five friends/neighbours are needed to propose, second and support your nomination, all of whom must be on Ward list. The cut-off date is March 1. Nomination papers can be obtained from Ward Clerk, Electoral Services, Guildhall EC2P 2EJ

How much does it cost to become a councillor?

A deposit is only required at parliamentary elections. Election expenses are limited,

Is an agent pre-requisite?

it's up to you.

Do you need to be a member of a political party?

No. Local self government is the lifeblood of liberty. Elected City members take pride in being independent.

Will the BA be sponsoring candidates?

No, but it will support those who wish to follow the BA manifesto guidelines.

£354.99

Famed for its pomp and pageantry, the Court insists male members wear a black tailcoat, white bow-tie and waistcoat attending banquets and dinners. Women members wear a long dress with shoulders covered. "Gloves may be considered. Tiaras, if in possession." Menswear shop Dobell sells a white tie package, a snip at £354.99.

What happens if those standing exceed the number of vacancies?

A contest takes place.. In Cripplegate Ward eight seats are up for grabs, in Aldersgate six. However if the number of nominations equal the number of vacancies it is uncontested.

Can you be trained to be a prospective councillor?

Yes, the BA is holding a workshop in January. Details will be given on the BA website, barbicanassociation.co.uk

Will there be public meetings?

Yes, voters will be able to quiz candidates at hustings being arranged by the BA and Golden Lane Residents' Association. Separately, the City's Ward Mote will be held the night before the election.themselves.

Is being a councillor a full-time job?

No, the Court only meets nine times a year but all elected members are involved in regular committee meetings which usually last 1-2 hours. A three course lunch with wine is provided on meeting days .

How many committees are there?

At present 131. There are five Ward committees on which each ward is represented (finance, planning, transportation, culture and port health). For the rest membership is by court elections.

What does the job entail?

The 100 elected councillors plus 25 aldermen run the City Corporation working through the committees, which range from police, the Barbican Centre to Hampstead Heath, served by officers.

Are councillors paid?

No, but there's a recently introduced honorarium of £7,500 a year.

Is there secretarial help?

No, unless you're a chair or deputy chair, but the City provides a laptop, mobile phone and IT department will help if needed.

How many banquets do councillors attend?

Apart from the Lord Mayor's and State banquets, councillors have a choice of five held at the Mansion House.

ELECTION TIMETABLE

22 February
Nominations start

1 March
Nominations close

3 March
Nominated named

9 March
Postal vote deadline

11 March
Postal votes sent out

16 March
Applications for new proxy votes deadline

23 March
Wardmotes in Cripplegate and Aldersdate

24 March
Polling Day 8am-8pm.
Count at 8.30pm

IN 2017

Eleven candidates fought for eight seats in Cripplegate Ward – one more than in 2013.

Total votes cast:
Barbican: 531 – 36%
Golden Lane: 237 – 52%

There was no contest in Aldersgate Ward, the six candidates being returned unopposed.

Overall, 144 candidates contested the 100 Guildhall seats, with 26 returned unopposed.

WEBSITE

If you're considering running for election, you can get more information at www.speakforthecity.com



BY DEPUTY BARBARA NEWMAN CBE, CC

IN 1989 a group of residents in Mountjoy House and neighbouring area had grave concerns about plans for the development of the girls'school, which they felt could be disadvantageous to them. They tried to communicate with their Common Councillors who were unwilling to talk to them, so it was decided that a candidate prepared to listen should be sought. After some weeks of searching, that turned out to be me.

I had never been on a committee and never taken any part in the public life of the Barbican, it was something I had never thought about.

In December 1989 I became one of the eight candidates for the six places in the Ward of Aldersgate and was elected. Since then, I have been continuously re- elected and am now the longest-serving Ward member - appointed Deputy following the recent death of Mrs Joyce Nash.

During the majority of my years I have been a member of the Planning & Transportation Committee as well as serving on many other committees, chairing six or seven of them. The P & TC has always held most interest for me because it deals with so many of the things which matter to residents, including, of course, the granting of planning permissions.

When I first joined the buildings we were considering were not nearly as big as they are now. Groundscrapers became popular, which sometimes took up a whole block so that people had quite a way to walk round them. Passageways beneath were tried, but after the bombings in the early nineties, these were considered a security risk. Then we went for a cluster in the east of the city, not of skyscrapers but of tall elegant buildings, which stood out well against the skyline.

Now we are giving permission for very much bigger and taller buildings - still considered to be required despite the distinct move towards working from home. It is said there will

GOOD LUCK TO ALL GUILDHALL CANDIDATES

be a flight to quality and that today's workforce asks more from the buildings they occupy, such as gyms superior to those they can find in their local area, showers, lockers and somewhere to have their bikes repaired.

The P & TC is certainly very busy. Now we have the development of the Museum of London and Bastion House sites, the area now being referred to as London Wall West, to consider. Early plans, recently exhibited at the Barbican Centre and now on line, show some very large buildings which I understand did not immediately appeal to the people attending ... but it is early days and I am sure residents will respond to the ongoing consultation.

After considering this upcoming major development and
continued over page

THE LORD MAYOR'S BANQUET

1634

The first banquet bill of fare which survives tells of brawn, boiled pullets, pheasants, herons and hare, soused coupon and carp, venison pasty, cold tongue pie, salmon, lobsters and exotic puddings for afters

2021

The recent banquet for the newly elected Lord Mayor, Alderman Vincent Keaveny, was no less of a feast...



NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE WATCH

BY HELEN HUDSON

What to House groups do? A question many new residents seek answers for.

Erin Summers recently joined the Defoe House Group and quickly found her way around.

"I joined my House group to get a better understanding of how the Barbican worked. I moved in just before the first Lockdown and didn't really find the BEO's User Manual very helpful. Back then I had yet to discover the Barbican Talk forum, so finding out the way things worked round here was actually quite a challenge.

For an awful lot of the time I relied on the concierges John and Trevor down at Defoe House car park. Even things like taking a meter reading or who to call for a small plumbing job felt like a struggle.

I was also super confused with all the organisations involved in the running of the estate. From the various house groups, the housing officer, the BA, the RCC to the working parties, it was all very perplexing. I thought the



only way to get my head around it was to join in!

Now I've got such a better understanding of how things work, but it has also led to actually meeting people who live on the estate - from the numerous Zoom meetings, Barbican related email threads, resident WhatsApp groups and eventually meeting my neighbours face to face.

I plan on living here long term, so it

will be good to be involved on what changes we'll face in the future."

Erin is now the Defoe House Rep and she's discovered all the blocks and towers have some form of community within their building.

Many of these groups have organised themselves into a Recognised Tenants' Association (RTA) where the owners band together to represent common interests. An RTA has rights! Under the Landlord & Tenants Acts, for instance, an RTA has the right to inspect accounts and receipts in relation to service charges.

The Barbican Association is also an RTA (at the estate level) and they are taking advantage of this legal right to review the charges in relation to the impending car park attendant cuts.

So whether it's just picking wine and nibbles for the House group party or compiling a response from your neighbours about a burning estate wide issue for the BA, there's always the opportunity to get involved and help out.

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GOOD LUCK TO ALL GUILDHALL CANDIDATES

other matters, the time seems right for me to stand down and I shall not be a candidate in March 2022.

I very much hope that we shall see strong candidates putting their names forward. During the years I have represented Aldersgate there have been many times when I have left Guildhall asking myself why I bother, no one is listening. Then occasionally there comes a day when one leaves thinking that perhaps it is worthwhile and one keeps going.

As well as the work there is the lighter side, when one is invited, as all Common Councillors are, to the Lord Mayor's Annual Banquet, or to a State Banquet. White tie and tails for gentlemen, long dresses for ladies, and in the fairly recent past some ladies even wore tiaras, though they are rare these days. I have made some good friends at Guildhall, whom I shall hope to retain.

In hoping that people will come forward as candidates, I offer a few words of advice, which perhaps will smooth your path.

I cannot stress enough that you must be sure that you can set aside sufficient time to prepare for meetings by reading the papers of the committees you join and that you will be able to attend the meetings which take place during the day. The timing of meetings is constantly under discussion and may one day soon be changed, but do not hold your breath.

You will find it's better not to be aggressive in debate, it simply will not work to your advantage. Other members will welcome you to Guildhall and will be ready with help and advice and you will encounter all round friendliness. There is a code of conduct (on the website) which you will be expected to follow and induction days will be offered to start you off in the right direction.

I have no hesitation in encouraging you to stand, there are many worse ways to spend your time, and you might even enjoy it. Good luck!

ISSUES

PLANNING: Impact planning decisions as a priority. We don't want to live where no account is taken of how light and noise pollution from new buildings affect us. Our major challenge is the Bastion House and Museum of London development..

MAINTENANCE: Fight harder to ensure the proper maintenance and improvement of the Grade II listed estate in accordance with its status as Britain's leading example of Brutalism. Instead of being a poor relation, it should reflect the City's pride.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Improve the environment and be resilient to climate change ensuring the Barbican remains a peaceful and green haven for residents and visitors alike. To support the Barbican and Golden Lane Healthy Streets plan. Beech Street will show the way ahead.

SECURITY: Update and enforce the byelaws, particularly on the highwalks. Skateboarders and fast food delivery bikers must not continue to colonise our pedestrian spaces. A more effective police presence is required.

ARTS CENTRE: The aim should be to make the Arts Centre and the Barbican estate a homogenous whole. The latest proposals for the Arts Centre ignore the fact that it's part and parcel of the estate.

RESPECT: Ensure the City Corporation pays due care, attention and respect to residents. The City's attitude has been passive aggressive for too long.

THE BA NEEDS HELP TO INFLUENCE CITY

BY ADAM HOGG

We live in the Barbican a grade II listed landmark. One of the finest post war modern urban developments in Europe. It has just had its 50th Anniversary.

We must ensure that it prospers for a further fifty years.

The Barbican Association needs to be strengthened to meet the challenges facing us. At present just over half of the flats are members. Enough for the City of London to recognise us as the people to talk to. Do they listen? If every flat was represented, they would have to pay more attention. If you are not a member please join.

Why do we want the City our landlord to hear us?

We need to future proof this wonderful place and protect our unique community.

Look around it, the residential part is in reasonable condition because we are responsible for paying for its maintenance. You cannot say the same about the high walks, the Arts Centre and the Schools the all suffer from lack of care.

The BA has had some successes over the years. With our Councillors we headed off the plans to expand the Girls School. In our response to Lisvane's review of governance in the Corporation we pleaded for three key things:

Greater control of the money we spend on service charges

The creation of an umbrella body to ensure that all parts of the estate are properly looked after and

The City to pay better attention to the needs of its residents

Though not yet delivered the City's response would suggest that we have been heard.

What are the future challenges?

Our buildings are aging we need to ensure they are properly maintained and kept up to date within the constraints of our listed status. We are developing an outline plan a blueprint for the future.

We are threatened by the City's rapacious appetite for taller buildings overshadowing residential areas blocking their light and views. The latest is the plan to demolish the Museum of London and Bastion House to make way for massive offices buildings.

The Arts Centre is about to embark on a major project to make better use of its spaces. We have been invited to work with them, in recognition that we are all part of the same estate. We are seeking to ensure that the facilities we already enjoy such as the Library, the Gallery, the open spaces and the Conservatory are not diminished. We have requested that we might express our views and needs to the short list of architects before the final choice is made.

Others include: Beech Street and traffic pollution.

The high cost of heating our flats which could be reduced through improving insulation

Developing a more proactive relationship with the Corporation.

We are rising to these challenges but we are dependent on residents to provide the intellectual firepower to work on them.

We are the Barbican

We need you to help ensure that it is looked after and improved.

How can you help?

Join the BA, get involved with your house group and seek election to the General Council



Bastion and the MoL ... the new challenge

STAND and DELIVER for the BAGC

Chair's Corner

YOUR issues are the BA's issues. We are there to look after everyone ... and if we are to be more influential with a louder voice, more residents are urgently needed to swell the 54% membership we already have in the Barbican.

If you're not a member then please join. It's only a fiver a year and as an added bonus you get discounts from local restaurants and services.

The Barbican Association is managed by the General Council (GC) comprising nine elected members as well as representatives from each house group. It meets every two months. The nine elected members help share the load by chairing sub-committees and working groups.

Future proofing the Barbican and protecting our ambience is our aim. We also want the City of London to talk to us about things before telling us.

Our agm is on April 14 where we set out our stall. It is here you will have the opportunity to vote for members of the general council. Or even better offer yourself up for election. If you love living here, want to make it more agreeable and have views and ideas we want to hear from you

Too often there have been no contested elections. This year it's hoped we'll have more volunteers to stand which will force a vote.

Following the agm, the council votes a week later to appoint the Chair. I'll be very happy to be challenged - if a load of people don't like what I'm doing, then there's no point in me wasting my or your time. I want to carry on for no more than another two years. But I need a strong team behind me - from people with vision and energy, people who are passionate about the Barbican. If you think you can help and want to know more, please talk to me or the other members of the present General Council. **Adam Hogg**

BA AGM: Thursday 14 April 2022

Election for nine members of the BA General Council, the decision-making committee.

The 2020-21 members are: Randall Anderson, David Bradshaw, Sue Cox, Adam Hogg, Helen Hudson, Christopher Makin, Jane Smith, Sandy Wilson.

OFFICIAL VOICE

The BA is a Recognised Tenants' Association. The official voice representing those who live here to our landlord. It consists of leaseholders who hold similar leases from the same freeholder, where leases require them to pay service charges.

As the Barbican's RTA, the BA has legal rights to:

- Request information about service charge costs, including accounts and receipts.
- Be consulted on the appointment of a managing agent.
- Be notified of proposed major works and receive copies of estimates.
- Nominate contractors to carry out the works, which the freeholder must consider.
- Appoint a surveyor for the purposes of a management audit.

The BA is also consulted by the City on planning issues, the renewal of the Arts Centre, London Wall West, traffic pollution and climate change.

OUR WEBSITE

All the latest news on what the BA is doing can be found on our new website barbicanassociation.co.uk

GET IN TOUCH

If you have questions or comments about the Barbican Association, please contact us. We will get back to you.

Adam Hogg: chair@barbicanassociation.co.uk

Jim Davies: membership@barbicanassociation.co.uk

BACG MEETING DATES

21 April to elect officers, 19 May, 21 July, 22 September, 24 November

£5

CAN SAVE YOU HUNDREDS

JOIN THE BARBICAN ASSOCIATION FOR MUST HAVE DISCOUNTS AT LOCAL SHOPS AND RESTAURANTS

Visit barbicanlife.com for the complete list and details of participants. A Standing Order mandate can be found in Barbican Life

Local businesses wanting to participate and offer a discount or other incentives to BA members should contact Helen Hudson on 07842 23 52 68 or barblifeedit@gmail.com for further information

The Newsletter is published by the Barbican Association for all Barbican residents.