

To whom it may concern,

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Your ref:
Our ref:
01/12/2017

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: The Curnock Estate

I became the ward sergeant for St Pancras & Somers Town ward in March 2017. It quickly became apparent that the Curnock Estate had an issue with youths and drug dealers congregating on the estate, predominantly during the night time hours. The estate is contained within the following four roads: Camden Street, Pratt Street, Plender Street and Bayham Street.

I requested some statistical analysis regarding the peak times that this activity was being reported and from which locations within the estate, during the period between 01/04/2017 and 25/11/2017. The peak days for calls are on a Tuesday (17% = 11 calls) and Friday (19% = 12 calls). Calls overall for Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) and drugs take place between 2000 – 0000hrs.

The following table shows the most common blocks/locations recorded on the police CAD system during this period:

Attendance Location	Total
GOLDTHORPE	28
BILLINGLEY	12
DARFIELD	11
THURNSCOE	2
TRIMDON	2
BARNBROUGH	1
RAVENS CAR	1
Grand Total	57

The team would regularly receive photographs from one resident whose home overlooked the area where these people tended to congregate. Although the photographs were not clear enough to identify any of the people involved, it did show that there were non-residents congregating on the estate for a believed unlawful purpose.

In response to this, the ward team increased their patrols of the estate and undertook an Environmental Visual Audit (EVA) of the area. The purpose of this was to identify any areas of the estate which could potentially be improved in order to reduce the likelihood of the issues continuing. As a direct result of this EVA, one small area was fenced off. This area had previously been used by drug users to inject and then sprawl out across the floor. It was also recommended that the CCTV within the estate be moved to another location that would better capture the behaviour complained about. This occurred on 21st November.

Despite increased patrols of the area, the problem continued. I sought additional funding to pay for additional patrols and also explored the possibility of using an Observation Post for police to observe the behaviour. This has proved incredibly difficult due to the lack of available premises with the appropriate view of the affected areas.

The main problem the police encounter when trying to deal with this problem is the layout of the estate. There are multiple entry points from each of the four surrounding roads. None of these are gated so the public have free access to walk onto and through the estate. If police officers enter the estate, they can be seen from some distance and it is easy for anybody that doesn't wish to be stopped to escape via other exits.

Despite the best efforts of the ward team, the problem continues to exist during the night time hours. The Emergency Response Team have a tasking to patrol the estate during these hours, however, they are often unable to complete this due to the heavy demand placed upon them by emergency response calls.

I have spoken to a number of officers who have been ward officers for St Pancras & Somers Town over the years and they have all stated that the Curnock Estate has suffered from similar problems for a number of years now.

I have spoken to all three ward Councillors regarding this estate and have stated that the best way to control the problem is to have resident only access onto the estate. This would best be achieved by gating across the current open access points. From my experience, the estates which are effectively fenced and gated, like the nearby Bayham Place Estate suffer far fewer problems in relation to antisocial behaviour and drug misuse. I appreciate that in the current financial climate, funding streams are restricted. The financing of such a fencing and gating scheme would be a significant one, but one I feel that would reduce many of the ASB and drug related problems experienced within the estate.

Yours sincerely,

Dean Kirby 141CN
Police Sergeant
St Pancras & Somers Town Ward