

Barbican Association Comms Meeting Minutes – 8 September 2026

The meeting reviewed design and branding progress, editorial planning, a proposed resident Q&A series, the governance review, membership growth, and upcoming events and dates.

Design and branding

The Chair reported that the merged design brief – combining the two earlier drafts, focusing on Barbican Life (BL) first – is now with North, the design agency, who are enthusiastic and have relevant Barbican experience. North have been given archive access, back copies and the written list of regular BL sections. A workshop with North, ideally in person, will take place before design work begins, and the brief will be circulated to the group. Any future website redesign would be self-funded.

Magazine, newsletter and editorial planning

The next issue of BL is going to print; the September newsletter, delayed by the building regulations coverage, goes out later this month; and the deadline for the Christmas issue is 1 November. The group agreed that Barbican News pieces covering the BEO or similar bodies should ideally be accompanied by an invitation to reply/BEO statement (responses are being pursued ahead of publication); by contrast, Barbican Life opinion pieces are the writer's own view – like a Sunday newspaper opinion piece – and require no response. The group agreed to begin developing a rolling six-month content plan for the newsletter. The plan will be organised around a standing set of recurring features, balanced with an open slot for unexpected, timely or playful content, so each issue mixes reliability with surprise. The group also agreed to investigate standardising the Lauderdale Tower lease summary and acronym-buster for all houses, and to reinstate the standing reminder panel in the next newsletter.

Resident research and a proposed Q&A series

The objectives of a residents' research exercise will be scoped before any questions are designed. The group also heard a proposal for a standing series of short, plain-language Q&As for residents – a "navigating tool, not a directory", building on the Defoe House Q&A model – with questions framed with input from the group and put to the RCC and BEO under

a no-obfuscation ground rule. Channel and positioning (newsletter, website or BA app) remain open.

Governance review

The group understands the consultant appointed to the governance review has completed the document review, but interviews have yet to start. A short piece appears in the next newsletter, and the review could be a natural Q&A subject once there is more to report.

Membership growth

The BEO has offered to help find a GDPR-compliant way to reach non-resident leaseholders, which will be followed up. The postcard campaign has been mailed, with a further push planned at the summer party welcome desk. A proposal will be made at the next BAGC that all house groups promote membership in their own communications. The group agreed to recommend to BAGC that a written role definition distinguishing membership administration from membership growth strategy be drawn up. Whether growth should sit within the comms group's remit remains an open question, and the option of a dedicated membership working party could be explored.

Events and dates

A town hall on heating and climate will be coordinated with the Climate Working Party and the BEO, with timing linked to the AMBUE report; a cost analysis of underfloor heating versus electric heaters has also been requested. An interim "immediate steps" piece will run in the next available issue of the newsletter, and seasonal BL special supplements on heating and cooling are now under consideration. The summer party takes place on Saturday 12 September, with a BA membership presence at the welcome desk.

Comms group administration

The website privacy policy update is complete. The group will look into which working parties publish minutes on the website, and terms of reference and KPIs are being considered.

Next Meeting: Monday 12 October 2026 at 6.30 pm.