

Crown Residents Against Sell Off

OUR HOMES ARE NOT FOR SALE

Hands
off our
homes

Tenants in Victoria Park, Millbank, Cumberland Market and Lee Green estates were shocked to find out of the Crown's plans to sell off our homes to private developers.

The motive for the sale seems to be pure profit, with the Crown citing its 'duty to maintain and enhance the value of the estate and the income it generates for UK taxpayers'.

Paul Clark, the Crown's Director of Investment and Asset Management, presided over a similar controversial sell-off of social housing in his previous role as boss of the Church Commissioners for England.

Following Mr Clark's sell off of the church commissioners properties rents rocketed and keyworker provision was abandoned. Some homes have since been sold off individually.

So far during this "consultation" the Crown has refused to give guarantees that policies of affordability and keyworker provision would continue under any new ownership, or to give any information on how its 'marketing exercise' is being carried out.

Residents have been told that 'existing tenancies will

remain in place' during any sale but that future change depends on the type of tenancy they have and who the new owner is.

The websites and magazines of the property speculators are already crowing that only 35% of tenancies on our estates are protected under strict legal rent controls. This means that 65% of tenants face price hikes similar to the sell off of the church properties – in some cases a whopping 30% over two years.

Worried tenants calling the 'consultation hotline' have been met with an answering machine message or in some cases advised to contact the Citizens' Advice Bureau for more information on their rights. Most vulnerable are families on short-term tenancies that could be easily ended or changed in the wake of a sale.

All this can only heighten the fears of current residents of the Crown Estate. We are all deeply concerned both for our own futures and also the break-up of long-established communities.

That's why we must all get involved and say NO to these proposals. This affects you, your friends and your neighbours. Join the campaign.

6 REASONS TO OPPOSE SELL OFF

Rents Up



Only 35% of all tenants have strict legal rights to limit rent increases. The majority could see rents skyrocket.

Loss of security of tenure



If our homes are sold to private speculators the security of our tenancy agreements will be lost. Those with shorthold tenancies could be forced out with as little as two months notice.

An end to key worker provision



The Crown's progressive policy of prioritising teachers, health and transport workers, firefighters, police officers and other workers whose services are essential to our local communities could be thrown out.

Loss of community



A real sense of community exists on our streets. There's a good mix of older people and young families, thriving residents' associations - exactly the kind of socially-mixed, sustainable community the government says it wants to foster. Why break this up?

Even leaseholders aren't safe



Even if you're one of the lucky few who have leasehold of their homes, a new owner could impose service charge hikes.

No return to the Crown



Sell off is a one way ticket, there's no going back to the Crown if this proposal is forced on us.

get involved in our campaign

email: handsoffourhomes@yahoo.co.uk



It is shocking that a respected and vital organization like the Crown Estate is proposing to sell off these properties simply to make a profit. Our communities with their vibrant social mix based on social housing and affordable homes should be seen as the jewel in the crown of their property portfolio, not just another soulless asset to be sold off to the highest bidder.

Brian Munro, resident and tubeworker, Victoria Park

Consultation? What consultation?

The Crown has obviously been considering selling off our homes for some time. Yet we were given no advance warning. The consultation period is just eight weeks, and for the first two days of that the 'hotline' was manned by an answering machine. Requests for information about the 'marketing exercise' have been stonewalled. What prospective buyers have the Crown been talking to? How are they presenting the 'investment

opportunity' our homes and communities provide to greedy speculators? Without proper information on what is happening, how can residents be expected to participate in this so-called 'consultation'? All the evidence suggests that this 'consultation' is a white-wash and the decision has already been taken. ***But if we organise quickly enough and effectively enough we can stop it being implemented.***

Tell the truth!

The Residents' Association at Victoria Park has sent a letter to the Crown requesting information about the sell-off under the Freedom of Information Act. We've asked for all documentation on how the decision was arrived at, how the properties are being 'marketed' and any dialogue with potential buyers. The Crown has 20 working days in which to respond – we'll keep you posted! Representatives of the residents associations are also due to attend a meeting with Paul Clark on 12 February. Some local MPs are already onside and are due to meet with Crown representatives at the House of Commons.

What you can do:

Reply to the consultation opposing the sale, and make sure you attend the 'drop-in' sessions that are scheduled for your estate

- Write to your local MP, opposition candidates and councillors



- Put up posters in your window and around your local community.
- Get involved with the campaign on your local estate
 - Organise residents' meetings to raise awareness
 - Write letters to the local press
 - Let local community organisations such as churches, mosques, schools and trade unions know what is happening and ask for their support
 - Volunteer to distribute material
 - Most important... talk to your family, friends and neighbours and ask them to SAY NO.

Make your feelings known!

We have to make our feelings known every way we can.

Please attend the Crown 'drop-in' sessions for residents.

Victoria Park Residents
have organised
A DEMONSTRATION
at Saturday's 'drop in'
at 11 o'clock on February 6th!
JOIN US

Victoria Park Housing Office

5 Gore Road, E9 7HR
Thursday 4 February 10am to 8pm
Saturday 6 February 9am to 4pm

Cumberland Market Housing Office

Camberley House
Redhill Street, NW1 4AU
Thursday 11 February 10am to 8pm
Saturday 13 February 9am to 4pm

Millbank Housing Office

19 Bessborough St SW1 2JD
Wednesday 17 February 10am to 8pm
Saturday 20 February 9am to 4pm

Lee Green

The Colfeian Sports Club
Horn Park
Eltham Road SE12 8UE
Thursday 25 February 10am to 8pm
Saturday 27 February 9am to 4pm

Campaign materials, posters, a list and contact information for MPs and councillors can be obtained by emailing:
handsoffourhomes@yahoo.co.uk