

Safer Southgate Neighborhood Scheme

On Friday 14th March we held a meeting at the club for the safety of women in the area. This was attended and hosted by the police, a member of Enfield council and a local councillor. We were an audience of around 10 women, members, staff and public where we were given the opportunity to raise our concerns about safety in the roads. As women we should be able to walk round the streets safely and confidently regardless of where we are, what we are wearing and what time it is.

A few points were raised

Men's cafes in Southgate - Several women spoke about the amount of café's with men sitting outside smoking and drinking coffee. While this can be perceived as a cultural thing it was felt that when abroad it did not seem as intimidating as it does on our streets. Why these café's are so popular and their underlying use was discussed, of which the police are aware, without evidence they are at this stage unable to do anything about it.

Street Lights – Since the lighting in the streets has changed to more modern lights it appears there are more dark areas as the light does not spread. They are more like spot lights on the ground. Again the police are aware of this. The police asked where we felt there were more dangerous or risky areas to walk through. Alley ways or side roads that were perhaps not well lit or overgrown with shrubs and asked to be taken there.

Safe space – The police are looking to get shop, restaurant and bar owners to be able to offer a safe space for anyone in distress. This includes the 'looking for Angela' initiative. Anyone in distress should be able to walk into any shop bar or restaurant and say they are looking for Angela. This is a signal they are in distress and need help. Ours staff have already been briefed on this. We also offer a safe space to anyone who comes to our door and once in the building they will be safe and looked after.

Reporting of crime – The police asked that all crimes should be reported, however big or small. If in immediate danger or the crime is being committed at the time, then 999 should be called and police will be sent ASAP. If the crime has happened then this should be reported online or by calling 101 and reported. The more a crime is reported the better. Even if someone else has already reported the same crime, it is still better to report it again and again. By not reporting it looks like we don't have any problems in the area and therefore do not require a police service and the funding goes to other areas. To raise the standard of our area we need to let the police know our problems. This can be done anonymously. They did stress they are happier to receive 10 complaints about one event then only 1 or 2, or even in some cases not at all as we deem it 'not worth it'.

I thank all those that attended to share their concerns about the area and with the hope that we can change things. I am especially proud of our club members and staff member Ella for their positive words about the club. I think the police were pleasantly surprised to hear that we are already practicing the procedures they had come to promote. They liked the club and the space that we offer have agreed to come again and are more than happy to use the club for other events. We will keep you posted on all future events