

Freddie Downing
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Detective Chief Superintendent James Conway
MPS Commander for Central East

Sent by email

20 March 2024

Dear Detective Chief Superintendent Conway,

I am writing to you regarding the recent crossbow attacks in Tower Hamlets.

As you know, on Monday 4 March, a 44-year-old woman was hit on the head whilst crossing the road by Clifton House in Shoreditch. This was followed by a second attack on Thursday 14 March, when a 20-year-old man was struck in the neck near Arnold Circus, only 200m from the first attack. I understand that the police believe the two attacks are linked.

I also understand that both victims have now been released from hospital. I wish them a full and swift recovery. It is a miracle that their injuries were not more serious in the circumstances.

By chance, on the day of the first attack I was shadowing two excellent police constables on their late shift. This included accompanying them as they responded to the attack by Clifton House. I saw first-hand how the police cleared the area to reduce the chance of further attacks, how the emergency services helped the victim and the arrival of armed officers on the scene to try and find the culprit.

From reports, I understand that although a man was arrested in connection with the attacks on Sunday, he has now been released. I am sure that you and your team are doing all that you can to bring the person responsible to justice. I also appreciate that you are limited in what details you can share about this investigation, which is ongoing.

That said, you will appreciate that local people have been left very frightened by these attacks, with some worrying if the area remains safe, especially as no one has yet been charged.

I would be grateful if you could share with me what communication there has been between the police and people in the local community; what steps the police are taking to reassure the public about safety in the area and what action has been taken to prevent further attacks? Having spoken with local people, I would stress that a stronger and continued police presence in the area would be appreciated until the person responsible is found and charged.

Yours sincerely,

Freddie Downing

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Conservative candidate for City and East