

# City of London Police

## Response to issues relating to Rough Sleeping

Chief Inspector Nikki Gander



## 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.

## Joint Protocol adopted

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 formed

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.*



A trusted and inclusive police service, keeping the City of London safe and transforming the national policing response to fraud, economic and cyber crime

# Formation of Joint Working Group



**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

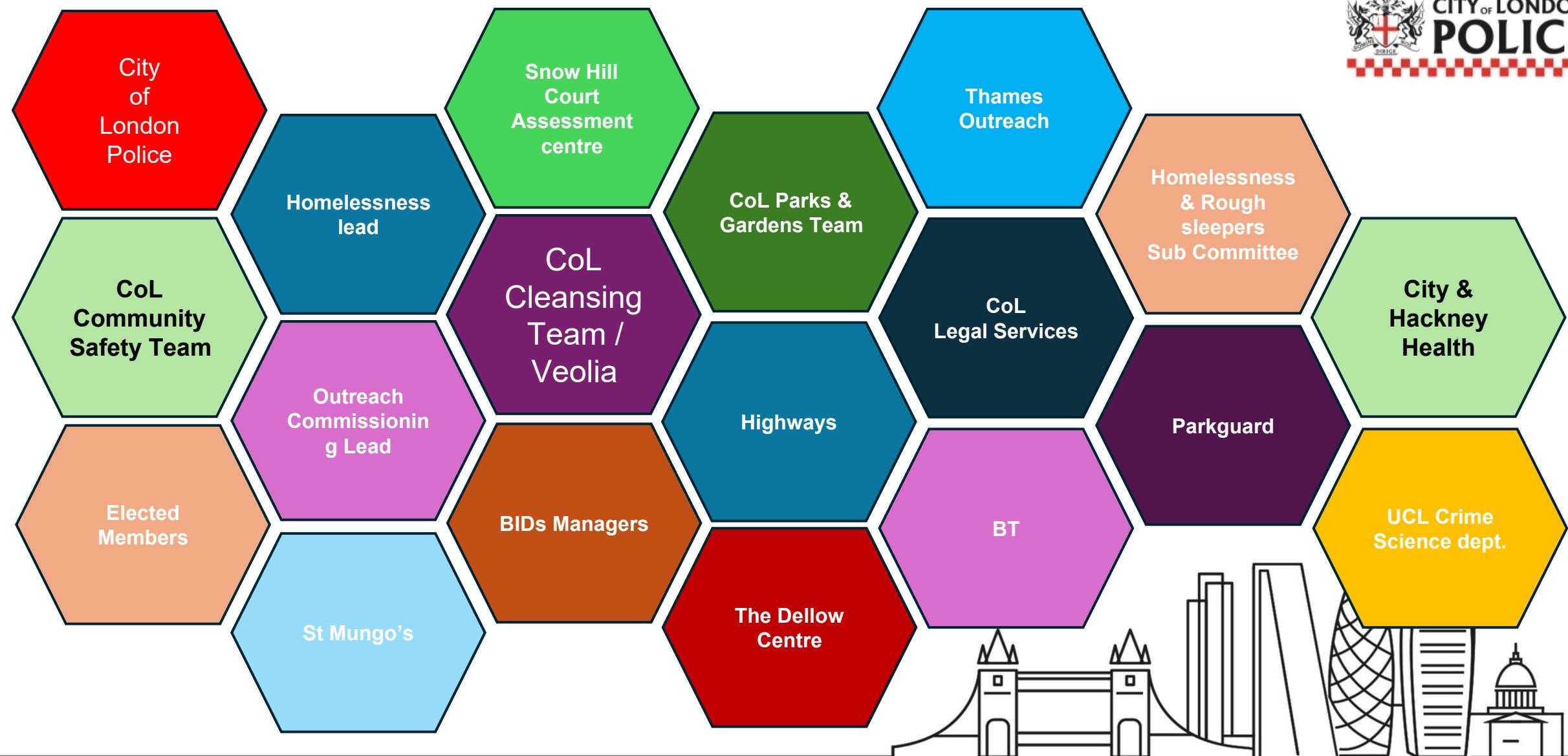
**Impact After One Year** - The Joint Working Group has:

- 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



A trusted and inclusive police service, keeping the City of London safe and transforming the national policing response to fraud, economic and cyber crime

# Membership / Partners / Key stakeholders



A trusted and inclusive police service, keeping the City of London safe and transforming the national policing response to fraud, economic and cyber crime



A trusted and inclusive police service, keeping the City of London safe and transforming the national policing response to fraud, economic and cyber crime



Castle Baynard Street  
Tunnel



White Lion Hill  
Subway



Peninsular House walkway



A trusted and inclusive police service, keeping the City of London safe and transforming the national policing response to fraud, economic and cyber crime



# Success stories

## Peninsula House

April 7 tents  
October 6 tents

Cleared risk to public health, blocked drains, urination pools, use of bins, removed waste

## Steelyard Passage

3 tents, escalating violence, early intervention, joint visits, arrests due to shared awareness, support for businesses,

## Rose Alley

Polo Bar & KFC unable to use alley, obstructed by 3 tents, 2 vulnerable RS's and known offender, health risks. CPW/CPN issued, joint Outreach, couple supported to re-inhabit cuckooed flat in LBTH, Offender summonsed for breach of a court order, planning permission support for gate to restrict access

## Golden Lane Est

RS gaining entry to communal areas, smoking crack, set fire to lift, aggressive if challenged. Parkguard tasked with night patrols, located RS, Police called and Officer ID male for arson

## Castle Baynard Street

April 23 tents  
October 13 Tents  
Removal of pallets, abandoned tents, mattresses, bedding, Rubbish, fire hazards.

## Baynard House

RS blocking fire escape route. Joint approach from Police/Outreach to relocate and due to engagement, move to accommodation



## St Dunstan's Court.

Vulnerable RS at this & other sites, complex MH needs, significant ASB/health issue for residents due to urination. Joint MARAC referral for multi agency care plan to safeguard.

## White Lion Hill subway

Obstruction by tents causing 300 students a day to cross road, 4 months of evidence gathering to prove risk and welfare approach and legal advice. 28 day notices served and plan to serve CPW/CPN. Action plan to prevent recurrence

## Blackfriars underpass

RS with large dogs, not on leads, dog/human waste, impact on businesses and local community. CPW/CPN and CBO banned from City.



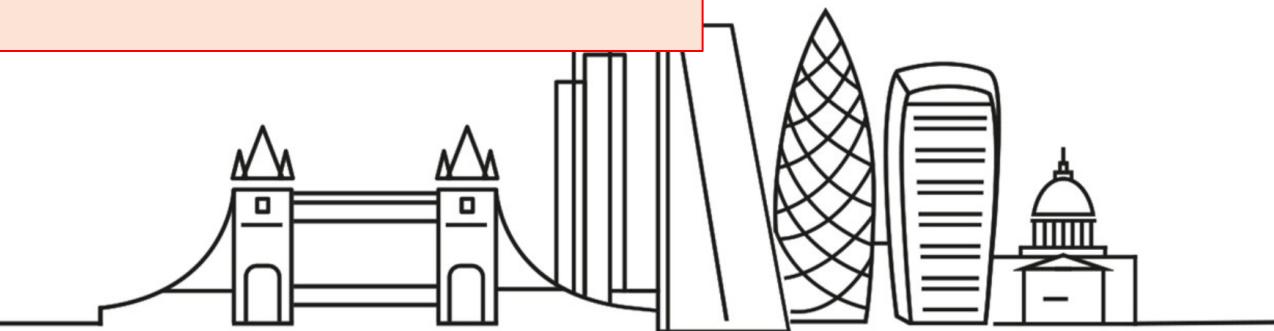
## Conclusion

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.

“Success” in this area is as much about the strength of the partnership and ability to work together closely to tackle difficult and complex problems as it is about statistical outcomes. The confidence and trust between partners, those who sleep on the streets and the local community of residents, workers, businesses is established and positive. We continue work to improve this, but we now have a forum for open and honest discussion, exploration and problem solving.

Given the significant increased risk of serious harm to those who sleep on the streets, its worth pausing to acknowledge what this work may have prevented.



# Next Steps

## Strategic

12-month strategic review  
Review JWG TOR & Membership  
Identify learning & celebrate Success  
Transfer chairship to CoL CST

## Operational

White Lion Hill Subway  
Enforcement options  
Prevention of further tents  
Review process

## Aspirational

Increased Assessment capacity  
City currently has 14 beds

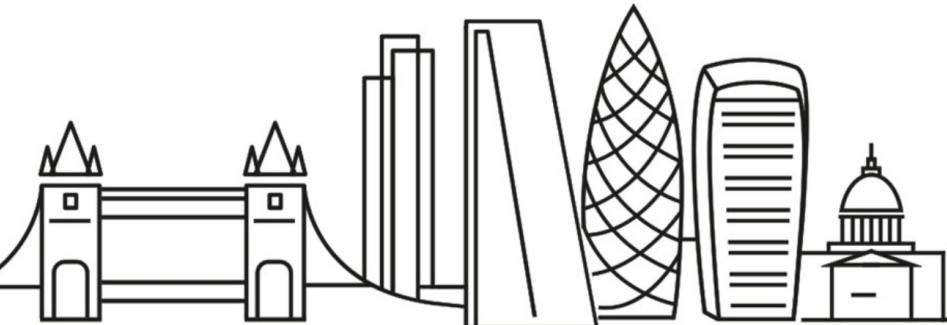
12-month strategic review  
Tackling the effects protocol  
CoLP/CoI Governance (NHPSB)

City Gardens Depot  
Build confidence & Trust  
Evidence gathering  
Environmental options  
Legal options

Rough Sleeper profiling  
Safeguarding & risk understanding  
Identifying exploitation and criminality  
Improve understanding of needs  
Provision of appropriate services

CST Rough sleeping ASB post  
Support permanent post  
Co-located with CoLP

Practical prevention of encampments  
Design out options  
Established protocols  
Shared interactive RS mapping



A trusted and inclusive police service, keeping the City of London safe and transforming the national policing response to fraud, economic and cyber crime

