

# **Council estate regeneration and temporary housing in the shadow of the 2012 Olympics**



**Professor Paul Watt**



**UCL Olympics Conference  
12 September 2022**



# Olu (Hostel)

# Kennelly & Watt (2012)



This advertisement goes a long way from attracting local residents because it is simply unaffordable. Those this the mean it's not for us and all the promises of affordable homes and local jobs is nothing but hot air and the real people benefiting are the large businesses.



[City](#) >

Analysis of Urban Change, Theory, Action

Volume 17, 2013 - Issue 1

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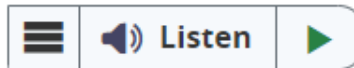
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## ‘It’s not for us’

*Regeneration, the 2012 Olympics and the gentrification of East London*

**Paul Watt** 

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# 'It's not for us'



"I think that the money they're spending on the Olympics is definitely going to change the area to a much higher-class area and all the people that don't have the money to stay in the area are going to be kicked out. After the Olympics has finished I don't think it's just going to be a dead area, I think it's going to be a giant tourist attraction that's going to generate millions for years to come I believe and it's definitely ... **it's not for us**, you know what I mean. That's why everything, all the prices, the rate of living and everything is going to go up so we'll probably have to move to other parts of Newham, like Manor Park, Forest Gate, areas like that, and Stratford is going to be as famous as the West End to Americans, people all over the world, so it's just about money".

**Jessica, Hostel (Watt, 2013: 113-114)**

# Housing market



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## Olympic house price legacy? Boroughs outdo rest of London

BY RYAN BEMBRIDGE

JULY 29, 2022

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Postal districts and boroughs around East London and the Olympic Park have proved to be a savvy investment compared to the rest of London since 2012, analysis by Lloyds Bank has revealed.

Waltham Forest took gold for the highest house price growth of any London borough in the 10 years since the London Games, with a rise of 122% to £537,277.

In silver and bronze positions were Newham, with prices up 98% to £429,734, and Hackney, which saw growth of 98% to £705,101.



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23 May 2019

## Best buy-to-let areas in London in 2019

By Anna Delves/Jessie Day



# Median private rents in Legacy Boroughs & London, 2011-22, £



	2011 Q2	2022 Q1	N increase 2012-22	% increase 2012-22
Barking & Dagenham	800	1,275	475	59
Greenwich	850	1,375	525	62
Hackney	1,148	1,600	452	39
<b>Newham</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>1,474</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>69</b>
Tower Hamlets	1,278	1,575	297	23
Waltham Forest	875	1,300	425	49
<b>London</b>	<b>1,075</b>	<b>1,450</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>35</b>

# Households in temporary accommodation in Legacy Boroughs & London, 2012-19

	2012 Q1	2019 Q4	N increase 2012-19	% increase 2012-19
Barking & Dagenham	1,085	1,609	524	48
Greenwich	235	1,221	986	420
Hackney	1,313	3,223	1,910	145
<b>Newham</b>	<b>2,253</b>	<b>5,280</b>	<b>3,027</b>	<b>134</b>
Tower Hamlets	1,796	2,647	851	47
Waltham Forest	1,307	2,064	757	58
<b>Total Legacy Boroughs</b>	<b>7,989</b>	<b>16,044</b>	<b>8,055</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>London</b>	<b>36,740</b>	<b>58,670</b>	<b>21,930</b>	<b>60</b>

# Welcome to Welwyn Garden City



Paul Watt © 2015



# Carpenters estate, 2012



Paul Watt © 2012

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**LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES SAT 24/03/12**

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# Carpenters v. UCL 'regeneration'



Protest at UCL, 2012

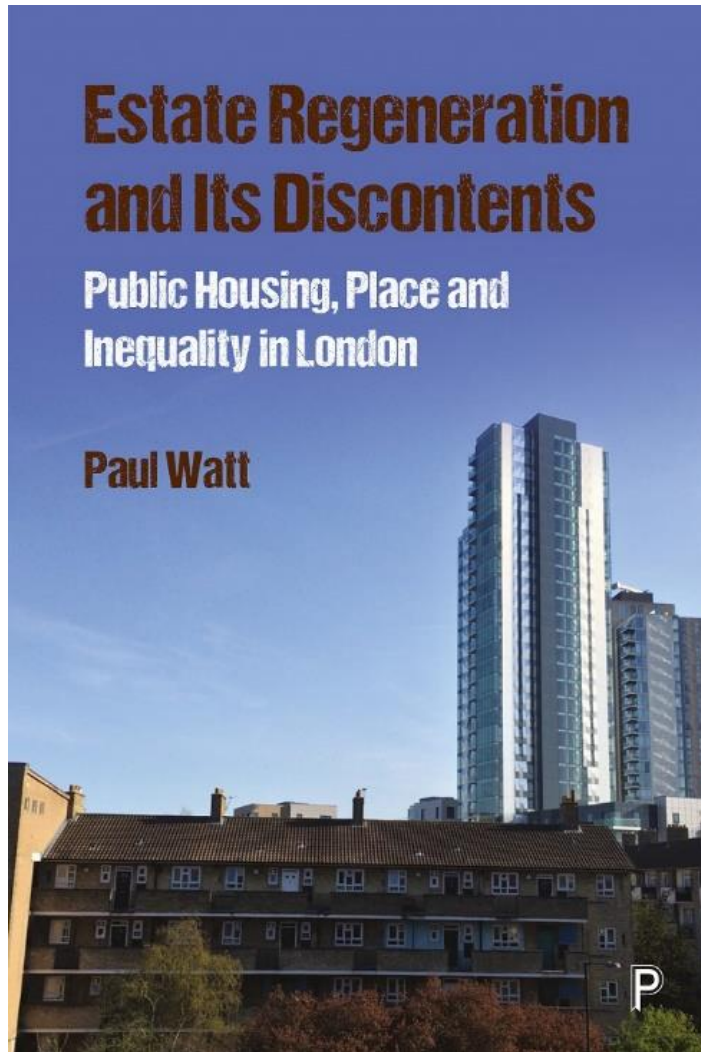
Victory BBQ, 2013



# Olympics counter-legacy (Gillespie, Hardy & Watt, 2018)



# Regeneration 2012-19



## Carpenters estate

- Never-beginning regeneration
- Never-ending degeneration

# Never-beginning regeneration



“When UCL pulled the plug, wow! Back to the old phrase of ‘headless chickens’. They [council] did not have a Plan B and they still haven’t come up with a Plan B. Well, it’ll be Plan A now won’t it when it does arrive [laughs]!”

**Ernie (RTB-owner, white British)**

# Displacement



“I was a secure council tenant and they told us we will be back. The way they treated us is unfair. Now Stratford is booming, we cannot come back, we just had to move.”

**Female tenant (regeneration meeting, 2012)**

# Physical & symbolic degeneration



Paul Watt © 2012

“Well it’s depressing innit – someone said to me when the first of the Sitex [security screens] went up, ‘we’re turning into the Bronx!’”

**Ernie**

# Ballot, December 2021



Brighter future ahead for Carpenters Estate as landslide 73% 'Yes' vote gives green light to new homes



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## ESTATE RESIDENT BALLOTS: ARE THEY WORKING WELL?



An investigation by Sian Berry AM  
Green Party member of the London Assembly  
July 2022





# Residents views on regen B4 ballot



- Enthusiasm?
- Undecided
- New homes?
- Conditional agreement on housing improvement
- Exhaustion
- Bereavement
- Distrust
- Resignation

# Appeal of new homes



- “They will demolish all of this. They say they will give us a new home, so we will vote yes”.  
**Male (temporary tenant, Asian)**
- “They said they will break it down, but I don’t know where we will go. They said we have a vote, but I don’t know what to vote, it depends on whether they offer us a new place. I think the regeneration is fine as long as they offer affordable housing and new buildings to those on lower incomes”.  
**Male (council tenant, black British)**

# What's wrong with the old homes?



"I saw the geezer [from Populo] and I said 'why are you going to pull the houses down?' He said 'they'll be all new and posh'. So I said 'what'll happen?'. He said you have the opportunity to voting and wouldn't you like a brand new house, all posh?' I said 'no, there's nothing wrong with the houses. And I've got a 6-foot fish pond in the garden, I can't do that again at my time of life'".

**Terry (council tenant, white British)**

# Exhaustion



“It’s been going on for years and years and years. I feel exhausted by the whole thing, I cannot be bothered any more. I’ve not read it [offer document] because it’s boring now, I’m fed up with it. The [Populo] woman said they’ll definitely pull it down. It’s ridiculous because these are brick-built houses. They’ll offer us money, but where am I going to go at my age, I’m 82! But I think it will be years to go yet.”

**Brenda (RTB-owner, white British)**

# Ambivalence, conditional & time



“I don’t know what to vote, either way. But my husband is likely to vote ‘yes’, but only if we get a ground floor maisonette. These are solid places, I don’t know why they can’t just refurbish them. James Riley Point will be refurbished and that will take 3-4 years, and the whole thing might take 10-15 Years. I could be well gone by then”. [laughs]

**Lois (council tenant, white British)**

# Bereavement



“I can’t part with this and buy back something here, because the money that they’re going to offer me for this isn’t going ... I’m not going to be able to afford something back here. And that’s not my only loss. My main loss is my neighbours, for 50 years I’ve lived here with my neighbours and we get on well together. Now at my age, where am I going to go to find good neighbours like I’ve got here? When my husband was sick and dying he fell down a few times, I called my neighbour over there, some at midnight and he came and helped me to pick my husband up. Where can I go to rely on somebody like that?”

**Gloria (RTB-owner, black British)**

# Distrust



“I’ve been through this process before so that’s why I don’t trust them. I’ve been here ten years and nothing’s happened! When regeneration started, people moved out, but if they’d have known that the building [Lund Point] had been still here, they wouldn’t have moved, I don’t think they would have moved”.

**Renea (council tenant, black British)**

# Resignation



Paul Watt © 2021

“Some change is going to come, it’s inevitable around here. Look at all of the new buildings. What’s left is us, this estate, so why wouldn’t this go as well? Stratford is definitely gentrifying”.

**Sam (lives with RTB-parent, black British)**



# Factors determining vote



- Housing tenure
- Housing type
- Depth of home-based ontological security
- Depth of neighbourhood place attachment
- Age

# Estate regeneration > State-led gentrification?



SLG criteria	Council / UCL 2012	Council / Populo 2019
<b>Loss of social housing</b>	Significant loss	Significant increase
<b>Displacement</b>	High among both social tenants & homeowners	Minimal among social tenants  High among homeowners
<b>Local housing market</b>	Direct large increase in student housing  Increases in house prices/rents due to 'prestige' impact & parents buying properties for students	Direct large increase in private housing  Increases in house prices/rents