

City Question Time, Wednesday 10 September 2025

Chris Hayward, Policy Chairman (CH): Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to City Question Time and thank you for joining me and our panel for tonight's Question Time event here at the St Bride Foundation which has got a very fascinating history of serving both the print and the publishing trades. And I'm particularly glad to see such an impressive turnout on let's just say not the most pleasant of evenings, the rain certainly is coming down out there so it's very good that we're all in the warm here at St Bride's and thank you for joining us I very much appreciate it. For those of you who don't know me and I look around and see a lot of faces I do know, for those of you who don't know me I'm Chris Hayward the policy chairman of the City of London Corporation which is the political leader of the corporation.

Now tonight's event will be chaired by our lead member for resident engagement Jacqui Webster who's chaired these for us very successfully before so thank you for doing that again Jacqui and for all the work you do as the lead member for resident engagement. And I'm delighted to be joined up here on our platform by a panel of a number of our grand committee chairs or deputy chairs all of whom are here as I am to try and answer your questions this evening and in a minute Jacqui will introduce them or ask them to introduce themselves to you.

Now on your chairs tonight hopefully you will find our latest edition of "you Said We Did". It should be there on your chairs. If you didn't get one on your chair please make sure you pick one up afterwards. You know we produce, those of you who've been before, know we produce this every time to try to pick up on the points you raised at the last meeting and say how we've responded to them. And I insist that everything you said is in there and then we have tried to provide a response and hopefully it's a response that satisfies you, hopefully it tells you why we can't do it or it says it's work in progress and explains what we're trying to do to make sure we address it. So we put this together based on your questions and your feedback at the previous Question time so I hope you read it and find it informative. I think these are actually a fantastic reflection on how much I believe the City Corporation is doing to try to make the Square Mile an even better place for you to live.

You know when I, some of you know when I became Policy Chairman over three years ago I committed to the resident reset and I committed to trying to make life for our residents better and to make you feel that you are genuinely a part of one Square Mile, one City of London. And one of the things we're launching tonight which I hope will demonstrate again that we mean what we say and we're doing what we say is that we're launching our new City Living Resident card. Now this card is the City of London Corporation's new scheme and it will give cardholders access to exclusive offers and opportunities from City attractions, from local businesses and useful services. And we'll also double up and act as your library card as well. So I hope you're going to enjoy using your City resident card. I have to give this one back I'm told at the end of the evening but you're all entitled to mine because you're all residents. And this initiative, a bit like our City Question Time events, is all part of that residential reset. Us trying to deliver on commitment to you as our residents. You know the residential reset programme is a policy priority of mine to improve our engagement with all of you who call the Square Mile your home. So do make sure you get your free card.

It was developed to celebrate our City Living Community and to expand access to resources and opportunities for residents. It's a card that has been shaped with and for our community. It's exclusive to residents in the City. And what's available now I should say is just the beginning because we'll continue to expand this scheme over time if you find it you like it and it's what you want. So we want to hear from you directly, our residents, about the kinds of offers and experiences you would value most. And we will try to make sure they become

part of the card. So whether it's discounted tickets or it's learning opportunities or exclusive guided walks led by experts, your ideas will help us shape a programme that reflects the interests and needs of you, our communities, in the Square Mile. So you can register for and receive your City Living resident card here tonight. It's at the library stall outside. So before you go, register for and get your City Resident Card. All City residents can sign up who aren't here tonight and get their new card from either Shoe Lane, Barbican or the Artizan Street Libraries. So please tell your friends who are residents who aren't here tonight. They too can get a City Resident Card if they just go to those particular places. So I hope you'll register and please, as I say, encourage your neighbours to do so too.

Now enough for me. I'd like to hand over to Jacqui to introduce our panel and explain a little bit more about the format of the event, including the rules of engagement. So Jacqui, over to you.

Jacqui Webster (JW): Thank you. And just to echo your welcome to everybody. Thank you very much for coming along. We're sharing mics. So do let us know if you can't hear. It's a good sign. Can you hear me now? So we're going to have to lean into the mics, I'm afraid.

So I can see lots of familiar faces. So most people know how this works. But just for people who are new here, welcome. But also just to recap, we use a roving mic. That's really important so that everybody can hear. But also we're filming. So it's really important that we capture everything on the microphone. We'll take one question at a time. We've got a little bit more time this evening because we haven't. We've got a bit of networking time that we want to put in at the end of the session.

We've got a bit more time this evening to ask questions because we don't have a panel presentation. But I would ask everybody to ask their questions directly, not make statements, so that we can get around as many questions as possible. And I will direct the questions to the relevant chairs and deputy chairs who are here this evening. We're not expecting a fire alarm. If there is one, follow the signs.

There are lots of colleagues in the room who can assist and support people. I'm now going to ask the panel to introduce themselves. I'm going to start with you, Jason.

Jason Groves (JG): Great. Thank you, Jacqui. Jason Groves. I'm the deputy chair of the Police Authority Board. And I also chair the local policing committee for the police as well.

Helen Fentimen (HF): Hello. I'm Helen Fentimen, the chair of Community and children's Services Committee and the chair of Health and Wellbeing Board.

Peter Dunphy (PD): I'm Peter Dunphy and I'm the chair of the Port Health and environmental Services Committee.

Shravan Joshi (SJ): I'm Shravan Joshi. I'm the deputy chair of Planning and Transportation.

JW: Okay. Thank you very much. So let's start. Who has got the first question of the evening?

Resident: Hi, good evening. Is this working? yes, it is. Hi, my name's Paul Lincoln. I live on Golden Lane Estate. I want to ask a question about heritage issues. On the 3rd of July, the former Lord Mayor, Vincent Keaveny, asked if we should consider delisting Golden Lane Estate. And in the same month, the deputy chair of Planning and transportation wrote in the evening standard, the heritage lobby cannot be allowed to stand in the way of development.

And this was echoed by a similar article in the Times. The question I've got, which is a double question, is there a concerted campaign by the corporation to undermine historic England and the other heritage bodies? and could you be persuaded, given that there is a government commitment to 1.5 million new homes being built, could you be persuaded to see estates like Golden Lane as models which ought perhaps to be communicated rather than denigrated?

JW: Thank you, Paul. I'm going to hand to Shraavan for that.

SJ: It's a good thing I'm here. Thank you for that question. First of all, there is no official policy to delist Golden Lane Estate. So let's cast that away.

I think members are entitled absolutely to express their opinion. And that's exactly what the Alderman was doing. On the further detail, the relationship with historic England is actually very healthy, I would say. I've got an excellent relationship with lord Mendoza and my successor does as well. We meet regularly and we exchange ideas and compare City plan Heritage impacts on schemes with historic England as a statutory consultee. There is a change of leadership coming out of historic England.

There are two co-chairs who have now come into place. And again, we've got, sorry, co-CEOs have come into place. And there is again a determined effort to work as closely as possible with historic England. What I will say is that when we have planning applications and schemes coming through, one of the first considerations we have is to make sure that the heritage balance is absolutely understood by the developer. And we have that embedded within our local plan and it's embedded in the future local plan as well.

Where we find that historic England takes a stance that isn't in line with our policies, we will absolutely defend our policies. And you'll see that if the schemes that I was referring to in my article and that others are referred to in criticising some of those issues that the historic England raised, it's generally where our policies are contrary to their views on those particular developments.

JW: Thank you, Shraavan. Can I take the next question, please? yes, Walter, over here.

Resident: Thanks, Walter. Walter Guy Briscoe, Barbican resident for the last 45 years. Occasionally, I leave the podium, I go onto the streets. And I've got a couple of suggestions for improving those streets for me as a pedestrian.

We've got a couple of zebra crossings in Chiswell Street, which I suggest should be light controlled rather than being random, because there's a lot of traffic in that street. And it doesn't give the traffic a fair crack of the whip. And the other thing is there is a junction of London Wall and Moor Lane, which I suggest should be a box junction to allow the 76 to turn right onto London Wall.

JW: Thank you, Walter. I think that's for you, Shraavan. I think there was a question in there.

SJ: Yes, okay, great. That's a very valid point. Thank you. And look, we are absolutely open to ideas on a hyper-local level of what we can do to improve the streets and walkways. So, Director of the Environment is in the front row.

I've seen her tapping away, taking notes of that. If we can get your details afterwards, we'll make sure we get the details of that. And we are absolutely open to running consultations on ideas on streets improvements. You know, these are ever-changing environments, and we have to make sure we are responding to local needs. Thank you.

JW: Thank you. Next question, please. Fred. Yes. Thank you. And did you have your hand up? yeah. Come to you. Thank you. Sorry, Fred Rogers.

Resident: First of all, congratulations on Finsbury Circus refurbishment. And I hope that the Christopher's Greyfriars Square will be just as interesting. However, and again, another constant complaint, where are the public toilets? there aren't none at all in Finsbury Circus. People are encouraged to have their meals there, there are tables set out for them, but no public toilets.

There's no potable water either. You know, so you spent nearly five million pounds on the project to encourage people to come there, and there's nowhere for them to relieve themselves. It's unbelievable. And the same is going to happen at Greyfriars Square.

JW: Thank you, Fred. Yes. Peter.

PD: Yeah, thanks for that. The issue of the provision of public toilets, where they should be, how they can be funded, how many there should be, is a major agenda item coming up at the next meeting of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee. It's something that comes up very frequently at our meetings. It's something that comes up very frequently as case work.

Now, as is often the case, it's very much a question of spending priorities. And if we do decide that we're going to provide an additional service, where in the budget we can find the cash to do that? and the provision of staffed public toilets is, as you can imagine, very expensive. We don't favour the provision of non-staffed public toilets because they can very quickly become run down, dirty. You get a lot of antisocial behaviour that is brought in there.

But we are looking at what we can do. There's a number of things that we've already done in terms of the provision, and one of which is through the planning system, requiring large developments to provide conveniences at ground floor level as part of their development through the planning process. And so there's three major ones of those have gone through quite recently. For instance, the custom house, Camomile Square development. We have the community toilet scheme whereby pubs, restaurants, hotels, offer provision as well. And so what we're looking at is all of the range of provision available, obviously includes railway stations as well, where there is provision.

So for instance, there's obviously very adequate provision at Liverpool Street Station, you know, close to Finsbury Circus. But we are looking at it in some considerable detail at the meeting coming up. But it will be a question of if we're going to put more money in to do this, where are we going to find the money from to do that?

JW: Thank you, Peter. Can I take the next question? I think it was at the front here. David, thank you. Thank you very much.

Resident: I noticed in the booklet here that the last question under the cultural entry, the first chapter really, mentions a Barbican. And I think in this update, the question about protecting the Barbican's iconic and significance is sort of rather punted down the track. And I wondered whether perhaps there was some update on the sort of discussions that are referred to here in the answer. And that would say, for example, what the City's general attitude is towards the Barbican, not just as a architectural and cultural centre, but also, of course, as a principal residential centre. Thank you very much indeed.

CH: Well, look, let me deal first of all with the Barbican Arts Centre part of it. So the Barbican Arts Centre is a critically valued international arts centre, one of the biggest in Europe. But to be blunt, it is tired structurally. It needs money spending on it to bring it up to modern day standards. Really, in the 40 years that the centre has been open, there has been, in my honest opinion with you, inadequate investment in maintaining the centre.

And we get we've got to the point where, you know, the toilets, etc, are in a poor state. There are health and safety issues. And so I was very keen that we start the process of preservation and investment in the Barbican Arts Centre and the Court of Common Council Corporation agreed to a proposal, I put, that we would find £200 million to start the work. Now, when I say start the work, that will certainly keeps the centre open, keeps it live and invests in those critical health and safety issues to which I'm referring. The bottom line is that it's nowhere near enough in order to get the Barbican Arts Centre right up to modern day standards.

I don't know, and we don't know because we're still doing the work on it, just what the bill for that might be. But I suspect there could well be another £500 or £600 million needed to get us to that point. We are going to need to get private sector investment to support that. And we have ideas and thoughts about how we would do that. We do not have that sort of resource available to the City corporation, but we are committed to doing it.

We have, we have, we've started the work with the first £200 million. We need to get more and we will keep going in investing in it. As far as the, the, the Barbican residential area is concerned. I mean, touching on the first question, really, the Barbican is iconic, right? it is iconic and it's much loved.

And, you know, there are people who don't necessarily enjoy its brutalist architect, architecture, but when it was designed and came forward at the timing it did, it was revolutionary. And frankly, I think we've now got really good management over the Barbican residence part. I, that, that's been a real step forward. We've got a great manager there. And so we will go on supporting and investing in Barbican and the whole Barbican estate, whether it's the residential or whether it's the arts centre. So the Corporation is totally committed to the future of the preservation of the Barbican.

JW: Thank you, Chris. Can I take the next question? I think it was Randall actually. You had the next question.

Resident: Thank you. Randall Anderson, co-chair of the Barbican Association. My question is about code of construction and deconstruction. So, Peter. My understanding is that you're considering a review of the code. And I think there are a couple things that it would be important to look at as part of that review. You may know that, well, you must know that one golden lane has been a bit of a nightmare for the residents. The, sorry. The problem is that one golden lane will be followed fairly immediately by 44 Beach Street. And that will be followed fairly immediately by 48 Chiswell Street. And then one Silk Street. So, this small area of the City with a lot of residents is going to have construction and deconstruction happening for a decade. And the code of construction and deconstruction simply does not seem to provide your noise control people or others with sufficient tools to address the problem. And it seems to me there are a couple things you might wish to consider. And I'm wondering if you would wish to consider them.

One is no Saturday working in residential areas. The second is mandatory respite provision for the affected residents. One golden Lane eventually did provide that. And that has been very helpful to the people most badly affected. But it's not a requirement. And who knows if the developer at 44 or 48 would ever provide it. So, it seems to me it needs to have some teeth. Thank you.

JW: Thank you. I'm going to pass it to Peter. Thank you. Thanks. Peter.

PD: This crosses over sort of two areas. The planning part and the environmental health part. In particular, I can talk to the environmental health part, which is to do with the enforcement and the enforcement of the conditions. The actual code itself, as I understand

it, is created and part of the planning framework. And that can be looked at. Now, I mean, what I absolutely sort of sympathize with is the issues in that particular location. Because most of the major construction taking place in the city at the moment is in the eastern cluster where there are very few residents.

There are few. But there are few. We have a particular issue in that area around Golden Lane where a number of significant developments are going up. And because it is an area of population concentration, it has that impact. It has a very significant impact.

Direct impact as it's happening outside of the rules and regulations can obviously be reported. And the phone number is in the guide that you've all been given. I know that in that particular case, you mentioned that respite has been provided. And as I understand it, very effectively enforced. And so what we are trying to do in relation to environmental health is make sure that those conditions are enforced very rigidly.

And I know that in that particular case, that has led to significant change on the part of the developer. And that is what we would seek to continue to do in relation to any significant development which impacts on a concentration of residents in the way that that one does and the way that the future ones may do. And that is the approach from environmental services. And as I understand it, since those changes were made and the respite was provided and the enforcement has been focused on that area, things have been a lot better for residents. And that is what we will seek to achieve, you know, going forward for new developments.

JW: Thank you, Peter. I've got a question. I've got two, actually. So if we could have the mic to that gentleman there, and then the lady at the front here afterwards. David.

Resident: Thank you. Can you hear me okay, everybody? yes. Good evening. I know. Put my glasses on one second. So I'm a long-term resident of the City of London, just opposite Smithfield Market. For anyone who was here at the last meeting, I'd like to give a quick update and ask a pertinent question. I've only got one paragraph to say, other than that there seems to be... There's a mention of a noise issue in the... You said we did. I don't know if that's the issue that I brought up. But anyway, the pavement outside our property has been dug up for services for the last few weeks. And a pedestrian diversion was put alongside the curb, which meant that none of the Smithfield Market heavy goods vehicles were parking or unloading alongside our residential building. Smithfield Market has been operating as normal the entire time, other than this. It has been incredibly peaceful, unstressful for us and our neighbours. We've really enjoyed this. Which has only struck me that this is how it should be. Any City resident deserves a basic peace. What can be done to address the issue of heavy goods vehicles serving Smithfield market using the double yellow lines, which have historically had curb markings that do not allow loading, using these double yellow lines every market day, all night.

JW: Thank you. Thank you. Over to Shravan. Thank you. Thank you.

SJ: So two bits to this. I mean, it is a working market. And it's a centre of business and trade historically. And we need to be mindful that that centre of food distribution needs to function effectively for London, actually. And so there is an important piece around allowing vehicles to move around that area safely and with residents in mind.

And I think that's the piece you're getting at, is there's got to be a balance to make sure the market can function and residents can enjoy their habitation. On the specific piece around the double yellow lines and how that's being used, can we come back to you on that specific point? it's a point I don't have right now, but the director of the environment can revert on that. Okay? thank you.

Resident: Thank you. I live with my son in Pemberton house, and he's a wheelchair user. The exit for the wheelchair is out into Gunpowder Square. And the bike companies, Lime and Forest, have permission, I understand, to park their bikes in Gunpowder Square. And quite often, they park in front of the doorway. And he can't get in if he's out or out if he's in. He can't physically move those bicycles. Is there anything that can be done about that?

JW: Thank you for the question. I'm going to hand to you, Shravan.

SJ: Thank you. Thank you. Thanks for that. I think most of the square mile probably suffers. Yeah. I think this is a City-wide problem. And there are two pieces to it. One is that we have to provide a number of safe parking bays for the quantum of these rental e-bikes within the square mile. That's a challenge in itself because we are a congested, dense urban environment. We have to see where that balance can best be met.

That's one aspect of it. The other aspect is the behavior of cyclists in parking those vehicles. And what the service companies do to enforce the rules that they've set around that. The relationship that we have with the bike providers, Lime and Forest in the square mile, is we have a voluntary contract with them that enables them to operate in the City. We don't have enforcement rights over their vehicles.

I've met several people from Lime. I've met their global CEO as well. And we've been very firm about the fact that the cycle parking is not in compliance with the rules they set themselves. They have brought in new technology that allows a much closer geomarker that means that the bike won't actually lock if it's not within a safe parking space. Sometimes works, sometimes doesn't work. I'll give you that.

The other piece they've done is they've committed to 400 extra people on the ground across London to remove bikes that are badly parked. That's coming to force. The City also did a blitz of our own a few months ago where we removed bicycles and then charged for their release to the service companies. And we take this very seriously.

On the Gunpowder Square piece specifically, we'll make sure we come back and get some enforcement teams out there to make sure that accessibility should never be compromised for that sort of provision. What I will say is this particular week is an anomaly with the train strikes, but it does go to show that these are extremely popular modes of transport. And we need to make sure that there's a good balance achieved between people who want to cycle safely and within the bounds of responsibility and those that live and reside and enjoy our pavements and streets.

JW: Thank you, Shravan. I've got... Now, I prefer to keep it to residence if we can, just simply... Okay, I'll let you take this one.

Beth Coombs (BC): Thank you. Hello, my name's Beth Coombs. I'm one of the current common councillors in this ward. I'm one of the current common councillors in this ward. I was elected in March, as Mr Griffiths so kindly pointed out. Before I was elected, I felt that residents were pretty much ignored by the corporation. And I'm not sure my view has changed that much now I have been elected. I've heard several comments within Common Council meetings and elsewhere that the corporation is focused on big business. And no offence, but that's the way it is and residents come second. I'd like to know what plans are in place, please, to change that, redress the balance beyond just giving us a card that will give us discounts.

JW: Thank you.

CH: Well, Beth, I don't agree with your assertion. I do not believe it is just about big business.

Yes, we are predominantly a business City. I'm not going to deny that. With 9,000 residents and 640,000 daily business commuters, it's inevitable that we are predominantly a business City. But I made clear all along, since I've been policy chairman, that we are one City. We do not want to cause these divisions between residents and businesses.

We want to make sure that our residents are looked after. If we didn't care about our residents, we wouldn't have City Question Time. We wouldn't give you the opportunity to tell us what you want and then for us to try and respond to it. We wouldn't bother with "You Said We Did". You may make mockery of the City resident card. I think residents will enjoy that. I think they will think it's something very positive that their Corporation has done for them. And frankly, we will go on continuing to consider any suggestions that residents want to bring to us to improve their quality of life in the City.

These are not shallow words. These are not the words just to politically political words. They are sincere. And the majority of members, I believe, of the Court of Common Council share them. We are one City and we won't allow people to divide us. Thank you.

JW: I've got the lady here. I'm not taking questions from councillors. I can't.

Resident: Alison Parry, thank you very much for that. You said earlier about looking at dividing, how you divide up how the areas for people to vote. So I immediately thought of California and perhaps you could do some great stuff on Instagram. I'm following in Newsom's way and divide it fairly. But it also made me think, and especially the other things, two things. One is, are we still under some ancient law that we're voting as we're voting? what date was that law? how should it be updated with people getting franchised when they were under 30 or women getting franchised? One thing.

And the other thing is, so when you're talking about how important businesses are, how we need money for the Barbican Centre. Again, going back to California and what it's thinking about is, should we not be looking at keeping more of the money that we are making in the City and not sending it all to Westminster? and there must be some way, especially with the cultural thing, that you can work that. Over to you. Instagram, Newsom, follow California.

JW: Thank you. Chris.

CH: Look, I don't know the exact date that the franchise came in, but it's been around for a few years now. And there are many ways you can cut the franchise. And when we talk about giving money to government, we are required. We are under legislative responsibility to give a certain proportion of rates. Yeah, well, I can't change the government for you. You'll have to do that at the next general election. But what I can do is to say that we do want genuinely to look at the franchise.

We do think it should be considered. We do think, you know, how people vote, who votes. One of the things, for example, which has been put to me many times now, is about having rolling registration. Rolling registration, which would keep our ward lists up together in a quicker way. But we can't do it because to get rolling registration, it's a parliamentary matter.

So, so much that people think, oh, it's the Corporation. The Corporation can put this right. Actually, beyond our legal ability to do so, we have to go to parliament to do it. So, when we talk about, well, okay, we need money for the Barbican. Let's just keep more of it, take more of it and plow it in.

You will understand that the Corporation is a big entity. We have many, many competing priorities. There's never, like any government will tell you, enough money to do everything you want to do at the time you want to do it. But we are committed to improving things for our residents, as you've seen. And we will go on doing that.

And for the Barbican, I just want to find outside external investors who will come in and put money into it. And we believe they will.

JW: Thank you, Chris. We haven't got a lot of time left. So, I'm going to come to Marion for a question. Can I take a couple more? one at the back and one here. And I'm afraid that's all we're going to have time for. If I could ask people to keep it really brief and get straight to the question. Thank you.

Resident: Thank you. And just to clarify, I'm here as a resident. Thank you. Competing issues. The government wants to see more alfresco dining. And the City wants to see more Destination City. However, where does that leave the residents in terms of protection for their residential amenity and noise issues? and how is the City of London going to balance those competing issues? Thank you.

JW: Thank you, Shravan. And, well, Peter and probably Peter. Yeah, sorry.

PD: I can speak to the licensing and hospitality part of this. And you and I are both former chairs of the licensing committee. We've always, I think, performed pretty well in terms of trying to strike that balance.

There is a statutory process that we go through. If a particular licensed premises wants to increase its hours of operation, for instance. If it has regular problems that are addressed to the licensing committee by the police and the licensing officers. There are statutory ways in which we can intervene. We can intervene to prevent pubs, bars, hotels having their bars open past particular hours, for instance.

In extreme circumstances, we can have their license revoked. In all circumstances, my suggestion to residents is that particularly if you're talking about new premises or you're talking about existing premises that are looking to expand their operations or increase their hours, is to look out in your area, we publish, there's a statutory requirement in relation to who is notified when there's a license change. We have to fit within national government legislation as to who is notified and who isn't on that. But we do publish every license application on the corporation website. You can set up alerts to be informed of any new licenses or changes to licensed premises in your area.

You can make representations as residents in relation to any change to a license or indeed in relation to any problems with an existing licensed premises or a new license. And so I'd encourage people to engage in that process so that we can try to strike the right balance as a licensing authority between it being a vibrant place where people want to come and live and work and play and visit as a tourist, but also where residents can rightly have a right to peace and quiet at the right time.

JW: Thank you, Peter. So I saw an arm at the back and then I know there's Geoff here in the front. So if we go to the back first and then to Geoff. And those are the last questions, I'm afraid, because we have now run out of time. We've got three minutes.

Resident: Thank you. My name's Mary Durcan and I'm a Barbican resident. And it's a question about the Barbican. Barbican residents recently received an instruction from the BEO via the communal email. It was individual residents, but the instructions were e-scooters and e-bikes are not permitted inside flats or communal areas on the estate. That's pretty much covers everywhere. They're not to be charged or stored indoors. And we are not allowed to bring or store them in lifts, corridors or stairwells.

And we can use external bike storage areas where available. Unfortunately, no electricity is available in such areas to charge batteries. And there are no secure areas for leaving bikes

whilst on charge. It would be interesting to know how long an expensive bike would remain in such an area before being stolen.

JW: Could I ask you to come to the conclusion, Mary, because we've got literally one minute left. Yes. Thank you. Thank you. Just want to get one more question in. That's why.

Resident: Thank you. There's been no discussion or consultation on this matter, just an instruction, the implications of which have not been thought through. So I've got three brief questions. Does this edict correspond with the London Fire Brigade's advice? does this instruction also apply to electric wheelchairs? And what proposals does the BEO have to ensure compliance with these instructions? Thank you.

JW: Thank you. Can I make a suggestion before you answer? because we did offer one more question. So I'm going to take the other question so that the person it's for can start thinking about it, because we now have officially run out of time. Thank you for the question at the back. Over to you.

Resident: Thank you. Geoff Hennessey to Frobisher House Barbican. A question about Golden Lane. The block of flats at the top of Golden Lane, which must have been completed about two years ago, still seem to be unoccupied. What's happening?

JW: Thank you. So that's to Helen. So, Shravan, if you want to briefly answer. And then Helen. Thank you.

SJ: Mary, thanks for that question. And it's actually a health and safety piece. There have been a number of fires with retrofitted electric bicycles, sort of homemade electric scooters. And it's basically a directive that's been driven on a health and safety ground that we don't want these stored indoors. It's also got a wider issue. You know, a lot of people say, well, you've got loads of empty bike spaces in building car parks. Why don't you use that to store these Lime bikes? It's because of these fire safety hazards that we can't do that. The only way to do it indoors safely is by building a Faraday box. And that could be capital intensive. So that's the issue right now. There are solutions being looked at. But the current directive is as it stands. And that's the reason why it's a health and safety piece.

JW: Thank you. Over to Helen.

HF: Yeah, thank you for the question, Geoff. We're talking about Black Raven Court here, which is on the edge of the Golden Lane estate. And I have to say that we are all extremely disappointed that Black Raven Court has not been occupied before now. But it is for reasons that have been fundamentally out of the control of the City of London. The developer, unfortunately, went out of business. And they went out of business at a time when a significant problem was identified with some of the materials that had been used in the building, which has got to be rectified before residents can move in there, or at least have a plan to be able to do that in a way that doesn't impact on residents as they're living in there.

There are some other difficulties in that. It also requires building standards registration. But until we've had a number of assurances from other places, we can't submit for the building registration. So all of this is in train. It's taken a long time to get us to the point that we're at.

But we are relatively confident now that we will be able to occupy Black Raven Court, not this month, maybe by the end of October. But please be assured, we are all incredibly frustrated by this. The City is losing much needed income into our housing revenue account. We have to occupy it as soon as possible.

JW: Thank you, Helen. And before I hand over to Chris for some closing remarks, because we have now come to the end of our questions, but there will be an opportunity to have a

chat after this. I'm just going to hand to Jason because nobody asked a question. I think it would be only fair to give Jason at least one minute. Thank you.

JG: Thank you very much, Jacqui And this is my first City Question Time, having taken over as Deputy Chair of the City Police a few months ago.

It's really great to be here and to be joined by Commander Khan and other colleagues from the City of London Police. And they'll be here to answer any questions that you've got at the end. I just wanted to reassure you that we are aware of the issues around crime, in particular theft in the City. And we're working very closely with commander Khan and the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner Betts on addressing that and finding ways where we can support. You have noticed Operation Swipe, a concerted effort to really address issues such as mobile phone theft.

But one of the things that I particularly wanted to make you aware of, just in case you hadn't heard, is that we have every four or five years that there is an inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. And we recently had those results. And I'm very pleased to be able to report that the police got a very rare ranking of outstanding for how it records crime, one of the categories on which it's judged, and was rated good for both investigating crime and responding to the public. And I can say that the City has maintained its record of attending on 100% of occasions where an incident is raised. So I just wanted to, hopefully on your behalf, to thank the City police for all that they do and for all their efforts in keeping our streets safe.

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much.

JW: Over to you, Chris.

CH: Richly deserved round of applause for our brilliant City of London Police. Look, thank you very much, Jacqui, first of all, for chairing the meeting so fairly and expertly. Thank you to all my fellow panel chairs, deputy chairs, for answering the questions. Thank you, Jason, that you got a chance to speak as well. So that was good. Thank you, though, most particularly.

All of you our residents for your questions and your contributions. We really value them, and that's why we keep doing these events. I hope you'll mingle, enjoy some refreshments, and visit our stalls outside. The library stall is open at the back, ready for you to register and receive your City Living Resident card. And I do look forward to seeing and hearing your feedback on the card and how we can continue to improve and expand it.

So just to say that our next City Question Time for your diaries will be at the Guildhall on the 15th of December, 1-5, 15th of December, and as I've done once or twice at Christmas time, as it's our sort of Christmas get-together, I'll try and turn it into a bit of a party and see whether we can't get some rather more generous refreshments for the festive tide. But thank you all very much for coming and safe journey home. Thank you.