

# **East London Communities and the LLDC Planning Committee**

**Nick Sharman**

Olympic Legacy Conference  
12 September 2022

# Key Issues

- Overdependence on private land market
- Weak system of planning control
- Limited democratic control over development

....meant it was impossible to achieve the original Olympic legacy promise to 'level-up' the area

Three sections – LLDC's development strategy; democracy and local people; range of planning and housing issues

# 1. LLDC's Development Strategy

- The Olympic Legacy's 2005 'convergence' promise to the world
- Post 2008 change of strategy to prioritise financial returns
- LLDC's establishment in 2012 based on giving the private property industry the leading development role
- LLDC intermediate role to plan, organise sites and infrastructure and market opportunities
- Alternative 'new town' corporation model rejected
- New London Mayor in 2016 prioritised *genuinely* affordable housing

## 2. Local People and Decision-making

- Perennial dilemma of local versus city-wide interests resolved by giving local people minority representation
- Predominant representation by technical property interests ignores local development aims of the legacy promise
- Alternative model could have ensured wider metropolitan interests were represented by GLA politicians (as in the Docklands Joint Committee, the original lead for docklands development in the 1970s)

### 3. Housing and Social Issues

- Share of housing available for social rent (i.e. affordable by those on average and below average incomes):
  - LLDC housing record 2012-2016: 11,380 homes; 984 social rent (of which 675 were inherited from the athletes' village)
  - 2224 homes of the LLDC's claim of 3288 affordable homes are only affordable by those with incomes two or three times the local average
- Long term increases in social homes suggest these will be 3-4,000 of the 30,000 total

# Social issues

- Intensification of development – massing, heights, open space
- Uniformity of design to appeal to core market of affluent professional singles and couples
- Social impact of core market cohort: predominance of 1- and 2-bedrooms; rapid turnover makes stable community development difficult
- Pressure for tenure segregation builds social divisions into the area's physical structures

# Conclusions

- LLDC approach means that only marginal contributions can be made to the Olympic promise to re-balance London's development
- Olympic legacy will be the area's gentrification supported by 9 billion pounds of public subsidy – a process re-inforced by location of national and regional cultural institutions in the area
- Alternative public sector-led development model could have led to a radically different outcome that tackled East London's shortage of housing, jobs and public services