## Open Garden Estates

Stop the DEMOLITION of London’s Council Housing and **fight** for our estates!

### Dates
- **18-19 June**

### Estates
- Granville Estate
- Somers Town Estates
- Silchester Estate
- Warwick Road Estate
- Alton Estate
- Cotton Gardens Estate
- Edmundsbury Court Estate
- Your Estate Here?
- Cressingham Gardens Estate
- Ravensbury Grove Estate
- Old Tidemill Gardens
- Crossfields Estate
- Aylesbury Estate
- Macintosh Court Estate
- Central Hill Estate

### Website
- [www.opengardenestates.com](http://www.opengardenestates.com)

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**Report - Open Garden Estates 2016**

June 2016
Introduction

Open Garden Estates is an initiative by Architects for Social Housing (ASH), a collective working to save London council estates under threat of demolition by Government housing policy, local authority estate regeneration programmes and property developers.

Last year (13-14 June, 2015) Open Garden Estates was hosted by three council estates: Cressingham Gardens in Brixton, Central Hill in Crystal Palace, and Knight’s Walk (part of Cotton Gardens Estate) in Kennington.

It was an opportunity for residents to open up their estate’s green areas, communal spaces and private gardens to the public, and help change the widely held but inaccurate perception of council estates as ‘concrete jungles’ that has been used to justify David Cameron’s plans to Blitz 100 so-called ‘sink estates’. Walking tours for visitors showed how well the estates are designed for community living, and increased awareness of the strong and mixed communities that live on them. Above all, it was a chance for estate communities to meet and organise the campaign to save their homes.

This year (18-19 June, 2016) ASH is exporting Open Garden Estates across London.

More than just an opportunity to bring estate communities together, Open Garden Estates is a chance for participating estates to form connections with ASH and other resistance groups offering support and information about how you might save your homes from councils and developers.

ASH is usually only contacted by estates after they have gone through the consultation process, by which time the council has gathered much of the information it needs to argue for the demolition of your homes. To counteract this, we want to use Open Garden Estates as a way to combat the threat of regeneration as early as possible in the process.

Architects for Social Housing offers:

– The truth about the regeneration process, information about the public and private bodies behind it, and advice on how you can fight against the threat it presents to your homes and lives.

– The truth about the Government’s Housing and Planning Act, what it means for London’s housing estates, and what you can do to oppose it.

– Support with building community campaigns, contacts with other resident campaigns facing the demolition of their estates, the support of eviction resistance groups, as well as funds for flyers, banners and stalls.

– Architectural design proposals that retain the existing community and its homes while increasing the number of homes on the estate, and in doing so force councils to consider alternatives to demolition.

Open Garden Estates is a collective event hosted by the participating estates, whose residents interpret how to stage the day, with the technical support of Architects for Social Housing. Please sign up to Open Garden Estates 2016, and invite local estates and residents from the surrounding neighbourhood to visit your estate. The more of us get involved the stronger the message we send:

Social Housing not Social Cleansing!
History

Open Garden Estates was first introduced in 2015, and three estates in south London took part:

Cressingham Gardens, Central Hill Estate and Knights Walk, Cotton Gardens Estate.

Cressingham Gardens Rain Garden

Central Hill planting

Knights Walk talk by architect Kate Macintosh
Thanks to our funders, Open Garden Estates 2016 was able to be hosted by 10 Council estates across London on the weekend of 18-19 June.

Participating estates in 2016 were:

- Alton East and West, Roehampton
- Central Hill Estate, Crystal Palace
- Cressingham Gardens, Brixton
- Edmundsbury Estate, Brixton
- Macintosh Court (formally 269 Leigham Court Road), Streatham
- Old Tidemill Wildlife Garden and Crossfields Estate, Deptford
- Ravensbury Grove, Mitcham
- Silchester and Lancaster West
- Somers Town Estates, Camden
- Warwick Road Estate

Other estates that initiated the process with us but did not in the end organise an event on the day:

- Aylesbury Estate
- Cotton Gardens Estate
- Brandon Estate
- Thamesmead Estate
- Granville Estate

To begin the process we designed and produced A6 postcards for general distribution to both residents of estates and general public.
Residents of estates threatened with demolition got in touch with us via our website and flyers. We then liaised with the residents of that estate and arranged to visit each estate to discuss the event and what activities they would be doing.

We then arranged several group meetings where residents met with residents of other estates and exchanged ideas about the event as well as broader campaign strategies.

A web designer updated the Open Garden Estates website to provide information relating to all the participating estates:

www.opengardenestates.com

ASH architects and designers coordinated the information about the estates and the design of the events they were planning. They subsequently then worked on designs for a series of maps for each estate incorporating this information.

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For some ideas about how your estate could host Open Garden Estates this year, have a look at photos from the estates that participated in 2015.

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We located all events and walking routes planned on these maps, which also contained a short description of the estate’s current situation and campaign.

Once the events were finalised we uploaded these maps on our website. We then printed and distributed them in the form of A5 flyers to each of the estates for them to distribute as they saw fit – to residents, neighbours and surrounding communities.

We also printed A1 maps as posters for each estate, and A3 posters (of each side) for each estate for posting around the estate and in nearly shops, libraries etc for advertising the events.
Central Hill Estate
Gipsy Hill, SE19 1AA

Residents from the Central Hill Estate in upper Norwood, near the Crystal Palace Triangle, have had their homes earmarked for regeneration rather than repair, as part of neglect imposed by Lambeth council. Lambeth Housing Association (LHA) have been awarded a £20m grant to regenerate the estate. The council has already made changes from residents. Lambeth Council have failed in their duty as landlords, and instead of operating these funds on estate maintenance, as is their obligation and responsibility, they have spent the funds elsewhere and allowed the estate to fall into obsolescence.

Instead of those responsible taking on their duties, they have instead come up with a plan to use the neglect to their own advantage to cement a way of allowing the process of regeneration to continue in a way that suits the developers and not the residents. The residents in the area have been left for years without any improvements, and now, the decision has been made, yet contractors have been hired, and work has started on the estates.

It is the story of the working people fighting for their rights against those in power who continue to dictate policy instead of standing up for our rights in an open and democratic way to allow all the people affected by the policies to be heard.

Lambeth Council intends to bulldoze not only our homes, but our rights, our opinions and our lives.

We need to stop the regeneration of the Central Hill Estate, insist on the right to remain in our homes and insist on the council spending all the surplus funds plan that they have ALREADY BROKEN PROMISE TO. To let the regeneration go ahead is to allow the long and hard-fought fight for the rights of the common man to be a voice in the British Bennytronomy to have been for nothing.

Under these plans, we are looking back to the middle ages, where a Tudor king and his favourites could do as they pleased and claim it for their own. It wasn’t right then and it isn’t right now. Fighting back in these days would probably earn you a scandal in the town.

Today, you can’t be kicked back for fighting back. We are all brainwashed, and the council is accountable to COUNCIL TAX PAYERS That’s ALL OF US.

So please join the fight, sign the petition, add your voice to the building campaign ... and stop Lambeth Council taking away to make a profit out of our sacrifices.

www.sacredcouncil.org.uk

Stop the demolition of London’s social housing and fight for our council estates!

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Social housing not social cleansing!

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www.architectsforsocialhousing.wordpress.com
www.opengardenestates.com

Facebook: Ash Architects for Social Housing
Twitter: @Ash_housing

Stop the demolition of London’s social housing and fight for our council estates!
Macintosh Court
269 Leigham Court Road, Streatham, London SW16

269 Leigham Court Road in Streatham is purpose built sheltered housing, with 45 flats that are currently home to 50 residents, all over the age of 60, all on secure tenancies. Despite being designed by architect Kate Macintosh specifically to house elderly people, a duty it has performed since 1979, in January 2013 Lambeth Council suddenly declared the estate ‘unfit for purpose’, told residents that it was too expensive to do the repairs and maintenance they had neglected for years, and declared the site was to be ‘sold up as cleared land.

However, following residents’ campaigning, in May 2015 the estate was given Grade II listing by Historic England. In response, Lambeth Council have said they will announce their final plans for the estate in the middle of June 2016, with the target date for its closure set at 2018.

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Open Garden Estates

Section AA looking north

Sunday 19 June

2pm - Arrive for Leigham Court Road Estate re-naming ceremony
Meet at the entrance (1)
2.30pm - Estate and garden tours
3.30pm - Talk (3 or 5)
ASH, Residents and Kate Macintosh
4.30pm - Tea and cakes (3 or 5)
Alton East and West Estates
Roehampton, London
18 & 19 June

Walking tours
Both days meet at Cafe Joywalk around
Alton West first and break at Cafe Joy
again, then Alton East for those with
appetite!

Saturday - 11am meet (1)
Sunday - 2pm meet (1)

1 - Cafe Joy
2 - Alton West (Grade 2 listed)
3 - Demolition site
4 - Alton Activity Centre
5 - Alton East (Grade 2 listed)
6 - Pocklington Court

Open Garden Estates
Stop the demolition of London’s social housing and fight for our council estates!

Designed by a London County Council design team led by Rosemary
Stjernstedt, the estate is renowned for its mix of low and high-rise
modernist architecture consisting of Alton East (1958) styled a subtle
Scandinavian-influenced vernacular and its slightly later counterpart:
Alton West (1959).

Residents are currently fighting Wandsworth Council, which in the teeth
of objections plans to demolish 330 households, the adjacent
commercial heart of the Estate on Denmark Avenue, the Library and
Allbrook House which were strong contenders for listed building status -
all of these set within the superb green, open, airy environs. The Alton
Activity Centre (children’s play and development centre) has already this
year been all but closed down, and ‘conveniently’ abuts on to the
demolition zone.

The planning process has not taken the views of residents into account
at all.

Hosted by Alton Regeneration Watch
www.altonwatch.org.uk
Facebook: Alton Regeneration Watch
Twitter: @AltonWatch

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facing demolition, and contact eviction resistance groups.

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Open Garden Estates at Old Tidemill Garden with Crossfields Estates.

We want the appointed developers of Deptford Southern Housing Site to go back to the drawing board and change their plans in line with what the community really needs, which is access to quality public open space and affordable housing that reflects real living wages. To do this we must convince the council planning department to reconsider the developers proposals and instead, listen to the voice of Deptford and its communities.

Deptford Southern Housing Site consists of Old Tidemill Primary School and its grounds, Reginald House and the adjacent Giffin Street car-park. It meets Frankham House to the East, Reginald Road to the South, Giffin Street to the North, Reginald House and Princess Louise Building to the West. All these residents will be affected by the development and sites all over Deptford are seeing the impacts of development on their communities.

Open Garden Estates is a chance for residents of neighbouring estates to come together at Old Tidemill Garden and stand up for a better deal for Deptford. The aim of the event is to get as many residents down as possible, to share what the development means to them. Its also a chance to share information about the regeneration process, and advice on how you can fight against the threat it presents to our homes and lives. Lastly, it is to celebrate the places and communities we live in, the public spaces we all enjoy and the diverse cultural and social connections that make-up Deptford’s strong identity.

https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-old-tidemill-wildlife-garden
http://crossfields.blogspot.co.uk
http://oldtidemillgarden.wix.com/deptford
https://www.facebook.com/oldtidemillgarden/

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Open Garden Estates
Stop the demolition of London’s social housing and PIGHT for our council estates!

Saturday 18 June 2016

Open Garden Estates 11 – 6pm
- View drawings of alternative plans. If we can imagine a better neighbourhood, we can negotiate a better Deal for Deptford.
- Hear the truth about the regeneration process, a round table discussion. What does development mean to you? Are you negatively or positively affected by it or don’t you know either way?
- Food, music, banners and garden activities. Join in and make banners, take part in Garden_lab activities and enjoy some delicious food and live music.
Warwick Road Estate
Pembroke Road, London W8 6PW
Sunday 19 June

‘Gardens in the Sky’
Warwick Road Estate - which consists of Chesterton Square and Broadwood Terrace, sitting atop a large cleaning depot and offices - is home to around 350 people (tenants and leaseholders), in 116 homes. Many of the residents are elderly, and have been living there long-term.

The estate was built between 1972 and 1975, designed by Arup Associates; and won a Department of the Environment award for good housing design in 1976. RBKC currently plan to fully demolish it and replace it with nearly 300 homes. Last year, in a high-profile campaign, residents applied for a Grade II listing - which was rejected because RBKC had made an advance application to the Secretary of State to grant a Certificate of Immunity from listing (which residents only discovered many months later, when the application was finally submitted).

“The chief element of the design is the conjunction of the austere and even forbidding mass of the depot with the intimate scale of the housing around spacious and well planted enclosures, especially in Chesterton Square. The housing itself is simple and unassertive, and the setting provides a remarkable degree of peace and seclusion in a particularly noisy part of Kensington.” - Survey of London: Volume 42, Kensington Square To Earl’s Court. Originally published by London County Council, London, 1986.

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Somers Town Estates

1. Chalton Gallery (Exhibition)
2. Churchway Estate
3. Oakshott Court
4. Polygon Road open space
5. Plot 10 Adventure Playground
6. Coopers Lane estate
7. Coopers Lane TRA Community Garden
8. Purchase Street Open Space

'Housing is not enough'

Located in inner city London, Somers Town was a unique social housing project designed for people in a community. A walk through the area is a journey through the development of social housing and community.

Bordered by the fast-changing NIC, threatened by HS2, undermined by Crossrail 2 and facing the possibility of the local council building luxury housing on its parks, Somers Town is at a turning point: one that many fear could extinguish its existing community. This is why it is timely to reflect on what it means to be a community and on the future of social housing.

Somers Town: What future? invites you to come and take part with this community in a space to give voice to its identity, vitality and hopes for a future.

The programme of walks and workshops, 'somerstownwishes' - documenting of local views on current changes – as well as an exhibition of rare archival as well as crowd sourced photography will tell its story from past to present and debate its uncertain future.

The 3-day event culminates on Saturday in a debate: 'Don’t squeeze us out!' - on housing, community and change - & are there alternatives? - with local activists, architects and politicians.

The event during the festival is a collaboration between Stanley Devlin from the Somers Town Neighbourhood Forum, local artist Diana Foster from START and co produced by the Temporary Action Studio with contributions from local people.

https://somersstownwhatfuture.wordpress.com
http://somerstownart.org

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Ravensbury Grove Estate
Mitcham CR4 4DG
Saturday 18 June 2016
12-2pm

Walking Tour 12-2pm
Take a tour of the idyllic Ravensbury Grove.
Nestled between the National Trust Morden Hall Park and Ravensbury Park, adjacent to the River Wandle, Ravensbury Grove is currently under threat of regeneration and redevelopment.

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After a 3 year ‘consultation’ with local housing association Circle Housing Merton Priory, throughout which residents’ voices were denied, residents received a leaflet informing them of the aims of regeneration.

Circle Housing Merton Priory admitted that they need to double the density of existing housing in order to replace them. The architects involved in the design consultation refuse to engage in further discussions because they have not been directed to do so by Circle Housing.

CHMP have sought permission to destroy the green space between Ravensbury Park and “Ravensbury Village”, thereby destroying an public amenity area that is also key to our area’s character. Placing flats on this space will block out the view of the park, remove a key green space for Ravensbury and jeopardise the very essence of our home area.

Circle Housing’s planning application is now on the Merton Council website: Planning Application number is 16/P1968. You have until 21st June 2016 to respond.

Hosted by Ravensbury Residents Association
www.ravensburygrove.wordpress.com
https://www.facebook.com/ravensbury
https://twitter.com/ravensburygrove

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Cressingham Gardens incorporates 306 low-rise homes in lush, green surroundings adjacent to Brockwell Park. It was built in the 1960s by Ted Hollamby - Chief Architect for Lambeth from 1962; the director of architecture, planning and development at LCC from 1969 - 1981; follower of William Morris and John Ruskin.

Since being told their estate was to be one of the 6 included in Lambeth’s regeneration programme at 2012 - after years of neglect - residents at Cressingham Gardens have galvanised and made it clear that they will not idly stand by as their homes are razed to the ground. They took Lambeth to court over not seriously considering any other option but full demolition, and won. Lambeth were forced to review all options again, including repairing the existing estate. Residents then developed a extremely thorough, fully-costed, People’s Plan, which was hastily dismissed after a few days - just before a decision to go ahead with demolition was made. The fight continues!

https://savecressingham.wordpress.com
https://www.facebook.com/SaveCressinghamGardens/

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Edmundsbury Court Estate
Brixton, London SW9 8AL
18 & 19 June 2016

Highlights:
1 - 100 Fruit Trees
2 - Hanging Baskets
3 - Edible Garden
4 - Water Garden
5 - Shade Garden
6 - Flower Beds
7 - Compost Garden
8 - Propogation Garden
9 - 'Royal' Private Garden
10 - Orchard

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http://edmundsbury.org.uk/
We also designed and produced these 10 ft by 5 ft banners which were printed and distributed to every participating estate for display on the street.

These are also intended to be able to be used for future campaigns, and specifically were designed to create connections between the participating estate.
COLLABORATIONS

London Festival of Architecture

ASH put forward Open Garden Estates for inclusion in the London Festival of Architecture, a yearly event which takes place throughout June. We were accepted and subsequently chosen as one of their top 10 events in June.

Inclusion in this event provided additional press and publicity through their own website and PR, and in addition opened up the event to an architectural audience.

Street Orchestra London

In addition, ASH invited Street Orchestra London to participate in Open Garden Estates, and a performance at Central Hill Estate was thus incorporated into part of their first London tour on the Saturday 18th June.
EVENTS

SILCHESTER & LANCASTER WEST ESTATES, Lancaster Gate
Saturday: 12pm: walking tour / 2-4pm: exhibition / 3pm: walking tour.
Sunday: 12pm: walking tour / 12.30 people’s picnic / 2-4pm: exhibition / 3pm: walking tour.

WARWICK ROAD ESTATE, Kensington
Sunday: 12pm: international picnic / 3pm: gardener’s tour.

SOMERS TOWN, Camden
Saturday: 11-1pm: art workshop / 12pm: walking tour / 4pm: open debate.

ALTON EAST & WEST ESTATES, Roehampton
Saturday: 11am: walking tour.
Sunday: 2pm: walking tour.

OLD TIDEMILL GARDENS & CROSSFIELD ESTATE, Deptford
Saturday: 11-6pm: alternative designs, round table, food.

RAVENSBURY GROVE ESTATE, Mitcham
Saturday: 12-2pm: walking tour.

EDMUNDSBURY COURT, Brixton:
Saturday: 12-4pm: gardens open.

CRESSINGHAM GARDENS ESTATE, Brixton
Saturday: 10-5pm, open gardens / 11am & 3pm: walking tours.

MACINTOSH COURT, Streatham
Sunday: 2pm: naming ceremony / 2.30pm: tour / 3.30pm talks by residents, architect Kate Macintosh and ASH / 4.30pm: refreshments.

CENTRAL HILL ESTATE: Crystal Palace
Saturday: 9am: street artists / 11am: guided tour / 11am onward: ASH exhibition & food stall / 1pm: Street Orchestra / 2pm: guided tour / 2.30pm: Film screening / 4pm: children’s painting; balloon release & puppet show / 4.30: film screening
The most successful events were ones where we were able to contribute to the organisation of the events, notably Central Hill for whom we had arranged the exhibition of the Alternatives to Demolition, the Street Orchestra and puppet show.
Macintosh Court

Macintosh Court was also very well attended, for whom we arranged the architect Kate Macintosh to perform the renaming ceremony of the estate.

We also designed and printed blue plaques, which the residents were all given in recognition of their successful campaign to list and save their estate from demolition.

A report of the Macintosh Court event and campaign can be found here:

https://architectsforsocialhousing.wordpress.com/2016/06/21/macintosh-court-the-campaign-continues/

Attendance: approx 60
Tidemill Wildlife Garden

Attendance: approx 30
Silchester and Lancaster West estates

Exhibition of work about the estates with community based artist Constantine Gras.

Attendance: approx 60

Resident led walk around the estates
Somers Town Estates

Walking tours

Opening night of Somers Town Open Garden Estates weekend exhibition

Attendance: approx 50
Photos: David Roberts
Cressingham Gardens

Walking tours and discussion of housing issues, including Cressingham’s Peoples Plan

Attendance: approx 40
Alton East and West Estates

Walking tours of both Alton East and West Estates took place over the weekend, attended by around 20 visitors.

The regeneration schemes were discussed as well as the quality of space, architecture and landscape.

Attendance: approx 20
Ravensbury Grove

Walking tours of the estate and nearby Wandle River

Attendance: approx 20
Warwick Road Estate

Composed of 116 homes and home to around 350 residents, Warwick Road estate is threatened with total demolition by royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC).

To celebrate this intimate and intelligently designed social landscape, the residents arranged a picnic in their ‘Gardens in the Sky’: 
PARTICIPATION

Altogether there were around 30 organisers over around 3-4 months and on average approximately 50-150 people took part at each event, so around 500 people overall would have directly participated in the events across the two days, while indirectly - through a conjunction of social media (twitter and Facebook), leafletting, press and TV coverage, around 10-20,000 people would be aware of the event.

DOCUMENTATION

Film Documentation:
All our events were filmed, and some short films have already been distributed online such as a short film on the event at Central Hill Estate: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPUmX3uzfy4
The event at Macintosh Court: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XnhaRCrUr4

We are intending to put all our footage together into a larger full length film, but due to the large amount of footage, this has not yet been achieved and we are looking for some additional funding to complete this.

Photographic documentation
We are still collating and uploading photographic documentation of each event to the website.

PUBLICATIONS and PRESS

Evening Standard
Open Garden Estates was identified in the Evening Standard as one of the Top 10 London Festival of Architecture events in June 2016:
http://www.homesandproperty.co.uk/home-garden/interiors/design-news/london-festival-of-architecture-june-2016-14-unmissable-events-including-free-talks-tours-and-a101596.html

SW Londoner
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XYdSFa3_2s

Inside Housing
An Article by Simon Elmer and Geraldine Dening about the event:
http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/green-jungles/7015655.article

Brixton Buzz
http://www.brixtonbuzz.com/2016/06/south-london-council-estates-open-up-their-gardens-to-raise-awareness-of-demolition-threats/

Inside Croydon:
https://insidecroydon.com/2016/06/17/central-hills-open-weekend-to-show-the-estate-they-are-in/

BBC:
BBC London filmed our event at Central Hill Estate and this was broadcast the following week.

We have been approached by BBC for a longer film about the work Architects for Social Housing does with estates of which Open Garden Estates would be a contributing factor. This obviously relies on the event taking place again next year for which we have yet to have obtained funding.
Report compiled by Geraldine Dening and Simon Elmer of
Architects for Social Housing with thanks to:

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