



VARTRY COMMUNITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
COMBINED ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND PUBLIC MEETING
29TH OCTOBER 2025

VCRA COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT Beck Dabscheck (Chair) Mark Bartlett (Treasurer) Deborah Cawkwell, Monica Viola, Claire Cammarata, Carol Gibbons (minutes)

STREETS REPRESENTED BY 8 LOCAL RESIDENTS living on Heysham, Vartry, Eastbourne, Candler, St John's

GUESTS Barbara Blake (Local Councillor), Zac Evans (resident representative on Police Ward panel), Tuli Jubli (St Mungo's), Laura Iduon (HAGA), Mya Khan and Matabur Rahman (PCSOs)

APOLOGIES Chitra Karve (VCRA committee member), Jo Hutchinson (local resident), Michelle Simmons (local councillor and Deputy Mayor), Pastor Charles, Glynis Kirkwood-Warren, Haringey Parks Zonal Manager

AGENDA

1. Chair's Report

2. Community Concerns

- Anti-social behaviour (drug use, littering, unwanted attention e.g. men following women)
- Fly-tipping
- Speeding
- Health and safety, bins out on pavements particularly on Vartry Road
- Parks, including playground update and rough sleeping in Paignton Park

3. Criminal behaviour

4. Formal Business of the AGM

3. Any Other Business

Chair's Report

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and VCRA members present identified themselves. The Chair gave a brief explanation of VCRA's history, role and activities over the past year including regular litter picks, summer and winter events (funded by the Council's People Need Parks grant programme), a Halloween trail and encouraged local residents to support and join in these events. She reminded the meeting that information about VCRA's forthcoming winter event would be circulated in the near future.



In the past, guests from the local agencies and the Council have given a short presentation about their work and taken questions. Given the persistent local concerns forming the bulk of the agenda, the meeting would instead focus on how working together by local agencies, together with the Council and local residents might resolve or mitigate them.

A lively discussion followed, during which local residents and VCRA committee members expressed their frustration at how consistently doing the right thing - litter picking, reporting criminal and anti-social behaviour to PCSOs and via 101, talking with St Mungo's and HAGA staff, asking our local Councillors to intervene - seemed to result in little or no improvement.

Residents understood that resources, both people and money, were scarce but wanted more clarity about what agencies could and would do to address our concerns. Residents are keen to understand why, particularly given St Mungo's and HAGA are both based in our area and do valuable work, did not support the community more with issues such as ASB often caused by their client groups.

Although listed separately above, several of the community's concerns were seen as closely linked. Taking the issue of parcel theft as an example, the person responsible had been seen searching repeatedly in front gardens, and when confronted had been extremely aggressive. Photos and videos were taken and sent to local police and she was known to live or have lived in St Mungo's (who had also been alerted).

Packaging from the stolen parcels was regularly found during litter picks. MetEngage had recently sent advice regarding parcel theft which was useful but only suggested actions residents could take with no mention of action to be taken by local police.

Drugs are openly sold from cars in Heysham Road, and again photos of cars, dealer and client had been given to local police. From her appearance and behaviour it seemed likely that the parcel thief had a drug habit. Was she stealing parcels to fund this?

Tuli (St Mungo's practitioner) explained that St Mungo's carry out regular locality checks and intervene if they find any of their clients, for example, drinking to excess in local parks. When a concern is reported, they raise it either with the individual resident and/or with residents in a group meeting. They also search bags residents bring in. While these actions are appreciated, parcel theft associated with the same resident has been a problem for several months. St Mungo's has an anti ASB policy on their website which includes an objective to be a "good neighbour" to communities in which they are located. The Chair asked what other action could be taken for more impactful change?

Laura (service manager from HAGA) explained that she and other staff challenged users of their services if they observed ASB, and invited local residents to knock on



HAGA's door if they observed ASB and if a HAGA client is responsible, staff will intervene.

ACTIONS

Local residents to alert HAGA staff to ASB when they see it, as Laura requested.

HAGA has links with an outreach service BUBIC and will ask them to include Manchester Gardens in their rounds and potentially work with VCRA on this matter.

HAGA's clients have been asked to suggest ways HAGA can improve their services and one idea is to restart the Gardening Group which could work with VCRA to maintain and improve our green spaces.

HAGA's clients would be offered Time Credits to join in VCRA litter picks.

Resident Zac (Ward Panel rep) asked what had happened to all the reports of parcel theft with photo evidence sent to 101? The PCSOs explained they are not informed about 101 reports, for example, of theft or drug dealing and so they don't know if they are investigated or not or if they are seen as low or high priority. There are only two PCSOs for the whole borough and legally they can only take limited action such as reassurance visits to people whose property has been stolen. They suggest we also report via MetEngage and strongly advise against actions such as attempted citizen's arrest.

ACTIONS

Residents to report parcel thefts to MetEngage as well as 101

Deborah VCRA will send PCSOs a link to the relevant page on vartry.org site so they can check that it lists full and accurate information on how to report criminal and anti-social behaviour.

VCRA committee members will use the local WhatsApp mutual support group to get and collate all evidence re parcel theft and send it to the Manager at St Mungo's asking what further action they will take.

Tuli from St Mungo's will request litter picking kit from Veolia and carry out an additional monthly litter pick in Manchester Gardens so that residents both contribute positively to the local community and see for themselves the adverse results of their leaving bottles, cans and food waste in our local green spaces.

Suggestions from Councillor Barbara Blake: explained that although she fully understood residents' frustration, our ward was not an outlier in the problems we face. Drug dealing, for example, is on the rise nationally and is more organised than in the past so harder to combat. Her own area of Haringey has had problems with fly-tipping, street -drinking and parcel theft so we should try to resist the temptation to talk our neighbourhood down.



While residents can't and should not take all the responsibility for reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, there are things we could do such as using the click and collect rather than delivery option where possible and organising a system to take parcels in for each other, working with the Council to design in anti-speeding measures such as planters acting as chicanes where residential roads are being used as cut throughs to avoid Low traffic Areas, taking more ownership of problem hot spots by organising activities there.

The Council takes action already on fly-tipping, removing reported items as quickly as possible. Local residents with good intentions also leave items, sometimes as bulky as fridges, out for others to take. Where the fly-tipping is by landlords emptying a property at the end of a tenancy the Council takes action whenever possible though their landlords' licensing process. Fly-tipping can be reported through the Love Clean Streets app and directly to Veolia on 0208 885 7700. Meeting attendees agreed that this does result in swift action to remove dumped items.

Not every property has ground floor space to store bins but where such space is available residents should only put bins out on the pavement on collection day and put them back inside their property once emptied. While this might seem like a minor issue, it causes real problems for people with poor mobility, wheel-chair users and people with buggies. VCRA committee member, Chitra, has been in regular contact with the Council about this issue and received a letter in response which she believes does not accurately reflect the situation.

ACTIONS

Cllr Barbara agreed to share information about what residents in her area had done to address speeding.

Cllr Barbara will liaise with Haringey's Traffic dept and share information about the traffic calming measures in local plans.

Cllr Barbara will request a copy of the letter sent to Chitra re bins on pavements and review the contents

VCRA to post a reminder on Whats App mutual support group that it's best to only leave items out for others to take for a set period of time, a day was suggested, and then take anything left over to a charity shop or recycling centre

Refurbishment of Paignton Park playground the timetable is shown below. There is a public event on Sunday 30th November between 2 and 4 pm at the Triangle Centre

- W/c 03/11/25 – announce public vote on playground design and the litter poster competition: on Commonplace, via email directly to schools, place advert on Linkit and put banner in the park
- 611/25 (Thursday): Printing of winning posters for weekend event



- W/c 24/11/25: Playground 3D design options back from play contractors; upload to W/c 03/11/25: Children back to school and can make start on litter poster designs once announced
- 20/11/25 (Thursday): EOD – latest date for poster design submissions to be collected by a teacher and potentially passed on to the Friends or Cllrs; we can arrange pick up from e.g. Triangle Centre on 21/11/25 (Friday) and scan to be shared with translation services to make sure we understand what they say
- 24/11/25 (Monday): distributing poster designs back to Cllrs for selection of winners
- 26/11/25 (Wednesday): Councillors selecting their favourite litter signage designs by EOD
- 27 Commonplace for public vote and print copies for weekend event
- **30/11/25 (Sunday) 2 – 4pm:**
 - Presentation of 3D design options in the park/playground or at Triangle Centre for in-person vote
 - Announcement of litter poster competition winners (can also put announcement on Commonplace)
- 01/12/25 (Monday): Commonplace vote on playground 3D designs closes

4. Formal Business of the AGM

All VCRA committee members present agreed to remain on the Committee.

The Chair reminded the meeting that new Committee members are always welcome and that people can also support VCRA more informally, for example by taking part in litter picks or helping on the day with our activities and events.

Mark gave a brief finance report – VCRA's funds come from successful grant applications and fund-raising through raffles and stall-holder fees from our events. Any grant-funded spend is reimbursed in full by the Council and so our finances are sound.

Mark will step down as Treasurer in January 2026 and expressions of interest in this role are very welcome.

Any Other Business

Stamford Hill primary School which has stood empty now for several years. Councillors Blake and Simmons have been invited to a meeting with the Housing



team on 2/12/2025 and will report back as soon and fully as possible from that meeting.