

# The Eastend Eye

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Commonwealth Games Village



whose future?

## A Housing Legacy?

Housing  
Special

### Playing games with homes and lives

This special issue investigates housing conditions in the East End in a period of housing crisis. What's happening with the Games Village? The Clyde Gateway regeneration promises 10,000 homes, but what kind of homes and who for? What impact will 'the bedroom tax' and housing benefit changes have on East Enders? How are Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) being used to displace the poor?

Large-scale 'mega-events' and 'regeneration' are now routinely used for aggressive property development and gentrification, increasing property and tax bases, and inevitably forcing less well-off people out of 'regenerated

areas' through land speculation, rent increases and the cost of living. All this, of course, is justified with bullshit about the 'common good' and 'legacy'.

The Athletes Village in Dalmarnock, currently under phased construction for the Games 2014, is allegedly a sign of great progress in Dalmarnock and Glasgow. But is this really the case? We know that only 300 out of a total of 1,469 homes will be available as "socially rented". Subtracting the 197 social sector homes that were lost last year through right to buy and demolition, this represents a commitment of 103 social sector homes from the Commonwealth

Games - not something to be overwhelmed about when Glasgow has lost over 60,000 social rented homes since 1991.

News has also come to light that the second phase of the development - 700 homes on top of the first phase - is not guaranteed to go ahead, which may mean further cuts to social rented housing at the Village site. This makes a mockery of the claim that the Athletes Village is somehow an asset for local people and is merely "on loan" to the Games.

If you want to know what's really happening in the East End, read on.

# The Bedroom Tax

No alternative for 'under occupiers'

—Demo!—  
Saturday  
30th March  
Assemble George  
Square 11am  
March to Glasgow  
Green 12am



Housing benefit reforms will put Glasgow residents at risk of rent arrears, eviction and potential homelessness. Social housing residents deemed to have an extra bedroom - or be "under occupying" - will be hit with a 14 to 25% reduction in housing benefit from April 2013. Local residents will either have to meet the extra costs themselves or attempt to downsize through local housing associations.

Downsizing may not be possible for many though. Research has shown that there is an insufficient stock of one-bedroom homes throughout the UK to provide for those who require them and the Scottish Government has conceded that homelessness could be a consequence of such changes. This admission further highlights the vast gulf between housing need and actual provision within Scotland - and particularly Glasgow - which has been hit with continual cuts to public housing since the 1980s.

This reduction is most noticeable in terms of the number of council houses in Scotland,

which has fallen by around 48% from September 1997 to September 2011. 300,000 council houses have been lost nationally in the last 15 years (150,000 sales to sitting tenants, 100,000 to stock transfer, 50,000 demolished). Glasgow has no remaining council housing. Such statistics highlight a deficit in housing provision for Glasgow residents and also undermine recent SNP boasts about the abolition of homelessness in Scotland.

The bedroom tax will result in the majority of "under occupying" residents being expected to pay an extra £624 per year in rent. Solicitor Mike Dailly argued recently that the policy will cause "misery, stress and serious worry for many tenants, and extra administrative costs and problems for social landlords". He highlighted how the changes will be likely to drive people into cramped and poor houses similar to nineteenth century slum conditions. Dailly was speaking at a recent meeting in Govan where the local community and

others have already gathered to discuss a 'bedroom tax' campaign. Similar meetings have taken place across the UK, with urgent local responses to the upcoming changes.

The coalition government have implemented many controversial austerity changes. This is just another example of an unfair benefit reform targeting those with little or no alternative. The decision to cut housing benefit is not supported by a sufficient housing stock to accommodate those who will be unable to maintain rent payments and find themselves at risk of eviction from their homes. The policy is bound to force residents into the private property market, which is similarly unforgiving towards residents on low incomes. Meetings are already taking place in Glasgow, and across the UK.

As Housing Charity, Shelter Scotland report, there are fewer social homes for rent in Scotland than at any time since 1959. The need for renewed campaigning on public housing is pressing.

# Social Housing Deficit

## False promises for social housing in the East End



Artists Impression; Commonwealth Village

Clyde Gateway Urban Regeneration Company (URC) was established in 2007, to cover the areas of Bridgeton, Dalmarnock, Farme Cross, Shawfield and Rutherglen. It is a coalition of interests comprised of city councillors from Glasgow City Council and South Lanarkshire Council, and representatives from business and construction firms.

Clyde Gateway is responsible for “spearheading” a 20 year regen programme which regularly makes the following claims in promotional literature: 20,000 new jobs, 10,000 new homes, 400,000 square metres of new business space, £1.5 billion of private sector investment.

We have attempted to extract more detail on the claim that 10,000 new homes will be built in East Glasgow by 2030. There is no substantive evidence available in Clyde Gateway literature on this issue. Where will those homes be? What tenure mix? How was the figure of 10,000 arrived at? Who will be able to afford these houses? Who will own the land and

property, and who will eventually profit?

We have requested this information from the Board of Directors of Clyde Gateway URC. An initial response from Jim Clark, a Senior Manager, admitted the figure of 10,000 was made up to get people to sign up to the Clyde Gateway URC, and will now be subject to re-definition, and that it will take up to a year for a revised figure to be published.

This is deeply discouraging in the context of Glasgow’s housing crisis. Between 1991 and 2008, social rented housing in the city was reduced (mainly through demolition and right-to-buy) by 60,000 homes, while the private sector grew by 67,500 homes: a massive swing to private housing. By 2018 private sector housing is estimated to take up to 70% of Glasgow’s total, with social rented housing falling a further 14,000 homes. Together with housing benefits cuts, the dreaded ‘bedroom tax’, and ever-expanding waiting lists, the housing crisis is escalating.

Given the property and business interests of those on the Clyde Gateway board, we are deeply sceptical about social housing promises in the East End. Chair of the board is Neil McDonald, who is also Chair of construction firm Barr and Wray. Other members of the board have day jobs with Scottish Enterprise, Cruden Estates, UK Steel Enterprise, Namana Properties - the property and business interests are clear.

With a budget approaching £2 billion, the Clyde Gateway project - lasting a projected 20 odd years - should surely address some of the massive gaps left in public housing building and maintenance following privatisation, instead we know it will only add to the property portfolio of land management and investment firms, making no significant difference to the housing crisis as working class people and the unemployed face it.

# For the Greater Good?

## Displacement - by any means necessary

Compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) were established in post-war planning acts to deal with the problem of profiteering slum landlords in areas of redevelopment and new public housing construction. But socially progressive legislation to curb private landlords has been perverted to benefit land and property developers at the expense of poorer working class residents - all in the name of 'the greater good'.

CPOs are now used systematically to dispossess and displace people from their homes and livelihoods in a direct transfer of property rights to the development industry. Dalmarnock (the site of the Commonwealth Games Village development) is a glaring example.

While the Jaconelli family and local shopkeepers have been offered desultory compensation packages, and violently evicted through compulsory purchase powers (in the case of the Jaconelli's), developers and land speculators have been offered hugely overblown compensation packages with no threat of CPOs.

Example 1: Despite an independent valuation of £7.4 million, Willie Haughey - a major donor to the Scottish Labour Party - received £17 million in compensation for his business premises on the route of the M74 motorway - a key part of redevelopment in the East End.

Example 2: Developer Charles Price, bought property along Springfield Road in 2005-2006 for an amount in the region of

£8million, then sold it to the Council for £17,000,000 in 2008 for a £9million profit!

But while these developers 'came to an agreement' with the Council, no such delicacies were afforded the Jaconelli family who were brutally evicted by over 100 police officers through CPO for refusing to accept a paltry £30,000 for their home. This is the reason why the family remained in a derelict home on a demolished estate without services for six years.

After resourceful campaigning and wide support, the Jaconelli's have now been offered £90,000 in compensation. This is closer to the market value of their home, but still bears no relation to the costs borne by the family to heat their home in a row of empty tenements. But being offered compensation and receiving it are two different stories - the Jaconelli's remain homeless and without compensation nearly two years after being evicted.

In the knowledge that CPO's and evictions are increasingly targeting the less well off and the less connected, Margaret Jaconelli has helped set up 'The Anti-Eviction Alliance', turning the campaign of one family, unfairly treated, into a deeper issue linked to the overall question of development and speculation on land and the use of CPOs as a tool for developers against working class people.

### East End Eye Online:

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Glasgow Games Monitor 2014 is a group of residents, activists and campaigners who are concerned about the effects of the regeneration in the East End of Glasgow through projects such as the Commonwealth Games and the Clyde Gateway Initiative.

This special housing issue was written by Glasgow Housing Action group.

Glasgow Housing Action is a news, analysis and resource site for housing struggles in the city, pro-active in supporting grass-roots struggles for the right to space in Glasgow.

[glasgowhousingaction.org/](http://glasgowhousingaction.org/)

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If you know of anything which you feel should be reported in the East End Eye then please get in touch at:  
[gamesmonitor2014@googlemail.com](mailto:gamesmonitor2014@googlemail.com)

