

Barking Reach Residents Association Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 16 July 2025

7.30pm via zoom

<https://bit.ly/BRRAMeets2025>

Meeting ID: 881 4907 6288

Passcode: 731647

Attendance: 30

Meeting started: 7.32pm

Agenda:

1. Service Charge
2. GP, dentist and restaurant
3. Flytipping, parking and CCTV
4. Bus stops
5. Foreshore Park (footpath 47)
6. Any other business

Minutes and matters arising

Pete Mason, the chair of the Barking Reach Residents Association (BRRA), opened the meeting. Minutes of the May meeting were agreed.

1. Service Charge

Significant concerns were raised regarding discrepancies between service charges levied and actual expenditure.

Pete cited an example for John Miller/Leslie Hitchcock Houses (JM/LH) where residents were being charged £198,000 for heating but only £68,000 was spent.

Residents are entitled to refunds where charges exceed spending at year-end, Pete stressed. Section 21 requests can be used to obtain invoices from managing agents to verify charges.

Pete also explained Right to Manage (RTM): a mechanism for residents to form a company, appoint their own managing agent and take control of service charges. He mentioned several instances of successful resident action, including L&Q issuing refunds following repeated invoice requests from residents.

He also said that in the case of JM/LH, block manager Canterbury Management rejected a £32,000 estate charge and avoided a bill of £15,000 drainage costs, resulting in £70,000 savings across 84 flats.

Forecasts suggest service charges may rise to £550/month within 2–3 years due to new fire safety regulations. Residents in the meeting have accused Bellway of misleading advertising (service charges advertised as £2,200/year for a two-bed, actual closer to £3,000).

After further discussion, Michael, a member of the BRRA committee, put the following motion to residents:

BRRA demands that the superior landlord, Barking Riverside Limited (BRL), adopts a policy of selling land only to developers who commit to delivering homes under a commonhold ownership structure.

Leasehold arrangements have proven unreliable, with freeholders frequently unresponsive to resident concerns, failing in their duties and lacking accountability.

Managing agents appointed under leasehold models operate with minimal transparency and often impose excessive or unjustified costs on residents. Attempts to challenge service charges or poor service are typically obstructed.

The commonhold system offers a fairer, more democratic model of ownership, enabling residents to directly manage their building and shared spaces through a company they collectively own. It removes the incentive for freeholders and managing agents to exploit leaseholders for profit.

BRRA believes that BRL, as the master developer with accountability to the local community, has a duty to prioritise long-term community wellbeing over short-term developer returns.

Pete seconded it and was passed unanimously.

Commonhold would enable residents to directly manage buildings via a collectively owned company, reducing exploitation by freeholders/managing agents.

2. GP, dentist and restaurant

Venilia Amorim, BRA's secretary, gave a brief update on healthcare and local amenities.

A brand new NHS GP service is to open in a commercial unit near Fielders Crescent/Circus by Christmas. BRL is to cover operational costs temporarily. A full contract is expected to begin soon.

A new dentist is also planned to open early next year. A Mexican restaurant has been confirmed in the same area.

The former L&Q sales suite opposite The Wilds is going to tender for community uses (e.g. café or youth centre).

3. Flytipping, parking and CCTV

There was a discussion on how the Envac system (Phase 2) has been deemed unfit for purpose (small inlets, heavy doors, constant jams, no provision for bulky waste).

Venilia said that residents had passed a resolution at a previous residents meeting stating the system was not fit for purpose. Pete put it to BRL by email and in a subsequent meeting between BRL and the BRRA executive officers, also noting concerns that costs were being passed on via service charges. BRL only replied with the notion that residents would eventually get into the mindset of using the system correctly.

Fly-tipping remains a problem, especially around Phase 2 and near Envac points. The estate manager, Preim, is starting a CCTV trial on Fielders Crescent (12 weeks) to monitor fly-tipping and parking violations.

4. Bus stops

Residents have received information from BRL about the closure of two bus stops near the Riverside Campus school. This is due to Bellway works starting across the road from school for health and safety reasons. The eastbound bus stop will be temporarily closed until September, while the westbound bus stop will be permanently closed. New stops to be introduced with Kings Hill Road opening (Spring 2026).

Persistent parking violations are constantly being reported on Phase 2 (Northgate Neighbourhood), especially from parking-bay-owning residents claiming other residents are parking illegally in other people's spaces.

Pete also noted that BRL rejected residents' request for parking posts following the meeting that BRRA executive officers had with BRL a few weeks ago. BRL deemed the parking posts a trip hazard, despite similar posts being approved by the council elsewhere in the borough.

5. Foreshore Park (footpath 47)

Venilia told the meeting that Barking Riverside Ltd (BRL) wants to build a paved footpath, public square and play area along the bank of the Thames, parallel to Fielders Crescent and the Boulevard.

BRL believes the plan will improve access to the River Thames residents as well as area visitors. The estimated construction time is 1.5–3 years.

Plans to renovate the footpath, Footpath 47 as it is called, were approved by the council's planning committee despite 11 objections.

Concerns were raised about changes being made to the area, along with the lack of accessible, non-technical summaries in the 140+ volumes of environmental assessments. Pete was asked to take a look at the [planning application documents](#) due to these concerns.

6. Any other business

None was declared.

Addendum 1

Quarterly meeting between BRRA, BRL and Council on Friday 4 July at 5pm

- The Wilds – Incident 20 June 2025**

Update provided on the incident that happened at The Wilds in relation to a private event that was hosted at The Wilds which BRL were misled on.

BRL have amended processes at The Wilds including no school leaver / young people events, risk assessments for any private event that has more than 60 people and involvement with the police moving forward.

- Temporary health provision**

New GP facility on the Circus. BRL are covering all of the NHS operational costs.

Earliest we think we can fit out is end of 2025. Interim provision until July 2026. During that period tender undertaken by NHS to procure longer term offering.

5 clinicians to be working from facility at any one time.

BRL do not know full details of interim service that is delivered until July 2026 once the procurement process has been finalised. New patient list and GP will be from July 2026. Applying pressure to see if NHS can deliver it quicker but fine balance.

- Amenity offering – The Wilds**

Finding new operator for this.

- Commercial Units**

L&Q marketing suite has gone out to tender for a new operator.

Hugget Road units – confirmed two other occupiers as well as the NHS. These include a dentist and a restaurant.

Two other units to then occupy.

- Footpath 47 Foreshore**

Three rounds of public consultation on this and managing access during the construction works.

BRL committed to allow people to access the area safely. A lot of misinformation being circulated on this.

Friends of Footpath 47 have been engaged with but that has now ceased as they no longer want to engage with BRL.

The footpath is not at risk and location is not fundamentally changing. Any change is due to ecological points that Friends of Footpath 47 assisted BRL with.

Whilst the formal diversion is longer, there is a second route that BRL are agreeing with the contractor.

- Block issues**

Eastbrooke Village - Waste area.

Residents Association to take this away and look into contacting L&Q.

Covered the planning points around this historically which would have meant engaging with

Bellway.

Argent House – rents being raised by L&Q.

RA looking to respond to L&Q on this following L&Q's response.

Leslie Hitchcock – heating issues

Online meeting with MP and MD of RMG (Justin Herbert) – seen all meters but one missing so they need to look again. They have 23 meters that they want to install.

MP stopped RMG from getting bailiffs to the residents.

SMc suggesting that a weekly tracker to ensure traction would be useful for this situation.

- **Handover of Public Realm Areas**

Update on Site H East – red boundary line being finalised with Bellway.

Frogley park hand over happening later this year.

Planning changes for Frogley Park and when those design changes will be implemented – **SPh to look into and circulate an update.**

- **Bus Stop on Fielders Crescent**

Update provided – link to follow.

- **LQE & Heating Issues**

BRL ask if the RA are aware of any live heating issues that residents are experiencing.

Difficult to say as it is summer. Nothing they are aware of.

Is this still a temporary boiler and if so when is this going to be a permanent boiler.

Some of the blocks are Bellway and issue with those residents transitioning over and the data transfer – to find out how this had improved.

- **Parking Issues**

People not getting the enforcement. Car gets parked in people's individual bays.

Need evidence base for reporting and frequency.

Car hasn't got MOT – because car not being moved then police can't do anything.

Once CCTV in place then will be able to support this.

RA advised that some parking posts have been installed. BRL highlighted that installing bollards / parking post is a H&S hazard.

PCM App – may be able to do some messaging on this from BRL's perspective.

- **Riverview**

Contract for [member of residents editorial board] to sign – wasn't sure if she needed to sign a contract. BRL would recommend that something is put in place.

Signed contract between RA and BRL for Riverview has been signed by RA and SMc will pick up with Lucy.

- **Leaseholder Reforms following Govt. announcement**

Increase in messages on service charges especially from Fielders Crescent.

Some residents have not received a service charge invoice for 1-2 years and then have received a large bill.

L&Q comments specifically as the service charges are not clear.

Meeting ended 9.04pm