

Estate Resident Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour - Where are we?

Hierarchy of Challenges

- Violence against the person [recent egg throwing is common assault]
- Criminal damage to property [1971 Criminal Damage Act e.g. smashed entry doors]
- ASB [legally defined as behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to someone. It ranges from nuisance noise and littering to vandalism and can be personal ASB - verbal abuse, targeted harassment; nuisance ASB - loud parties, drug dealing, rowdy street behaviour; environmental ASB - fly tipping, graffiti]
- Failure to comply with our signposted by-laws e.g. Parkour block jumping
- A confused BA reporting system that concentrates on the process and not the impact and because it is sparsely used does not reflect activity e.g. no box for reporting drugs or assault. The current reporter gets in the way of making sure police reporter is used

What good looks like

- Residents being aware of HOW to report serious incidents [new posters are being prepared with councillors and police input]
- Ending the current reporter and replacing with BA ASB support email that can support but guide to police reporter
- Achievable improvements in hotspots [eg line of sight signs at entries to the estate at key points. 1st phase rolled out and paid for by BEO in July and greatly welcomed by residents]
- Visible policing btw 5 and 7pm, especially when schools are out
- Joined up info exchange: Aldermen, councillors, ward police, relevant RTAs, CPA, BA working group, BEO. Garden and cleaning teams are eyes and ears too. A quick alert system.
- Upstream social media messaging and 121 approaches to organisers so visitors know our rules [e.g YouTube, Tik Tok messages]
- Neighbourly support to residents impacted [let them know BA cares via ASB email managed by BH]
- Simple and quick one-stop-shop reporting to police so that crime numbers are obtained and data collected - we need a clear path to reporting to the right people
- Harnessing all assets - Barbican Centre, GSMD, Girls School, Golden Lane and nearby firms [scaffolding on 1SS and Tenter will have CCTV, Moor Lane and Deutsche Bank, Nuffield, Aldersgate firms CCTV]. We've now added security to the standing agenda for Barbican Cen - Resident meetings
- A renewed BA Estate Security action group drawing all parts of estate especially entrance areas, parents' groups, youth [Miranda Q, Jan Marc P, Richard Collett and Lucy Sisman are supporting]
- Being guided by houses on what they need - provided this does not add costs to others or impact listing constraints [why should I as a Willoughby resident block an initiative by say Ben Jonson?]

What bad looks like

- Grand schemes that never get anywhere because, fingers are in the pie or funding just doesn't happen
- Confused BA reporting that has outlived its original excellent purpose
- Letting the 'silent majority' and 'common ground' views be drowned out by loud individuals on Barbican Estate Matters who have a particularly civil liberties perspective
- Not holding the City and police to account for treating our high walks just as they would any other public area and for protecting safety of 4,000 residents in a dense space with a growing number of older residents - City Police told us Barbican is seen as a playground for kids from Islington etc
- Residents having to pay more to ensure they have reasonable safety
- Not keeping a sense of proportion on how safe our estate is and the need to avoid frightening vulnerable residents.
- How to reconcile any AI driven rise in insurance premiums by more informed data!

For consideration

- Ending current reporter and replacing with a supportive email that pushes people to report a crime
- Have we been reporting too wide a range of incidents so that the most serious issues get eclipsed by the inevitable realities of urban life?
- Does our data show to authorities that all we must worry about are Lime bikes when neighbouring areas have stabbings, drug peddling, robberies and burglaries?
- Is each house group aware of what is happening in its own block or location? [I was stunned by reports of defecation sub podium and elsewhere]
- Does the revenue from filming on our estate offer a resource to keep the estate and its visitors safe?
- The critical need to use the podium renewal, Barbican Centre etc to design out crime and ASB?
- How can we make it harder for groups to cycle furiously on the estate?
- Should the Barbican Association use some of its financial war chest to issue legal reminders to Parkour firms and other informal sports bodies? I appreciate expert legal colleagues may be sceptical but damaging the fabric of a listed building is a serious criminal offence. What would residents want us to do?
- Have we used the law enough? Should the BA or blocks push for Public Space Protection Order zone against the worst aspect of persistent ASB breaches?
- By having a block led local approach can we avoid circular ideological discussions on grand CCTV schemes? It is worth remembering that this dense residential space is less monitored than many corporate spaces.

I recommend we fix the small things first like reminding visitors at every entry point we are a residential community with rules and that we will act to uphold those rules and we support a new streamlined ASB process without giving the impression we are crime ridden. We are not.

Bernard Hughes

Chair ASB Working Group
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