

The Barbican Association General Council
Minutes of the Meeting on Thursday 23rd October 2025

At 630 pm in The Lilac Room

Present (crossed out not present):

<p>Elected Members: Jan Marc Petroschka (Chair) Randall Anderson (Deputy Chair) David Bradshaw Adam Hogg Sandra Jenner Nathan Morse Deborah Oliver David Preston (Secretary) Richard Setchim Sarah Stobbs</p>	<p>House Groups Represented: Graham Wallace (Andrewes) Helen Hulson (Ben Jonson) Humfrey Brandes (Brandon) Andy Hope (Breton) John Taysum (Bryer) Julia Robinson (Bunyan) Paul Moriarty (Cromwell) Martin Farebrother (Defoe) Linda Partridge (Frobisher) Annette Rudkin (Gilbert) Miranda Quinney (John Trundle) Richard Collins (Lambert Jones) Alberto Garciga (Lauderdale) Martin Luff (Mountjoy) John Holme (Postern) Jane Smith (Seddon) Sandy Wilson (Shakespeare) Graham Spickett-Jones (Speed) Brendan Barnes (Thomas More) Nicola Baker (Wallside) Fionnuala Hogan (Willoughby)</p>
<p>Other Members: Tony Swanson (Hon Treasurer) Jo Boait (RCC) Hannah Logan Co-Opted Member (Parent Rep) Helen Hudson (Barbican Life) Nigel Dixon (Assistant Treasurer)</p>	
<p>Deputies and Guests: Fred Rodgers (Breton) Janet Wells (John Trundle) Kathleen Bailey (Mountjoy) Stuart Lynas (Mountjoy) Roy Sully (Shakespeare)</p>	

1.	Apologies for Absence
	Nicola Baker, Brendan Barnes, Nigel Dixon, Alberto Garciga, Andy Hope, Helen Hudson, Hannah Logan, Martin Luff, Paul Moriarty, Deborah Oliver, Linda Partridge, Miranda Quinney, Tony Swanson, and Sandy Wilson had sent apologies for absence.
2.	Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on the 11th of September
	It was felt that a comment pertaining to the potential siting of the police storage facility in Bunyan Court carpark should be included within Point 5 of the AGM minutes of 11 th September 2025. It was also highlighted that Point 11 should have referred to a tribunal in November rather than the City of London in October. These were subsequently amended and the corrected version posted on the website. The set of minutes were approved.

3.	Planning Update
	Two of the Barbican Exhibition halls have been unused for over 15 years and the Barbican Centre, with the City of London, are looking for expressions of interest for the repurposing of Halls 1 and 2 with an expected date of redevelopment to begin in 2028, subject to the completion of Beech Gardens Phase 2. The bulk of the public consultation is due to take place in 2026.
4.	Silk St Update
	The proposed redevelopment of 1 Silk Street continues to meet significant local opposition due to concerns about the proposal's height, scale, and impact on the surrounding area, including the Barbican estate. A townhall meeting was held at St Giles Cripplegate on the 22nd of October when over 200 Barbican residents and neighbours from Golden Lane and The Heron raised their concerns over the proposed two tower structure. As of late October, over 200 submitted objections have been raised towards the scheme. The formal consultation, which began on the 18 th of September, ends on the 12 th of November.
5.	Barbican Signage
	<p>At the last Barbican Centre quarterly meeting, it was noted that signage for the Centre is being redesigned, with three different teams/consultancies involved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inside the Centre 2. Across the Estate (to and from the Centre) 3. On public roads (directional signage to the Centre) <p>It is to be hoped that a mechanism will be devised to ensure that the outcomes provide a coherent whole. The residents of Defoe House because of their location are in the front line of helping people along with the livered staff located sometimes outside the Tube Station. All of us are asked to help people who are confused, especially as the everyday reliance on Google doesn't work within the Estate. We are assuming that this fundamental fact is being taken on board. An obvious question therefore is: how can the BA build into the project that first hand feedback of what works and what doesn't in terms of helping people?</p> <p>The proposal put to the meeting was that the BA establish an ad hoc working group on signage to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Advocate for resident involvement in the redesign process, and (b) Encourage coordination and cohesion between the various design teams. <p>Following a healthy discussion, it was decided that the BA will not set up such a working group but rather that those individuals who want to get involved do so in an individual capacity.</p>
6.	Governance Review and Elected Members
	It was reported that the BA is eagerly awaiting the Governance Review. The BAGC is constantly looking for potential new members, particularly those with the ideas and energy required to be an Elected Member. The Deputy Chair informed the meeting that a draft of a profile document (or Job Description) for an Elected Member will be brought to the next BAGC meeting in February 2026.

7.	Future use of the excess car parking and other spaces
	<p>As most Barbican residents know, most of the car parks are currently underutilised, as the number of car ownership has declined over the years. The BA understands that the Barbican Estate Office is considering commissioning a comprehensive survey of the carparks, to establish their use, occupancy etc. At the same time, the Barbican Golden Lane Neighbourhood Forum has asked AECOM to do a high-level analysis of the car parks as part of the Site Options and Assessment for the Neighbourhood Plan. The BA has relayed to the BEO and BRC that early stakeholder consultation with Barbican residents is vital when looking at potential alternative and appropriate uses and to ensure that residential amenities are respected. As the process gets underway, the BA will be more formally seeking residents' views so that we can make well informed representations. However, the BA is happy to hear views at any time</p>
8.	Website and technology changes
	<p>Several members of the BAGC as well as BA members and other residents have provided pointers to material on the website which are either outdated and no longer relevant. The website administrator expressed thanks to those individuals and believes each of those pointers has now been acted upon by either removing the text or where relevant aged material has been updated. The administrator has also removed many duplicates of files that were within the website database.</p> <p>Many requests have been made to the website administrator for a calendar of events, and this is now available on the site.</p> <p>Further developments will follow but the website administrator feels that the best way forward would be to follow the communications strategy when this is published as this should be the guiding principle as to the look and content of the site. In the meantime, as this would seem a logical and uncontroversial step the administrator is planning to make one of the areas of the site to be as a repository for the four working parties' documents. There are also plans to make areas of the site, password protected but again the Communications strategy will hopefully provide the definitive direction the site should go.</p> <p>With so little Barbican Association activity on X (formerly Twitter) and several residents' complaints about our involvement in it, our X account has been cancelled. Similarly, with almost no activity on the BA's Facebook page, we have also cancelled our account there.</p>
9.	Non-BA members attending BA meetings
	<p>Following a discussion, it is anticipated that for the recent future at least, there will not be many non-BA members wishing to attend BAGC meetings. As a result, for the time being, it was decided that we would continue with the <i>de facto</i> approach which is to allow attendance. Should the number of such attendees significantly increase, this issue will need to be considered at a future BAGC.</p>
10.	Remote attendance at BAGC meetings
	<p>Continuing from Point 10 of the BAGC meeting of 11th September, following healthy discussion, the meeting believed that if adequate access and security controls could be put in place then facilitating remote access to BAGC meetings would, by enabling those members who travel regularly or work late, enhance and add value to the current structure. As with Point 7 above, the nascent communications strategy should give guidance on the application of the remote access.</p> <p>Initially the remoteness would only be available to BAGC members but later this could be developed to include all BA members though this would likely necessitate some restructuring of meetings into public and non-public parts</p>

<p>11.</p>	<p>House Group socials</p> <p>From Point 10 of the BAGC meeting of 11th September, the BA is intending to run a campaign to increase the BA membership. One suggestion of how to grow the BA membership was for House Groups to hold Winter social events, where any resident will be welcome. A quick and easy facility for joining the BA would be available at each such House Group social. A second idea was a B.A. Christmas card, containing a QR code for joining the B.A.</p> <p>As some members were in favour of holding the social events and others were not, it is to be left to each House Group to decide whether to run such a social event or not. House Groups that decide to do so need to email the BA Chair for funding, which will be provided in a scaled manner.</p> <p>The Christmas card idea was warmly received by many members, and the Chair has agreed to both design and organise distribution of the cards.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Working Parties</p> <p>The Anti-social behaviour and Estate Management group has not met since the September BAGC but hopes to meet with the City of London soon.</p> <p>The Planning group has decided to have more structure – for the group to meet regularly, about monthly, to look at the planning lists and decide how to respond to applications that may affect us. The identified classes of responses are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) major response – alert nearby houses and form a group (usually this will have happened earlier because of a pre-application consultation) (ii) medium – write a detailed letter to the planners (iii) minor – short letter making single point or asking for conditions (iv) no action <p>Taking advantage of people’s location and interest, each proposal/issue should be allocated to one member of the team to lead.</p> <p>The group will maintain contact and compile a list of residents with relevant skills who may not want to be public about their involvement but are willing to give background information/advice. It was decided that we need to talk to the Communications group about communicating the work of the committee better.</p> <p>Currently there are quarterly meeting with the planner officers, where current and pipeline developments are discussed, and other issues that affect residents such as noise, light pollution from offices. The meetings are jointly attended by two BA members from the planning team, and two members from the Barbican and Golden Lane Neighbourhood Forum. Officers often do not follow up on complaints; hence the group is thinking about how to make meetings more effective.</p> <p>The Future Proofing of the Estate group has progressed well since the last BAGC meeting. It will be recalled that the Group’s key focus is on reducing energy consumption in the interest of cost, comfort and carbon 'net zero'. In the October Update the Group canvassed for those with expertise and experience with retrofitting insulation, roofs, windows, heating and the like, especially for listed buildings to join us. We were delighted that three new members have come forward: Alicia Villagra Ayuso, James Manningmore and Stephan Solomonidis.</p> <p>Perhaps of even greater long-term significance is that the October Update prompted an approach from the RCC to join up with them on this. The RCC Net Zero and Sustainability Working Party had undertaken much work under the Chairmanship of Ted Reilly but has not met since he left the Barbican and having a wider group of volunteers involved is seen to be a benefit to residents. This is timely considering the AMBUE project which is being sponsored by the City Energy Team and the BEO, involving sensors and drones to generate calibrated energy models to assess potential measures for residents and the BRC and RCC to consider in due course.</p> <p>David Preston has agreed to act as Secretary of the expanded Working Party and a meeting is being arranged for those who have expressed interest. Previous members of the RCC Climate and Zero Carbon WP will also be contacted. Richard Setchim will be interim Chair to kick start the initiative until a 'future proofed' (i.e. 20 years younger, please!) Chair emerges. Richard is mobilising material for the kick-off meeting and has met with both Jo Boait (Chair) and Sandra Jenner (Deputy Chair) of RCC, who have been generous with their</p>

	<p>time-sharing, knowledge and introducing others who have been involved. All notes are being sent to the Secretary.</p> <p>The Communications group has met once since the September BAGC and the notes from that meeting have been sent to the Secretary. Some significant progress has been made, and they are currently working toward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Finalising the mission statement. (ii) Finalising the survey of residents (iii) Reviewing the branding work from Jan-Marc working towards rebranding in stages: first the newsletter, then website/emails/stationery, and finally the magazine. (iv) Deciding whether to put the minutes on the BA website
13.	Membership Report
	<p>The Membership secretary stated that the estate has a total of 2013 leasehold flats. It was reported that as of the 19th of October 2025, the BA has 1495 members, of which 105 remained in the 'Barbican Membership' category which is meaningless in terms of what we know of our members. Further data presented showed that the total number of leaseholders among those not in the 'Barbican Membership' category is 1157, occupying 916 flats. This latter number is significant as, to have 50% of leasehold properties having at least <u>one</u> leaseholder living there we need 1007 such properties and so the BA is currently (1007 - 916 =) 91 short of that number.</p> <p>The Membership secretary stressed the importance of finding the true category of all those 105 members mentioned above and that it was very likely that when that is achieved, the BA membership will fall short of the 1007 required. It was recommended that a recruitment campaign to attract new members should be drafted and implemented.</p> <p>Some blocks have quite a low percentage of members, with three blocks having a membership rate 35% or less. Other blocks have much higher rates including the three towers which each have a membership rate above 55%. It was suggested that any recruitment campaign should be a targeted one.</p>
14.	Financial matters
	<p>Through a <i>Culture Mile</i> bid Helen Hudson managed to win funding for both the 2024 and 2025 Summer Party. The current financial situation regarding the Summer Party is that there is nearly 1400 GBP left over from this year's event. It has recently been announced that Helen Hudson has won funding of 3000 GBP from the <i>City of London – Stronger Communities Fund</i> for the Summer Party next year.</p> <p>All elected members sent their details requested by the Nationwide Bank to the BA secretary, which were forwarded by the Treasurer to the Bank. Tony received an immediate response to say they have all they need, and they have withdrawn their threat of closing the BA account.</p>
15.	Dates of next Barbican Association meetings
	<p>Barbican Association Steering Group Monday 12th January 2026 (Elected Members ONLY)</p> <p>Barbican Association General Council Thursday 5th February 2026</p>

16.	AOB
	<p>It was reported that the Community Room in the Barbican Library will be available for BA use from January 2026. The room will have a video conference facility with room capacities of 60 seated and 90 standing. It is understood there will be a fee for use of the room, but the fee structure is not yet known. It is intended that the room can be used at evenings and weekends, but that will probably not be immediately available in January as this depends on further work being completed in the library.</p> <p>Whilst appreciating that on occasions such entries may be extremely brief, the importance of having both a Membership and Treasurer report at each BAGC meeting was stressed.</p>