

MEETING RECORD

Furzedown Ward

Safer Neighbourhood Panel

Meeting minutes | Tuesday 15 September 2026 | St Alban's Church

Present

Police Inspector Alistair MacPherson, Sergeant Toan Chung, PC Orla Conlan, PC Walid Mechkour, PCSO Nicholas Lester

Panel members / public Stacey Smith (Chair), Jonas Acetben, Hanya Anderson, Michael Blair (Wandsworth Community Safety), Sue Clarke (vice-chair), Deborah Clay, Garfield Edwards, John English, John Farebrother, Rosanna Ferrigato, Melissa Foo, Karen Franco, Trevor Hutton, Amina Khatib, Ibrahim Khatib, Simon Kewer, Alexandra Lupano, Daphne Matthews, Marc Richeux (secretary), Omaira Sanchez, Marta Zielinska.

Apologies PC David Aldridge, Niall Barrett, Barbara Clay, Leonie Cooper (councillor), Judi Gasser (councillor), Samantha Lewis (councillor), Lesley Morton.

Police team update

The new police team introduced themselves and reported on what they had chiefly been engaged on in recent months. They had been executing warrants targeting known offenders, taking part in drug raid operations and using facial recognition technology in the area, arresting wanted criminals as a result.

Priorities: questions and answers

1. Theft from and of motor vehicles

- Statistics showed a downturn in robbery
- ANPR operations had been targeting stolen vehicles
- A Lithuanian gang had been apprehended who had been stealing cars on Pretoria Road.
- There had been more high visibility patrols and the team had dropped advice leaflets at know hot spots.
- The theft of VW badges (and some other makes of vehicles) were responsible for a high number of the current thefts. Thieves removed the sensors contained behind the badges to sell on to unscrupulous dealers. In response to a question about follow-up (ie chasing the onward sale of the sensors), the police said that would be taken up by a different team who were looking at this on a wider basis.
- One resident reported that a neighbour had had 3 cars stolen in 1 year, even though they had trackers. It was questioned whether trackers were really of use. Police said that criminals were aware of where trackers were placed and would remove them. The advice was that air tags were better, as they could be hidden anywhere in the vehicle. MB advised that using manual locks was also a good deterrent to would-be thieves.

2. Robbery

- Incidents of robbery have been relatively low of late.
- High visibility patrols were targeting problem areas, along with proactive targeting of known nominals.
- Edencourt Road, Thrale Road and Links Road were areas of particular concern. Street robbery (with a knife or the threat of a knife) was the most prevalent form of robbery.
- Sergeant Chung reported that he would be getting more funding to continue targeting robbery.
- The issue of shoplifting from local businesses was raised – in particular, there was one incident at Williams Newsagent when the perpetrator was identified by the community, evidence recorded and reported to the police. However, no action was taken (or there was no feedback to anybody about it).
- There was a comment that more foot patrols were needed, or at least for police cars to stop for a reasonable time in hotspot areas. Police acknowledged that foot patrols had been reduced and that there was a greater need for them to be able to reach a number of areas, so reducing time in Furzedown. They would look to see if they could at least stop in the car for longer periods.
- There was a question about response times, and whether statistics were available. The police and council officers said that the data wasn't available at ward level, but that there was supposed to be a 72 hour response time for non-urgent cases. Due to capacity, some low-level queries would not get a response.
- Another question was whether officers could be on the local Whatsapp groups and therefore aware of crime as it was being reported by neighbours. The police said this wasn't possible, but that the main way to report crime (other than 999 calls) was via MetEngage. PCSO Nick Lester could add people on to MetEngage with their email addresses and would liaise with Trevor Hutton to enable this. The police advised that people should follow up with the SNT if a response didn't happen within 72 hours.

3. Anti Social Behaviour

- Police were aware of problem areas and were aiming to target those hotspots. Warnings were generally being given. Main issues were disruptive behaviour at night, drunken behaviour, loud parties.
- Residents reported issues around Garrick House (Fayland Avenue), especially the stairwells (drugtaking and general nuisance) and on Penwortham Road from a particular house affecting the neighbouring one with drug use, loud and abusive behaviour.
- MB reported that the council were using cameras on the Rec. where ASB has been reported (people breaking into the courts etc).
- Residents were concerned at the lack of police response following a break-in at (former) Goldfinch school (now used by Julians). Youths had broken in and were filming themselves on the premises and encouraging others to join them. Although the police did come, they weren't able to find anyone on the premises, but the youths returned later. Residents kept contacting the police and forwarded evidence online, but there was no response at the time, or afterwards. The community eventually sorted the matter out with the help of the school caretaker. SNT acknowledged that this wasn't an acceptable response from the police and said that residents ought to have been given an Axon link (this was eventually given, but not at the time). It was the

burglary team who had been deployed in this instance, not the SNT, which meant that the local police team were unaware of the break-ins, revealing a lack of communication between teams (which they aimed to improve).

- Some residents were unsure when to call 999 or 101 – police and MB stressed that if a crime is happening, even if you are unsure, call 999 – the operator would decide on the appropriate response.
- Shops on Southcroft corner had complained about abusive person putting off customers along that parade of shops for a whole week. Police had been contacted but nothing had happened. There were further reports of people with mental health problems in the local area and questions about how the police were dealing with them. SNT reported that they were restricted in what they could do: they followed mental health warrants and worked alongside the mental health team in executing them. MB stressed the multi-disciplinary approach necessary for such cases.

4. Violence against women and girls

- Orla is a trained officer for VAWG. She had undertaken walk and talk sessions and other advisory events. She felt that the statistical reduction in VAWG incidents was likely due to greater awareness among women and girls. [There was a query about whether the reduction was real – ie was there underreporting – and whether the drop was statistically significant]
- Preventative measures include safe spaces (MP initiative) and safe havens (council initiative), giving out of personal alarms and ‘Ask Angela’ initiative for pubs and clubs. The police check that staff do follow the expected response for ‘Ask Angela’ and reported that locally, pubs and clubs are well trained.
- It was felt by residents that more safe spaces were needed in Furzedown. MB would look into this.

5. Any Other Business

- There was a question about whether repeat offenders would show up on the statistics. Police said they were aware of repeat offenders in their area, but that they wouldn’t show up on the statistics.
- Stacey introduced the new Furzedown Safer Neighbourhood Panel website, which has all the information relating to crime on Furzedown ward and the relevant contact details for police and other agencies. Also, there is a section specifically for young people. The web address is <https://furzedownsnp.org>. Residents were encouraged to share feedback on the website so that it can meet the needs of the local community.

6. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 12 January 2027, 7pm | St Alban’s Church, Pretoria Road