

Police update for CoL Homelessness and Rough sleeping Sub-Committee

February 2026.

Chief Inspector Nikki Gander

Overview of Crime, ASB, enforcement and Op Luscombe

Below overview of the ASB recorded that relates to rough sleeping or begging. Op Luscombe has not been running routinely since April 2025 due to changes in the way welfare support is offered and adjustments to what conditions we stipulate. (Based on learning from adult safeguarding review and partner advice). This required new tickets to be printed to align to changes and training to frontline officers and engagement with partners. Training now being delivered and Op Luscombe being re-launched.

1st of October to 31st December 2025

- 43 ASB/begging related occurrences.
- 46.2% decrease in begging/homeless related ASB between Q3 and Q2, (80 occurrences).
- Highest number of Homesless/Begging ASB was Crutched Friars, 18%
- The peak hour for Homesless/Begging ASB was between 19:00-19:59, 18%
- No incidents have been tagged under OP Luscombe on Power Bi for past 3 months- latest occurrences tagged as 'OP Luscombe' were in September 2025

A total of 42 ASB CPW/CPN's were issued in Q3, 12 were related to Homeless/Begging ASB.

Examples of behaviour being addressed. (Some linked to issues described in Appendix A)

Urination, drug use, defecation, begging, trespassing, discarding waste food, blocking exits/access, screaming/shouting, causing disturbance, smoking drugs, bedding/clothing causing obstruction, uncontrolled dogs, dog mess, gaining access to private communal areas, setting fires, sleeping in lifts of residential buildings. Obstruction of highway. Creating public health risk.

Year One Summary of Joint Working Group - High-Impact Rough Sleeping Sites

Purpose

To provide Members with a concise overview of the first year of the City of London Joint Working Group (JWG), established to manage the risks and harms associated with high-impact rough-sleeping sites.

Background

In May 2024, City Community MARAC referrals highlighted increasing concerns at rough-sleeping encampments at Peninsular House and Castle Baynard Street. Initial multi-agency responses achieved short-term improvements but were not sustainable.

In September 2024, a serious knife-related assault at Castle Baynard Street escalated concerns. Although effective post-incident partnership working enabled all individuals to be placed into temporary accommodation, the incident exposed gaps in prevention, shared risk management and long-term solutions.

Key Issues Identified

- Lack of policy or procedure for managing high-impact rough-sleeping sites
- Limited shared intelligence and collective risk awareness
- Links to serious violence, drug use, ASB and safeguarding risks
- Growing public health and environmental concerns (waste, fire risk, pests)

- Increasing fear of crime and impact on residents, workers, businesses and visitors
- Recognition that policing alone could not deliver sustainable outcomes

Partnership Response

A problem-solving, prevention-focused approach was adopted, aligned with the Home Office Hot Spot Action Fund.

A joint protocol, “Tackling the Negative Impacts of Rough Sleeping”, was developed, establishing:

- A welfare-first approach with proportionate enforcement
- Risk-based, case-by-case decision-making
- The requirement for a dedicated ASB (Rough Sleeping) Co-ordinator role

Joint Working Group

The City of London Joint Working Group was established in December 2024 to provide a dedicated multi-agency forum.

Principle: To work in partnership to make the City a safe place to live, work and visit, for everyone.

Activity and Enablers

In its first year, the JWG has delivered:

- Monthly multi-agency intelligence and risk meetings
- Co-ordinated action days (policing, outreach, cleansing, enforcement)
- Clear lead-agency ownership of risk/issues with appropriate partner support
- Joint Police and Outreach engagement to improve accommodation take-up
- Use of legal powers where necessary and proportionate
- A shared Teams channel enabling real-time intelligence sharing and rapid response

Impact After One Year

The Joint Working Group has:

- Embedded a consistent, preventative partnership model
- Improved safeguarding and collective risk management
- Reduced ineffective repeat interventions
- Supported more sustainable accommodation outcomes
- Reduced pressure on police and partner services
- Increased reassurance for residents, workers and businesses

Conclusion

After one year, the Joint Working Group represents a significant shift from reactive enforcement to structured, intelligence-led partnership problem solving, delivering safer outcomes for individuals, communities and the City. Full Review being undertaken by Nikki Gander & Phil Connor Jan 2026.

NB An extended report will be available once review completed.

Appendix A.

Joint Working Group – Compressed Examples of Impact

Location	Issue Identified	Partnership Action	Outcome / Impact
Peninsular House	7 tents (Apr), 6 tents (Oct). Significant public health risks: blocked drains, pooled urine, misuse of bins, accumulated waste.	Joint site assessment and clearance. Environmental health and cleansing activity.	Public health risks removed; site stabilised and environmental conditions improved.
Steelyard Passage	3 tents. Escalating violence impacting businesses.	Early joint Police/Outreach intervention. Shared intelligence and coordinated visits.	Arrests made; escalation prevented; improved safety and business reassurance.
Baynard House	Rough sleeper blocking a fire escape route.	Joint Police and Outreach engagement and relocation.	Immediate fire safety risk removed; individuals supported into accommodation.
Rose Alley	3 tents obstructing access for Polo Bar & KFC. Two vulnerable rough sleepers and a known offender. Health and safety concerns.	CPW/CPN issued. Joint outreach support. Enforcement against offender. Support for gated access.	Vulnerable couple rehoused into previously cuckooed flat (LBTH). Offender summonsed for RHO breach. Long-term access control enabled.
St Dunstan's Court	Vulnerable rough sleeper with complex mental health needs. Persistent ASB and urination affecting residents.	Joint MARAC referral and multi-agency safeguarding plan.	Coordinated care approach established; risk and harm better managed. Reassurance for residents.
White Lion Hill Subway	Tents obstructing subway, forcing 300 students daily to cross road.	Evidence-led welfare engagement, legal advice, 28-day notices served. CPW/CPN planned.	Safety risk addressed proportionately; prevention plan in place to avoid recurrence.
Golden Lane Estate	Rough sleeper accessing communal areas, smoking crack cocaine, aggressive behaviour. Fire set in lift.	Parkguard night patrols. Police response and identification of suspect.	Serious risk managed; offender identified and arrested for arson; resident safety restored.
Castle Baynard Street	23 tents (Apr), 13 tents (Oct). Fire hazards and accumulated waste.	Coordinated clearance of pallets, tents, bedding and rubbish.	Reduced risk of fire and disorder; improved environmental safety.
Blackfriars Underpass	Rough sleeper with large dogs, not on leads. Human and dog waste impacting businesses and community.	CPW/CPN issued. Criminal Behaviour Order obtained.	Individual banned from the City; sustained reduction in impact at site.

Summary of mapped outcomes of selection of examples (see Appendix A below for detail)

Safeguarding

- Multi-agency care planning (St Dunstan's Court)
- Accommodation outcomes achieved through engagement (Baynard House, Rose Alley)
- Prevention of serious harm and escalation

Crime & ASB Reduction

- Arrests and enforcement enabled through shared intelligence (Steelyard Passage, Golden Lane Estate)
- Use of CPW/CPN and CBOs where proportionate (Rose Alley, Blackfriars)

Public Health & Safety

- Removal of fire hazards and environmental risks (Peninsular House, Castle Baynard Street)
- Protection of vulnerable road users and students (White Lion Hill Subway)

Community & Business Impact

- Restored access to public routes and business areas (Rose Alley, White Lion Hill)
- Increased reassurance for residents and businesses through visible joint action

Assurance

These examples demonstrate early intervention, proportionate enforcement, safeguarding, and sustained partnership problem solving, reducing crime, ASB, public health risk and demand on services.