

Dear West Midlands Police

Recently, once again, when trying to be a good citizen, and report crime in my area I've been belittled, and talked down to. Whilst I have tried to explain exact actions of people who could cause harm to property and life, I've been interrupted, asked a basic set of questions, then been called rude when I've been trying to make my case as to why persons or people may cause harm.

Where I've lived, we've had a murder, a suicide, an arson, and more in the last 6 months. A shop has been closed due to their complicity in allowing antisocial behaviour and drug dealing to take place. Yet, it remains an area used as a dumping ground for homeless people, an area where crime isn't taken seriously, and where the police only really respond when there is a real crisis. I have spent years attempting to discuss issues surrounding crime, drug abuse, dealing gangs and cross boundary issues with you, but they almost always fallen on dead ears. I've offered to even use my expertise as a Planning academic, to explain to you the same issues I wrote about in 2013, that still exist today.

Today's issue was about someone who used a well trodden path from outside to inside of the 'City Centre' (Clean Air Zone), who was clearly agitated, and looking for a fix. He was aggressive to me when I was walking to check on my car, which was damaged whilst I was on holiday and even tried opening the passenger door whilst I was inside the car. He since ended up on the 2nd floor of a block of low rise blocks on Westthorpe Grove, the only way to do so is to either have a key, or be granted access.

It makes me chuckle how the police decided to use this as a point. These are security doors, but badly maintained by Birmingham City Council, with Wates and others using articles to block the magnetic lock themselves. Ironically, if I were to do the same, I would be in breach of my tenancy, and not only evicted, but forced to pay damages to anyone whom's home was placed in danger. This point however was lost on your police that the entrance door, regardless of intention does not provide legitimate access onto the block.

There was a real possibility to damage to property and life in this situation. Whilst I am not aware that the individual broke into any property themselves, his aggressive behaviour, and almost 1 hour on the 2nd floor balcony clearly posed a risk to residents, who should feel protected behind a security door. The reason I called 999 is that there WAS a potential risk to life or property, in a very real circumstance, by an individual who was clearly not in their full capacity, who had acted in a condition which was unpredictable, and posed a risk to our

local community.

At this point, I feel it prudent to bring into conversation the attitude of officers. They may call me rude for interrupting them, and for talking over them, however, the line of questioning was such as not to understand the full situation. This is something I have raised for years, in that context is always important. I say this as an academic, formerly as a consultant. Next, it remains clear that West Midlands Police remains incapable of dealing with victims of crime, and those who have disabilities like myself. And now, as I wasn't able to tell your officer, my personal story.

When I was 19, through reasons of family breakdown, I found myself living in a YMCA. After befriending some people I shouldn't have, I found myself barricaded into my flat one January. After managing to run free, I went to the police station, 300 yards down the road. There, an unenegetic officer told me to lift a phone and report the crime. Which I did.

Because of a football game nearby, 'all officers were on duty'. 7 hours later, when someone finally decided to look into my crime and respond to my call, most of my life was gone. All my important possessions disappeared, and after not being able to stay at my adopted parent's house, I checked into a Travelodge, and attempted to commit suicide.

On the drive home back from the hospital, the police laughed at my 'wimpnesness', and said I was wasting police time. In the meanwhile, I discovered that not only had the remainder of my possessions gone, my important documents, like my Passport was destroyed, laid to waste in my little flat. Upon learning of the people who committed this crime, and being witness to another, the response was to give my details to the person under investigations' solicitor, to the point I was held at knifepoint and forced to leave town for fear of death. This left me homeless twice. First in London, and latterly in Birmingham in 2009.

Since this day, I've never trusted the police to protect me, but I've always hoped that the police would protect those around me. My neighbours, community, and local area. My stress against precious interactions may have made me terse, frightful, and even angry towards police responses, but I've always relied on the police to resolve crime, rather than try to take matters into my own hands. I report crime where I feel it may impact others, and have had time when I have again been a victim of crime down the

line.

Ironically, 7 hours after my 999 call to you today, you sent an ambulance, and a police car towards the person who I reported. There was some confusion as someone else had also reported the same person, mainly because people had been reporting this person for almost 24 hours. Neighbours (and my wife) informed me that this was an incident that started the night before, that was not fully actioned on. Whilst I understand the fact that not everyone's account of an incident is fully accurate, and whilst not all call outs will provide a suspect, I feel that there has been a profuse lack of care and attention provided to us as local residents in St Georges.

If this were to be 200M up the road in the Jewellery Quarter, I'm almost certain that there would have been a more immediate response. I've heard the rhetoric from your teams that there are boundaries, and staff issues, and priorities, but here I'll be frank. Outside of a murder, West Midlands Police doesn't give two hoots about the St Georges area, and even then only a cursory amount.

To that end, I'm sure that West Midlands Police would try to claim that they patrol the St Georges area as much as any other. Neighbours and myself would be the first to claim that this is untrue at best. I teach my students about a book called "How to Lie with Statistics", and I'm sure that a deep dive into data would lead to such lies being uncovered.

In the 1990s, before I moved to Birmingham, Lea Bank was the dumping ground, and the forgotten place of Birmingham. It took Bill Clinton to come to the city to force it to hide its shame, and then finally take action by gentrifying the area. St Georges is the 2020s version of Lea Bank, in no short part because of the inadequate, and ineptitude of people who are paid to serve them. This community is one which is wildly diverse by design, and one which has seen issues since I've lived here, and the response to crimes raised, and the offer of help has been beyond inadequate.

I am always happy to work with West Midland Police, the Mayor of Birmingham, and the Police and Crime Commissioner to help identify issues, and ways to solve them. For years, my attempts to provide his help has been ignored, or brushed aside. I will not take this anymore. I know the issues that affect this community, the reasons why it will again in the 2021 census be one of the most deprived in Birmingham, and in some cases, how to fix it. Though I can not do it alone.

Therefore, I ask that you set up a real working group in St Georges, supported by community leaders, and with full support from the Police, the Mayor, and others to work out the real issues facing our community. To drill down, and remove the fears of crime which make it hard for residents to even get into their cars, and to recognise the impact of a lack of police responses to legitimate issues. I pledge to support this with my expertise, my personal knowledge, and desire to support our community.

Else, we welcome you to the next Birmingham Ghetto. Something that FOX News may well be partially right about.