To the Residents of Pinner Hill Estate and members of the Pinner Hill Residents Association

(via the PHRA website and posted to the residents WhatsApp group ‘Pinner Hill Residents’)

I wish to start by expressing how sorry I am personally to hear about the recent incidents for our neighbours at Windwhistle and Silverwood as well as several other incidents for other residents on the estate. The rise in crime is troubling and our personal safety as well as that of our properties is very important to all of us.

I am writing this note focused on security so that all residents are aware of an ongoing initiative regarding security in our estate and the role and position of the PHRA committee. Although security has always been a high priority topic for all residents and a repeat topic of discussion at our AGM, these recent incidents have made this an important and urgent matter, and I am pleased to see so much collaborative communication and activity on the resident’s WhatsApp group of which a significant subset of residents are members.

It is clear of course, but worth restating, that determined criminals, and other criminals will penetrate or overcome the measures that we can all take individually and collectively and that relying on the police for wholesale crime prevention on the estate cannot be as effective as we would like given the resources available. I am pleased that the police have been responsive in attending when an incident has happened and although we hope for apprehension and punishment of perpetrators, this has not happened and is unlikely to happen consistently. Our experience is not unique unfortunately. As you know there is no substitute for 5 lever locks on all doors, secure windows, effective and monitored alarms, security lighting and, for some, the use of CCTV. Comprehensive insurance arrangements are of course key as well for when these measures do not work.

What I do wish to address is the current active discussion by several residents who wish to arrange and fund a private security presence on the estate as exists in Moor Park and Copsewood estates. Such a service is designed to have a deterrent effect (it can achieve little else as it can only be based in the road and cannot be everywhere at once plus what can the security man actually do or be legally able to do) although I am aware that where they are in place elsewhere, the risk of crime is not eliminated but may, hopefully, be reduced. It is clear that the residents expressing an opinion wish to move swiftly and are willing to commit financially for a pilot scheme lasting 12 months at a cost of, say, £2500 per annum to £5000 per annum per house for either 12 hours or 24 hours per day of coverage by way of a vehicle and security individual present on the estate. There is much debate as to who and how should take this forward including reference to the Pinner Hill Residents Association committee.

I have considered this matter seriously, along with other committee members, and set out our position as follows: -

* The committee exists in support of the Directors of Pinner Hill Estate Limited, of which I am one, and Pinner Hill Residents Association. We collect resident’s mandatory contributions and organise and inter alia manage the pro-active maintenance and repairs where appropriate of the estate’s property and are pleased to do so on a voluntary basis. This takes considerable effort, and I know that residents, for the most part, appreciate this work despite the concerns that are expressed from time to time. This is the documented role of the committee for which we operate a bank account that collects and uses these funds for these strictly bound purposes in accordance with the title covenants.
* The live proposal to arrange the pilot security arrangement is outside of our scope and neither I, my fellow director, nor supporting committee members are willing to expand our terms of reference to include it because (and this list is not exhaustive) (a) the money has to be raised from each household, collected and placed in a separate account with a bank and there are already account issues as previously discussed with the current bankers (b) a contract for the security would need to be entered into which would entail obligations and liabilities (c) house ownership changes may affect collection and viability (d) no doubt some house owners may be dissatisfied with the security service creating additional issues (e) it would be voluntary (f) there will be conflicting ideas as to what form or forms of security are best.
* Our position arises from capacity for the project and the potential ongoing long-term management of such a scheme, expertise and/or experience of managing such arrangements and a belief, from the challenging experience of collecting the estate funds of (currently) only £600 per household. Several residents have expressed to me in private that they will not be participating.
* Of course, we do not want to stand in the way and would support any effort by the active group who are proposing the scheme. Therefore, we suggest that the proactive residents, with the support of all those willing commit the funds, move forward as a group forming a committee to put whatever is feasible and optimal, in their opinion, into place.
* If I can help in any way then, of course, I will.

A few other matters arise: -

1. There are ongoing initiatives about internet connectivity and mobile reception which I will not cover here for brevity.

2. As much as the position is unfair to us the golf club is only obliged to pay what it is required to pay under the covenants in its own lease with the council. There is no contractual position between the golf club and Pinner Hill Estates Limited.

3.Houses who choose not to contribute to a security company or scheme are fully entitled to do so and their decision should be respected. It is not appropriate to publicly criticise or threaten those residents by ‘naming and shaming’ who have made the decision to deal with security in their own fashion on the WhatsApp group or otherwise.

Please note that it would not be sensible to pursue a conversation in the WhatsApp group concerning this note. Matters regarding security should now rest with a specially formed committee. For clarification purposes, of course, residents are entitled to discuss security issues on the WhatsApp Group but as far as PHRA Committee is concerned, this must be managed separately to anything else.

**Richard Blunt - Pinner Hill Residents Association**