

Proposer:	Ben Towse
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This Union Notes:

1. UCL is working with Newham Council to develop proposals for an expansion in Stratford, near the Olympic Park.
2. It appears likely that hundreds of residents will be compulsorily displaced as their homes are demolished and the area redeveloped.
3. Residents have founded a campaign CARP (Carpenters Against Regeneration Plans – a democratic group representing residents) and are raising a number of concerns and objections, including claims that:
 - a. A community established over half a century is being broken up.
 - b. The regeneration plans will not benefit current local residents but are an attempt to gentrify the area. One resident told the BBC, “The future is in Stratford, but we’re not the type of people they want in Stratford.”
 - c. Consultation processes conducted by UCL and the Council have not been properly carried out. Residents have either not been informed, or given extremely short notice, making it very difficult to voice their concerns.
 - d. Residents and the local vicar claim that if their neighbourhood is “in decline”, it is due to “a lack of public realm investment”. They claim that the Council has allowed the area to become run-down in order to justify lucrative regeneration.
 - e. Some residents were told their homes were not fit for purpose and impossible to refurbish due to asbestos, only to find that they are being converted to BBC studios, apparently for the Olympics. Despite requests, they have not been presented with any evidence to substantiate the claim their homes were not habitable.
4. CARP intends to take legal action against their Tenant Management Organisation, who they accuse of acting unconstitutionally and not relaying residents’ concerns to Newham Council

This Union Believes:

1. We want to be part of an ethical university. Our education and research must not be founded on the destruction of lives and communities. We must ensure scrutiny and pressure is applied to ensure that those affected by UCL’s development and operations are treated with dignity and respect, and promises are kept.
2. We do not object to regeneration in principle, or the expansion of public services such as education – quite the opposite. However, a community must not be ejected from the area they have lived for decades to make way for a new, gentrified development in which they have no place. Regeneration must, first and foremost, genuinely aim to improve the lives of the people that are struggling the most.
3. Sham consultation exercises, drop-in sessions held with little or no notice, and the use of hired security to keep campaigners out of meetings, are unacceptable. No plans should

proceed without residents being given a genuine and strong voice in the development of plans for their own area.

4. The destruction of social housing is particularly concerning at a time when Newham has the longest housing waiting list of any council in London (over 20,000), and cuts to benefits, a shortage of social housing, high rents, rising unemployment and stagnating wages are making it increasingly difficult for poorer people to continue living in London. Politicians, commentators and campaigners have speculated that in the coming years many will be forced out of our city. This has even been characterised by some as a “cleansing” exercise. Any development must ensure there is no overall reduction of the local area’s stock of social housing and genuinely affordable housing.

This Union Resolves:

1. To support CARP and oppose the development plans as the situation currently stands.
2. To send representatives to liaise with CARP campaigners and attend their meetings.
3. To respect the lead of Carpenters residents in determining the nature of any campaigning, and to support actions such as protests, letter-writing, petitions and non-violent direct action.
4. To place pressure on UCL and Newham Council to proceed with development only under the following conditions:
 - a. Local residents are not compulsorily significantly geographically displaced and their community remains intact.
 - b. Alternative housing is provided which is of improved quality than the unrefurbished existing stock, and not higher cost.
 - c. Full, accessible, well-publicised consultation processes allow local residents a genuine and strong voice in the development of any plans. CARP democratic representatives must be included in any meetings or exercises.
 - d. UCL makes it clear how its plans will bring specific and substantial benefits to poorer and working class residents of the area.
 - e. It is genuinely a regeneration, and not a gentrification.

This Union Mandates:

1. The Education & Campaigns Officer and the Community Officer to lead UCLU’s work on this issue.