

## THIS IS WHAT WE THINK!



### Backing residents all the way: Andy Slaughter MP



Inside this issue: 'Anger Out There' as Residents Proclaim Dunkirk Spirit; Senior Council Staff Exposed as Nazi: Leader's Bulldozer Solution for Ghettos of Concentrated Deprivation Revealed; Boris 'Happy to Demolish our Homes'; Yachts, the Mayor and Developers; Report from the Seafrost; Discontinuous Roads and Odd Angles in England's Green and Pleasant Land.

*No to Demolition! Yes to Community Control!*



# HANDS OFF



## Furious protesters slam big plans to bulldoze estates

BY BEN GREENING

**ANGRY residents last week gave an emotional rebuke to developers who are considering tearing down their housing estate.**

A consultation became a heated shouting match at the tenants' hall as residents quizzed developers about proposals to bulldoze and rebuild the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates.

The battle attracted the attention of Government ministers, who have come out in support of the residents taking legal action to force the council to let them take control of their own homes.

Chris Taylor, who lived on the estate for seven years, said: "I think nearly everyone on the estate is against this. Clearly, there is a significant financial benefit for the people who are planning it.

"This estate has a great sense of community and we don't want to lose that," he said.

Abbas Hamaraza, who lived on the estate for two years, said: "I'm happy with where I am and I don't think I'll be able to get a better place than I have now.

He added: "I think the developers are doing this because they're greedy."

Diana Belshaw said: "There's nothing wrong with this estate. We have new front doors and

bathrooms and inside the homes are fine. The outside needs a bit of sprucing up but only because the council has let it go."

Andy Slaughter, the MP for Ealing, Acton and Shepherd's Bush, said this was a plan to replace an estate with 'luxury flats.'

He said: "This is about greedy men and corrupt politics. Here you have hundreds of homes in good condition and the only problem is the lack of maintenance by the council.

"Millions in public money has been spent here but the council doesn't care."

More than 80 per cent of residents signed a petition against the plans.

Chris Rumfitt, spokesman for the developers Capital and Counties, said a regenerated estate could lead to better homes and could mean an extra 24,000 jobs in the area.

He said: "We appreciate there is anger out there. This is about sharing with local residents that we can offer something better than they have today."

"This could improve a lot of people's life chances. And everyone who lives here will be able to stay here in the future."

A council spokesman denied the 'luxury flats' claim and said there would be at least a 100 per cent replacement of social housing.

# 'We won't be moved from our estate without a fight'

Residents of neighbouring estates with an uncertain future faced developers bidding to bulldoze the communities they are so proud of this week. AIDAN JONES reports

Braced against the biting cold outside the Gibbs Green community hall. 46-year-old Colin Butler swats away the idea that redevelopment of West Kensington Estate could improve his life.

A recipient of community care, he also relies on neighbours for support, some of whom he has known throughout his 30 years on the estate.

"My mum died two years ago. What will I do if I'm moved away from my friends and neighbours?" he asks. "I will not move. I want to be left alone in the place where my memories are."

Luke Ridge is only 14, but also wants to have his say. He seethes at suggestions by Councillor Stephen Greenhalgh, leader of Hammersmith and Fulham Council, that his estate could do with some richer residents to improve the social mix.

"There's no trouble around here, the neighbours know each other. Even the kids are respectful - this isn't a ghetto. They're saying it to get us out of the way so rich people can move in."

Waiting patiently for her chance to speak, Jane Champkin says the council 'must be mad' to contemplate redeveloping Dieppe Close a set of semi-detached houses among Gibbs Green built only seven years ago. The houses have wheelchair access, insulation, driveways and gardens.

"They will never be able to offer me a 'like-for-like' house, no matter how nice their plans are," she says.

"They want to destroy our estates and that's why we're fighting.

Believe me, we've got the Dunkirk spirit here."

Colin, Luke and Jane are three voices among hundreds steeled for a long battle to preserve their communities as they are.

Under the banner of the West Ken and Gibbs Green Tenants' and Residents Associations (TRAs) they are urging the secretary of state for housing to allow them to take control of the estate from the council.

While they await a legal decision they are planning a long, creative and resilient campaign to block the bulldozers, should they come.

But powerful forces are lined up against them, including the Conservative-run council at Hammersmith and Fulham and developers Capital and Counties Capco, which owns the Earls Court arena and wants to revamp the surrounding area.

On Feb 11 Capco representatives came to Gibbs Green, showcasing some early ideas for redevelopment. Capco wants to knock down Earls Court 1 - the iconic music venue which it owns - soon after the 2012 Olympics and then Earls Court 2, bringing into play the unused space occupied by the railway tracks.

It promises up to 8,000 flats and homes, offices and leisure facilities to add lustre to a well-connected area a short hop from the West End.

The council wants to piggyback its own vision for a more densely populated, landscaped and housing and leisure area, on to Capco's plans for Earls Court.

It has dangled Gibbs Green and West Kensington estates as bait for the developers, claiming a phased

rebuild will provide more affordable housing and better equip the area to cope with future housing demand.

Council leader Stephen Greenhalgh calls it a 'once in a lifetime opportunity', promising to use Capco's inevitable redevelopment of Earls Court to build more affordable housing for the borough's residents.

He guarantees all existing council tenants new permanent homes, of an equivalent size, within any development and pledges that all existing home owners will receive 'full compensation' for their properties.

The trouble is, few believe him.

More than 80 per cent of the 1,000 residents contacted signed a recent petition against redevelopment plans.

Critics say the council is in thrall to developers and has set its course on squeezing out poorer tenants in favour of wealthy private home buyers.

They have seized on comments in a radical policy paper on housing crafted by Mr Greenhalgh and written for the think tank Localis, which included a description of council estates as 'barracks of the poor'.

Jonathan Rosenberg, a legal advisor to the TRAs describes the Localis document as 'not just a principle of how to get rid of poor people, but a blueprint of how to do so'.

Andrew Slaught, Labour MP, who will contest the newly created seat of Hammersmith at the next election, says Mr Greenhalgh is espousing 'social cleansing' of council estates.

"It's clear the council wants to develop here and believes there are too many of the wrong sort of people living in the area," he adds.

Faced with accusations his words have done much to ferment mistrust, Mr Greenhalgh is typically bullish.

"Je ne regrette rien," he says bluntly.

To his opponents, his response exemplifies an out-of-touch council which will not listen to their concerns, despite pledges to consult. Aware mounting opposition could scupper its

plans, Capco this week launched a charm offensive urging tenants and leaseholders to keep an open mind about a redevelopment.

By the time Capco publishes a solid proposal this autumn it hopes its hearts and minds campaign will have softened the clamour against change.

Many residents listened keenly last week as the developers talked them through the proposed revamp.

Others were less impressed, making their anger known with placards and catcalls aimed at the Capco representatives.

Both Capco and the council urge patience as plans are still fluid and they say, open to extensive consultation before entering a formal planning process.

The early sketches are ambitious, bold and expensive, befitting a major redevelopment in the heart of London.

But residents fear any rebuilding will mean tenants are shunted from the area and those who return will be left with smaller homes, with the lion's share of accommodation reserved for private owners.

Those who reject the new homes will effectively be making themselves homeless and therefore fall off the council list.

Mr Greenhalgh blames politically motivated rumour-mongering for the 'misinformation' about the scheme but remains fully behind the proposal.

"In principle you always want to take people with you... I don't have a crystal ball about what will happen, but we want to go ahead."

Whether he can or not, will depend in some measure on the resilience of the TRAs.

Members are currently talking tough.

Mary Sime, who moved to the West Ken estate in 1972, speaks for many when she blames the council for running down the estate. "I'm too old to move and face all that disruption," she says. "I won't be going anywhere quietly. They can bet on that."



■ ANGER: Tensions run high as residents fiercely defend the estate they call home

Photos

# M SUNDAY Mirror

## £90,000 council housing boss is secret Nazi



**EXCLUSIVE by Gary Anderson 14 March 2010**

### He sends vile racist texts saying 'Gas the Jews and the wogs'

A £90,000-a-year housing boss leads a sordid secret life – dressing up as a Nazi for sick racist sex games.

By day Gareth Mead works in one of Britain's most ethnically-diverse communities.

Mead, 44, is in charge of social housing and homelessness in Hammersmith and Fulham, where his duties include helping decide who is eligible for a council house or emergency homeless shelter.

But at night he poses in front of a swastika in full SS regalia and tells other lovers of the vile fetish: "Gas the Jews and Wogs."

In a series of shocking photos seen by the Sunday Mirror, the high-ranking council official shows off his array of fascist outfits.

In one shot, Mead reclines on a sofa, wearing jackboots, leather

trousers, a khaki shirt with swastika armband and a Nazi officers' hat.

In another photo, shaven-headed Mead stares menacingly into the camera, dressed in "bovver boy" boots, bomber jacket and swastika T-shirt.

Mead also sent racist texts to men he met on fetish websites. In one he wrote: "Turn on the furnaces for those Jewish boys and let them burn in hell with us 2 Nazis j\*\*\*\*\* off on their terrified screams."

In another he said: "Gas the f\*\*\*\*\* WOGS too! Look forward to seeing your pictures mate. HEIL HITLER! Your nazi buddy."

As one of the council's top housing officials, Mead heads a team of around 20 staff who manage housing policies at Hammersmith and Fulham.

The authority, where almost a quarter of residents are from an ethnic minority, is one of David Cameron's flagship Tory councils.

But in recent years the housing policy has been likened to "ethnic cleansing" for discriminating against poor and ethnic minority tenants.

Plans drawn up by Cameron's Council Innovation Unit could involve rent hikes and the demolition of 3,500 houses which would not be replaced – forcing thousands to move.

In January the council was ordered to pay £750 to a pregnant black woman fleeing domestic violence who they had refused to provide support and accommodation to.

Mead met some of his contacts through a website aimed at gay men who are into leather and uniforms.

His profile – which was active as recently as last week – describes him as a "friendly, fit, intelligent, clean-living guy who happens to enjoy leather and who has a bit of a twisted side to him".

He adds: "Have a great b/f who's not into leather so we have the usual 'arrangement' so I'm looking for buddies and occasional leather sex."

One man who met Mead – who has been with Hammersmith and Fulham Council for several years – said: "What he was texting was really too much."

"I could not believe that he had such extreme views while he is

earning a lot of council taxpayers' money paying lip service to multi-cultural political correctness.

"The pictures showed just how far he had gone with the whole thing. He had all the bits to go with the uniform. He even had a gun in one picture laid out on a Nazi flag."

When we confronted Mead about his Nazi secret, he admitted exchanging extreme messages.

But he claimed: "It's a private fetish – I'm not interested in anything political and I'm not a racist. There are Jewish men who do this as well."

Asked if he believed his bosses would accept his racist fetish, he said: "I would have thought not, but I think there will be sympathy for me. I am well-regarded by white and black colleagues."

After the Sunday Mirror contacted Hammersmith and Fulham Council with our story, Mead was suspended pending a full disciplinary investigation.

# WARNING! Nazi Senior Staff Backs Leader's Bulldozer Solution to Create Mixed Communities in Ghettos of Concentrated Deprivation

The Nazi Senior Staff Officer in charge of major aspects of social and housing policy is also a member of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board.

Assistant Director of the Council, Gareth Mead, is fully signed up to the Leader's "solution to concentrations of deprivation", which is to 'bulldoze the Ghettos'.

On 12 January 2010, the Nazi Senior Staff Officer recommended that the Council:

"endorses this strategy and new approach: how temporary accommodation provided by the Council for people accepted as statutorily homeless is changing.

"With support and high quality advice, options such as low cost home ownership, moving out of the borough, and privately

renting will be more accessible to tenants, enabling them to see that social housing is not the only viable or realistic option open to them."

"Through this strategy the Housing Options division seeks to ensure that this work contributes to the Council's objective of fostering mixed and balanced communities."

Nazi Council Officer

The Leader

Assistant Director Community Services (Housing Options)



## The Leader's Bulldozer Solution for the Ghettos

What do the words "Leader", "Ghettos", "concentration" and "solution" bring to mind? This is Hammersmith & Fulham, where oppressing the poor is elevated to a 'Principle for Social Housing Reform'.

ON THIS PAGE WEST KEN & GIBBS GREEN NEWS UNCOVERS THE EVIDENCE.

As soon as Stephen Greenhalgh, Conservative Leader of Hammersmith & Fulham Council, got elected in 2006 he plotted to get rid of the poor and bring in the very rich by bribing developers with land and planning permissions to bulldoze council estates. In 2007, he summoned the developers:

"We are open for business. Today we are looking to you to help us maximise our huge land values".

Last year, the Leader was ready to publish 'My Struggle Against the Poor' under the title 'Principles for Social Housing Reform'. He told senior Conservative Party officials:

"Social Housing=Welfare Housing=Ghettos of Multiple Deprivation. No return on asset value. Government has received no benefit from £billions invested.

"Social housing remains the destination for millions who add to the welfare cost far beyond the £20bn cost of social housing.

"Principles of reform: only provide homes for those who are unable due to age, infirmity or disability to provide for themselves. What is needed? A solution to concentrations of deprivation."

The Leader explained how his "solution" would gain electoral advantage for the Tory Party on the website conservativehome:

"Is it time to reform social housing? It will be an issue for new Conservative MPs from target marginals, which have far higher levels of social housing. Shadow housing minister Grant Shapps's seat has the highest percentage of social rented housing of any Conservative seat.

"Some key targets have huge percentages: Hammersmith 36% and Westminster North 30%."

"Many inner London boroughs remain Labour or Liberal Democrat. Why?"

"Our inner cities have high levels of social housing. Social housing has become welfare housing where a culture of dependency and entitlement predominate.

"Conservative principles of freedom, self-reliance and personal responsibility run counter to this culture. Calling for the state to provide a "hand up instead of a hand out" is unlikely to resonate."

To justify bulldozing their decent, well-loved homes, the Leader told residents in their own community hall: "We want to attract people who are very rich".

"But where will we go?" "To the Seagrave Road car park!"

The Leader invited other Leaders and senior staff (including the Director of Community Services) to a secret conference.

Who could resist the prospect of such forceful company, the lure of wine and canapés, and the menacing

slogan: "Creating Mixed Communities in Concentrated Areas of Deprivation"?

The question was how to implement the "solution to concentrations" without provoking too much civil unrest, or worse, undermining morale in the hinterland. "What is a poor person?", someone asked.

The notes of the 'roundtable discussion' are available. Although the Council refuses to name the Valkyric knights, we know who they are. The mystery is who said what.

Who pointed at pictures of a council estate and exclaimed: "This is not a place! It is a barrack for the poor!"?

And who observed wryly: "The bulldozer argument does not recognise the strength of every tenant as a resident occupying a home. Funding needed for political problem of management. Hard to get rid of people"?

Dismissing such trifles, Conservative Shadow housing minister, Grant Shapps MP, Boris Johnson's Deputy, Kit Malthouse AM, along with the Tory Leaders of Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster, and Wandsworth Councils dispensed the fate of millions in time for dinner:

"It was agreed that 'Porteresque' accusations of gerrymandering or social engineering needed to be faced head on, pointing to the urgency to act to address failing neighbourhoods.

"Councils should not be put off by a vociferous minority. Consultation needed . . . gentrification could be their own

kids gaining. Community leaders to be cultivated.

"Need to deal with political risk in terms of 'concerned citizen' disaffection."

Immediately, the Leader instructed the Council's senior staff to execute 'My Struggle Against the Poor', which they did straightaway by stigmatising thousands of homes "not decent neighbourhoods" – victims of his "radical demolition policy" "to establish mixed and balanced communities".

The Leader's "bulldozer solution" threatens physical destruction and social havoc. Major uprisings have broken out in "ghettos" across west London as the "poor" get organised to resist removal.

Historically predictable, Dear Leader bristles indignantly, dismissing the truth as "scaremongering". He shines his boots, gathers his Senior Staff, and masses his Ghetto Bulldozers.

Nonchalantly, he brands "shabby" the estates he earlier labelled "ghettos".

Lazily, he swats the Labour Housing Minister - "some bloke who looks like an accountant".

Heroically, and with unswerving accuracy, he positions his perfectly polished boot, in one last bid to appease his allies:

"My mates [David Cameron and George Osborne] are all in the Shadow Cabinet; waiting to get those boxes; being terribly excited. I went to university with them.

"They haven't run a piss-up in a brewery!"

**You have been warned!**



Boris is happy to don a hard hat again

Mayor says he is happy to demolish housing estate

# BORIS PUTS THE BOOT IN

BY BEN GREENING

**MAYOR of London, Boris Johnson has said he will don a hard hat and is 'happy to take part' in the demolition of hundreds of homes which are under threat from a controversial redevelopment.**

Mr Johnson was answering a question about whether he supported Hammersmith and Fulham Council's proposal to demolish and redevelop West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates in Earl's Court.

The mayor said he was 'happy to take part' in the bulldozing provided he had 'a hat on, with the proper boots, equipped and properly briefed about the procedures, provided that we go through the health and safety drill.'

At the monthly session of Mayor's Question Time, he added: "Provided I don't breach any rules I will certainly take part in any act of demolition that leads to the improvement of the estate."

Jonathan Rosenberg, who is leading the campaign against the demolition, said: "Residents will be deeply saddened to hear that the mayor not only doesn't know the names of the estates but will be quite happy to participate in the demolition."

Sally Taylor, who lives on the estate, said: "He makes it seem funny, but it's our homes he's joking about demolishing. It's frightening."

Nicky Gavron, former deputy mayor and current Labour London Assembly Member, told the Times: "It is incredible that Boris could joke about donning a hard hat to knock down the homes in front of the very residents who are going to lose them."

She said: "It goes to show his complete disregard for the plight of this community and those who live there. All that residents wanted from the mayor was an assurance that he was on their side and not the developer's."

"Instead, he said he was happy to take part in knocking down their homes."

She said: "I'd like Boris Johnson to take up my offer and join me on a visit to the estates he wants to demolish and maybe he would see that they're decent homes and decent people who just want him to intervene on their behalf."

Mr Johnson had accused Ms Gavron of 'scaremongering,' suggesting housing on the estate was 'substandard,' even though flats have recently had millions of pounds worth of improvements, including new kitchens and bathrooms.



Outside City Hall. West Kensington & Gibbs Green Residents Associations Committee Members: Sally, Neil, Richard, Tom and Salim



**The Leader**

**The Mayor**

# Chronicle Council Officers £1,500 Trip to Cannes



12 March 2010 By Aidan Jones

Two Hammersmith and Fulham council officers are heading to Cannes this week to woo property developers to the borough on a taxpayer-funded trip costing £1,500.

The trip to the French Riviera for the annual MIPIM property conference will bring the officers into contact with potential developers for the Old Oak site, near Wormwood Scrubs.

They will also be seeking to drum up business for "other areas", apparently a reference to the hotly contested council proposals to bulldoze and rebuild some of the borough's estates.

On Wednesday (March 17) Lyn Garner, assistant director for regeneration and housing strategy, will take to the podium for a session titled West London: the Home of Opportunity. Hammersmith and Fulham Council says the total cost of the two officers attending is £1,482.

Garner will fly out at a cost of £188 for four days and return by train (£62). Her accommodation at the resort will cost £250.

The second representative, who is head of area regeneration programmes, is flying both ways for £271 with accommodation costing the taxpayer £106 for each night of their five day stay.

Critics say a slew of recent planning rows show the council is already too close to developers and should not be touting people's homes for redevelopment.

Labour opposition councillor Stephen Cowan, said: "The public don't support this. Take any resident from next to the Goldhawk Industrial estate or the Queen Caroline Estate and they will tell you they are sick of the council putting their borough up for sale. It has to stop."

The council refutes his claim.

Cabinet Member for Strategy, Cllr Mark Loveday said: "In order to try an attract multi-million pound inward investment to H&F - in the face of tough competition, it is essential that we market ourselves at MIPIM, which is Europe's leading property conference."

The conference is a notoriously lavish affair, with delegates rubbing shoulders on yachts and upmarket restaurants.

Town Halls across the country have been slammed for attended the conference at a time when taxpayers are being urged to accept cuts to services.

Several London boroughs will be represented at the London Pavilion which is led by Mayor Boris Johnson, who is a keynote speaker at this year's event.

MIPIM has been running for 20 years and is hailed as the world's leading property conference. Here a regular delegate gives his views on the week-long extravaganza on the Riviera.

"In a week when many are either glued to Champions League football, celebrating St Patrick's Day or betting on Cheltenham nags, the great and good of the property world up sticks and decamp to the Côte-d'Azur for a lethal concoction of blue skies and free booze.

Chief executives mingle with mayors and architects show off match-stick models of their latest plans as the French coastal town of Cannes is invaded by suited and booted property players for MIPIM, the world's must-attend property-fest. Easyjet ditches its low-cost mantra, hiking up return fares to £500 and some.

Aboard heavily-sponsored boats leased for a small fortune by councils and developers in the marina, delegates wash down their canapés with champagne in the midday sun."



## WEST KENSINGTON & GIBBS GREEN NEWS

### BREAKING NEWS FROM THE SEAFRONT

EXCLUSIVE BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

16 March 2010

## 'OPEN FOR BUSINESS' Mayor backs Leader's invite to developers

Mayor Boris Johnson wants to declare our estates an 'Opportunity Area' so he can personally help the Leader bulldoze our homes.

Before flying to Cannes, the Mayor told Property Week: "At MIPIM I'll be telling those investors and developers at every opportunity that London is open for business".



Warming up this morning, he told Estates Gazette: "I'm here to get the message across to the world's great developers - London is open for business".

This afternoon, in his keynote speech, the Mayor told developers: "Our goal in City Hall is to create the right planning framework to allow developers to get on and do what they do so well".

What will he say next?



The Leader



Ghetto Bulldozer

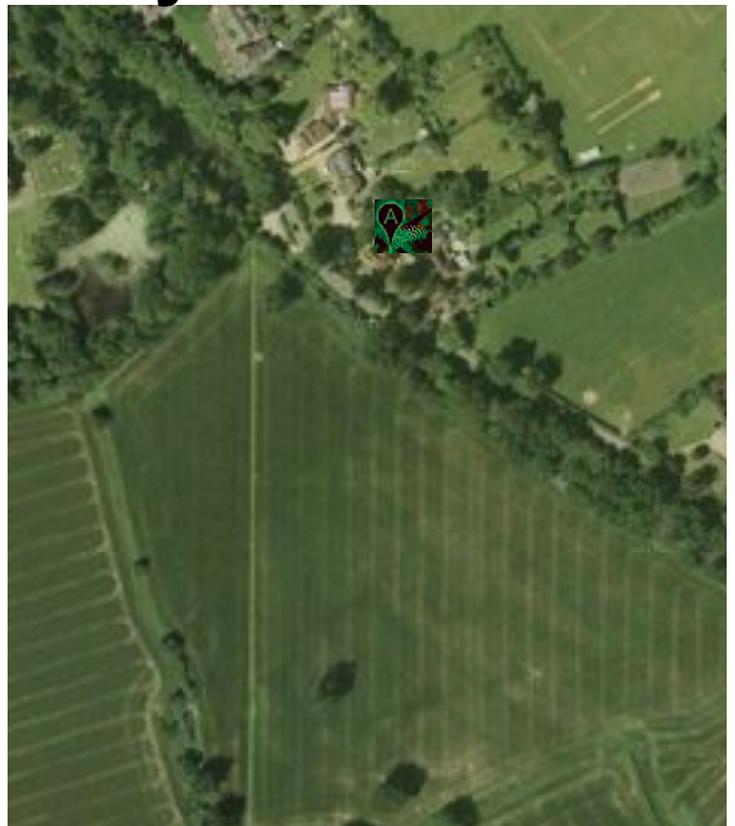


Developer: Gary Yardley, CapCo

## Our homes



## Gary's home



### Gary's "propaganda piece"

"The Council has supported the 2007 Developers Summit as a new way of engaging private sector partners in finding solutions.

"The estates suffer from discontinuous internal roads, awkward placing of buildings at odd angles and generous car parking.

"Twice the percentage of residents here suffer from social and economic dependence, low qualifications and limiting long term illness.

"North End Road is a disjointed and tired commercial street.

"The creation of a sustainable and balanced community has been hindered by the concentration of social and economic deprivation. The redevelopment of the area can create the desired socio-economic mix and balance."

Earls Court Area Regeneration Framework, submitted by Capco to the Mayor & Leader

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