



Mothers fight back against eviction and forced removal



Focus E15 is a mother and baby unit that provides accommodation for young single mothers and mothers-to-be in Newham. However, the Council decided last August to close Focus E15 and move the young women out.

The 29 young, single mothers are not being offered appropriate alternative social housing in the local area, near to their families, friends and support networks. Instead, they are being forced to find their own accommodation in the private sector or else offered accommodation outside of London in places such as Hasting and Birmingham. They are concerned that they will not be able to provide a stable environment for raising their children and will not be able to find work if they do not have a secure home in a place where they know people.

These kinds of evictions are happening all over London. Rather than protecting and defending the people in the community against attacks such as the benefit cap and the bedroom tax, the strategy of politicians is to attract the rich by up-scale developments and finding excuses to move the less fortunate out of their borough. Newham Council is a prime example of such a strategy. Carpenters Estate, next to Stratford Station and the Olympic Park, is another example of the council trying to force evictions so they can sell off this prime piece of land to a wealthy developer. What we are seeing is effectively a form of social cleansing with East London being transformed from a diverse mixture of working class communities into the latest place to make money for investors and developers.

The women from Focus E15, like the residents of Carpenters Estate, are not prepared to accept what is

happening and have organised an effective campaign which has already managed to delay the evictions. The next few months are critical and they will need help and support in order to get what they are asking for: secure social housing in the local area or at least in nearby boroughs. We know there are boarded up council properties, such as on Carpenters Estate itself, which could be turned into decent living accommodation for these young mothers and their children.

What can you do?

Support the weekly street stall outside Wilkinson's on the Broadway in Stratford - Saturdays from 12noon to 2pm.

Get involved in the campaign:

Meetings alternative Saturdays at Ithaca House, 27 Romford Rd, Stratford, E15 4LJ.
Next meetings are January 18th and February 1st from 3-5pm.

Sign the petition:

<http://goo.gl/tY1Ltc>

Phone or email the local politicians:

Terry Paul (Labour councillor) 0208-3737340
terence.paul@newham.gov.uk

Lyn Brown (Labour MP) 0207- 2196999
lynbrown@lynbrown.org.uk

Robin Wales (Newham mayor) 0208-4302000

Contact the campaign:

Facebook: <http://goo.gl/9H9Hv6>

focusmummies@outlook.com

keepusinlondon@yahoo.com

Too many deaths: Transport not traffic



UK cycling deaths hit a 5 year high in 2012 with 122 people killed on the roads. There were 9 deaths in London last year, 6 of them in a horrendous 13 day period in December.

Half of the deaths involved large vehicles (3 lorries, 2 buses and a coach). Cycle paths were also implicated, particularly the blue-painted Cycle Super Highways (CSH) beloved of Mayor Boris. East London has been badly affected, particularly the notorious Bow roundabout. There have been three deaths at the roundabout in the last two years.

Cycle paths are not safer unless they separate cyclists from drivers (through raised/ concrete curbs/ rumble strips). Bikers also need protection at junctions e.g. through 'cyclist-only' traffic lights which give them a head start over drivers. Boris & Transport for London (TfL) are planning a second, 'substantially segregated' CSH North-South through London, from Kings Cross to the Elephant & Castle. All the CSH are to be 'substantially overhauled' - but NOT fully segregated through a combination of better junctions, full and semi-segregation and other measures.

TfL have commissioned tests of different warning systems that are being developed for larger vehicles to protect cyclists. They are based on radar and radio frequency ID (RFID) the technology used on Oystercards. This could be used on London's 7500 buses and countless lorries. These technologies aim to counter the blind spot that afflicts drivers of large vehicles who cannot see cyclists on the inside lane beside them.

Aside from the deaths and injuries caused by cars, buses and lorries, the air pollution they create is a major and growing health problem. The City of London (beloved of Boris) has the worst air pollution in the country, responsible for 8.94% of deaths. In 2011 air pollution death rates worsened in 15 of 33 of the London boroughs. Over 4000 Londoners



die prematurely as a result of air pollution. It aggravates respiratory and cardio-vascular conditions, with a disproportionate effect on children due to their smaller lung capacities; the elderly are also more vulnerable.

What To Do?

Many drivers also cycle and most of us walk. We welcome measures that make roads safer for all users and the air cleaner. This could involve fully segregated cycle paths, cleaner fuels, RFID and other technologies. Ultimately however we need far fewer vehicles, however powered, and to create a transport system based on people's needs, rather than a traffic system based on the needs of money (people are only useful as workers or consumers). We want a cheap or free public transport system which promotes walking, cycling, buses and trains over cars and lorries. Streets should be for play and socialising as well as transport. The Road Lobby (oil and car companies, Road builders etc.) is very powerful. We know that politicians will kowtow to it, as they always do to power. We are the ones who can change things through organising grassroots campaigns and direct action that bring us together as residents, parents, walkers, cyclists, public transport users.

There are many groups campaigning for safer cycling. There have been many protests at the Bow roundabout including a candlelit vigil in 2011 and a thousand strong protest on November 13th after the latest death.

Groups to contact

London Cycling Campaign

<http://lcc.org.uk/>

Tower Hamlets Wheelers

<http://www.towerhamletswheelers.org.uk>

Tower Hamlets Renters

Tower Hamlets Renters campaigns for a better deal for local people who are renting from private landlords. We offer information and support for tenants who are in crisis, experiencing housing problems, or feeling dis-empowered.

We campaign to tackle the root causes of tenant's issues and fight for real change towards great housing for everyone. We are run by Tower Hamlets renters, for Tower Hamlets renters.

What problems do we address?

*Unaffordable rents and through-the-roof increases
Poor quality housing: leaking roofs, scrappy paint-work, draughty rooms*

Bad treatment and harassment from landlords

Rip off lettings agent fees

Lack of information and support for tenants

Mysteriously missing deposits

Cuts to housing benefit

Our current agenda (we always want to do much more than we can do...)

Share skills, information and campaigns with groups across London

Take direct actions against the biggest housing culprits (Let Down campaign)

Gather information and evidence about the difficulties faced by Tower Hamlets renters

Hold support meetings for tenants to discuss their experiences and think about solutions

We are also open to new ideas! Want to get involved?

Information & Support

Private renters in Tower Hamlets are facing a variety of problems. Rents in the borough are sky

rocking in the last years. Tenants are often bullied into extortionate, bogus fees, giving over deposits without a guarantee of receiving them back and living in substandard conditions. Also people suffer racial discrimination at the rental market or face difficulties to rent because they have to rely on benefits.

If you are facing problems with a landlord or a letting agency, you can come to our monthly Information & Mutual Support Forum and/or get information and professional housing advice here:

Tower Hamlets Law Centre

Tel: 020 7247 8998

Email: info@thlc.co.uk214

<http://www.thlc.co.uk/>

Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BJ

Toynbee Hall

Support for private renters claiming benefits:
<http://www.toynbeehall.org.uk/tenancy-talks-tower-hamlets>

General housing advice for private renters:
(Thursdays): <http://www.toynbeehall.org.uk/legal-advice>

Tel: 020 7247 6943

Email: info@toynbeehall.org.uk

28 Commercial Street, London E1 6LS

Social housing tenants can get help & advice from the **Tower Hamlets Federation of Tenants and Residents Association (TRA)**: <http://th-federation.org.uk/help-advice/>

Tower Hamlets Renters can be contacted at:
Unite, Unite Community Centre, 236 Cable Street,
London E1 OBL

Tower Hamlets Leaseholders Association

Tower Hamlets Leaseholders Association exists to defend the interests of public sector leaseholders in the borough of Tower Hamlets.

It provides advice and support for issues such as excessive charges, poor block maintenance, major works procedures and other areas of dispute between the council and leaseholders.

It has a long and successful record of intervention, support and action. Now join us on twitter too:

<http://twitter.com/thethla>

Leaseholders make up 40% of Tower Hamlets Council residents, managed by Tower Hamlets Homes, in addition to those living in estates run by other housing associations. The findings of an independent audit in 2010 show clearly that Tower Hamlets Homes has failed its leaseholders. 3 years after that report the overwhelming majority of their recommendations remain a dead letter.

Surgery hours at Watney Market are: Saturday 10:00 - 12:00 | Telephone: 0207 780 9703

Email: contact@thla.org.uk

At THLA office: 6 Watney Market, Commercial Road, London E1 2PR

Friends of Queen's Market: latest news

Friends of Queens Market have been busy ensuring Newham Council don't 'sell off all the silver' in the borough by making sure Queen's Market is recognised as an asset of community value.

What does it all mean?

It's in the Localism Act passed by Government that states, if a place is "is currently being used, or was used in the last five years for activities which improve the social wellbeing and interests of the local community" then it can be nominated. We

believe Queen's is clearly of value and much more, so we filled in the forms and sent them off.

Just awaiting a reply from Newham council.

Queen's Market in East London is unique. It seems unimaginable that for 10 years this vital resource could have been threatened by Newham Council and rapacious companies. In response to this attack the Friends of Queen's Market (FoQM) was formed which defeated the developers and continues to PROTECT and PROMOTE the market to this day.

Useful addresses

Tower Hamlets Federation of Tenants & Residents Associations

C/o Unite Community Centre, St Georges Town Hall, 236 Cable Street, London E1 OBL
Email: admin@th-federation.org.uk | Website: th-federation.org.uk
Tel: 07903060303

Tower Hamlets Renters

C/o Unite Community Centre, St Georges Town Hall, 236 Cable Street, London E1 0BL
Email: towerhamletsrenters@gmail.com

Tower Hamlets Leaseholders Association

6 Watney Market, London E1 2PR

Friends of Queens Market

142 Clements Road, London E6 2DL
Email: friendsofqueensmarket@yahoo.co.uk

Newham Monitoring Project

Office telephone: 020 8470 8333 | 24 hour Emergency Helpline: 0800 169 3111
The Harold Rd Centre, 170 Harold Rd, Upton Park, London E13 0SE

Random Blowe

Great blog on what's happening in Newham and all points north, south, east and west
<http://www.blowe.org.uk/p/about-random-blowe.html>

Focus E15 mothers' campaign

Email: focusmummys@outlook.com | keepusinlondon@yahoo.com

About Action East End



The East End Howler is produced by Action East End. We are a small group of local residents keen to highlight issues not taken up by the popular media. All of this, as so much in life, costs money...and surprise, surprise, we're not millionaires! So please donate a small amount for each copy of the Howler you take.

If you like what we're doing and feel like doing more, please send an e-mail to: actioneastend@gmail.com

We will add you to our mailing list and keep you informed of our latest activities. Alternatively, if you supply us with an address, we will send you a paper copy of our news letter and a free East End Howler through the post.