



## **Grenfell Tower Block burnt in the early hours: most were asleep**

**By**

**Sally Ramage<sup>1</sup>**

**Grenfell Tower block for poor residents in one and two bedroom flats is situated in Kensington, London, an affluent area with multi-million pound homes nearby. Grenfell was recently given a cosmetic facelift costing over £8.6 million – mainly to make it look attractive to the wealthy neighbours**

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who were forced to look at it every day as they went to and from their affluent houses nearby. This cosmetic facelift was undertaken and government funded to appease the parallel rich residents in this cachement area who complained that the ugly sight of this poverty stricken, non-maintained tower block building housing poor residents was bringing down the price of their own lavish properties.

We must remember also that despite the abject poverty of pockets of people living in London- London is the capital city of the United Kingdom ('UK'). Covering an area of 607 square miles, it is the largest metropolitan area in the United Kingdom. It is located on the River Thames. London attracts millions of visitors. London is the most-visited city in the world and the Tower of London, Kew Gardens, Palace of Westminster, St Margaret's Church, Buckingham Palace, Piccadilly Circus, and Trafalgar Square are London's major attractions.

### Largest financial centre of the world- yet millions live in abject poverty

London is indeed the largest financial centre in the world-yet London has millions of poverty-stricken residents. One of the largest economies in the world, with a mixed market economy, this country has millions pf people living in dire poverty. Overall, England, as part of the United Kingdom of

England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, is divided into nine regions that are further divided into smaller administrative units, namely, East Midlands, East of England, Greater London, North East England, North West England, South East England, West Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber. The United Kingdom has millions of people living in dire poverty- on the one end of the spectrum- and millionaires galore on the other, a true dichotomy.

## UK Government

England has a parliamentary form of government which works under a constitutional monarchy. The leader of the largest party in the House of Lords is elected as the prime minister. He then selects a cabinet to run the government; the tenure of the government is five years. (As shown in the map, England is bordered by Scotland to the north; Wales to the west; the Irish Sea to the north-west, the Celtic Sea to the south-west, the North Sea to the east and the English Channel to the south. The English Channel separates the country from continental Europe).

## *Holocaust wish on the poor among London's wealthy*

There are many wealthy people who would like to see the hub of London- the poor- wiped off London- so that they could take hold of prime property to sell to Russian Oligarchs and the like- because in England, money is God, and no religious respect, and no respect for poor people, not even poor white people. It matters not that wealthy people allowed into the UK cannot speak much English- all that matters is the size of their wealth, because, as we all know, this is the money-laundering capital of the world. (The Swiss hid the stolen money that governors stole from third world countries. They also hid the valuable diamonds, gold, fine art etc that Hitler's regime in Germany pawned with them in order to obtain cash to make missiles and killer warplanes). The Swiss use strict privacy laws to protect *proceeds of crime from around the world*. However, in London, the government use a different strategy- lies and deception.

## *Liars Poker*

They can lie for Satan- all of them: for money over the safety of their people's lives and the tragic destruction of Grenfell Tower Block and death

of dozens of people in the early hours of the morning in June 2017 in London, UK.

### ***The Criminal LAWYER***

*Bloomsbury Professional's The Criminal LAWYER* covered the fire at another London tower block, Lakanhal House, in Camberwell, where fire in the year 2009 caused six fatalities.

It has now been revealed that the London, Kensington's Grenfell Tower Block's residents association and another residents' group *Grenfell Action Group*, had warned in Blog posts and to the government housing authorities that there would be a catastrophic imminent fire risk in this building. (See this blogpost in APPENDIX A. See also APPENDIX B of the *Manifesto of the professional group named Architects for Social Housing; and APPENDIX C-an article by Brent Action Group*).

The government placated the residents by paying for an external 'facelift' of the building costing several million pounds, which facelift itself is now being queried as aiding the forceful spread of the fire which burned for over 24 hours.

## **Corporate Manslaughter Committed at Grenfell Tower**

**This serious and major fire has quickly been acknowledged as a health and safety crime (against the 500 or more residents) committed by the government and building contractors who caused so many deaths. This is corporate manslaughter.**

**After 18 hours of the tower block burning away, there were 12 known deaths of residents of Grenfell Tower Block with 79 persons known to be in various London hospitals, with over 20 very seriously burnt and hospitalised. The residents were utterly desperate as the fire swept through the 120 apartments in the Grenfell Tower Block in Kensington. Even before the UK Corporate Manslaughter Act was passed.**

## **Inadequately equipped firemen arrived with short ladders**

**Residents were ordered to stay in their apartments. Firemen told residents to stay put in their apartments until rescuers reached them. Luckily many ignored this order and ran for their lives, but the British are culturally known for following rules, queuing, etc and many died because they were told to stay in their apartments until Fire Rescue Service reached their floor, whilst fire engulfed all twenty-four floors. There were no sprinklers**

or fire alarm system. Residents had never had training as to what to do in case of fire.

People are always quick to find excuses for the incompetence with which they perform paid work, be it government ministers or firemen. We can look as far back as the horrendous Aberfan disaster in 1966, when a mountain of coal remains slid down and covered a primary school in South Wales –situated at the bottom of this MAN MADE mountain and killed 144 persons, mostly children, who died when the coal slag heap slurry suffocated them. Immediately, the National Coal Board denied responsibility, and blamed ‘a coincidence of a set of geological factors, which it claimed, collectively created a particularly critical geological environment (see *Aberfan, Report of the Tribunal*, 1967, at para 190). This is the price society pays for educating people to a high level without thought of educating them about ethics and humanity. We see in among lawyers, ruthlessly finding loopholes for their clients, be they governments or the man in the street.

## Causation

Legal philosophers Hart and Honore (1985) suggested that legal liability attaches on the basis of the abnormality of the cause. Later, Norrie (1991)

Stated that ‘attribution lies on the fault line between the view of individual agency and the social contexts within which individual agency is rooted, the question of legal causation must always ultimately rely upon a closure of the issue brought about from outside by policy argument.

### International design guidelines

Indeed current guidelines for high-rise buildings in the UK, Europe, Asia, America and elsewhere include statutory fire safety design requirements of evacuation routes, compartmentation and structural fire design. The evacuation route is the most important design element regarding safety of residents in a building fire and such evacuation route must allow occupants to escape as quickly as possible, while sheltering them from smoke and flames. Evacuation routes may be external or internal or both.

### Lack of fire safety systems at Grenfell Tower

Even though Grenfell Tower was built in 1974 at a time when the building rules and regulations were not as clear and well developed as present day, *nevertheless*, there is documentary evidence and virtual electronic evidence that the residents of Grenfell were *not* happy with their fire safety escape route because they made formal complaints through their *residents association committee* to the building management over many years and

they also ‘blogged’ on the Internet in November 2016 about their dissatisfaction regarding fire safety.

### **No working escape route**

One alleged central fire stair well on which 600 people must escape fire Grenfell Tower building had one escape route: a central stairwell and the Local Authority’s annual fire risk assessors should have recommended or been instructed by court order that other evacuation routes must be made available to the Grenfell House residents and visitors.

### **No fire-resistant doors in the 120 apartments in Grenfell Tower**

No fire-resistant doors were installed to slow the speed of potential fire spread. Annual fire risk assessors should have inspected and studied Grenfell Tower inside and outside for compartments to stop the fire spreading quickly. This can take the form of fire-resistant doors and walls to confine a fire, or at least slow the speed at which it can spread. Some buildings include active fire protection methods such as water sprinklers and adequate supply of water at hand.

## **Keeping the paperwork ‘happy’ in case of litigation**

Indeed after the 2009 Lakanal House fire and fatalities, and published inquest report in 2-13, the then government drafted a Parliamentary report recommending that sprinkler systems be installed in tower blocks *across the UK*, but it was never acted on, keeping the paperwork seemingly compliant. Grenfell Tower Block’s residents action group, aka, (website at <https://grenfellactiongroup.wordpress.com/2016/11/20/kctmo-playing-with-fire/>), stated that their warnings on their blogsite and to the Local Authority and Management - about a lack of fire safety measures were never heeded.

## **Materials used: concrete and recent flammable cladding**

The fire risk level of any building also depends on its structural design, i.e., the capacity of its materials to resist fire. Different materials receive different fire ratings. For example, steel buildings are normally required to have structural elements such as beams or columns that can stand for one to two hours with the help of fire protection material such as intumescent paint, which swells up when heated to protect the material beneath.

Concrete is a material which rates highly for fire resistance and concrete structures can help to prevent building collapse in case of fire, as well as

making it safer to use helicopters to quell the flames from above, Such a method can dump up to 9000 litres of water at a time, to extinguish a fire.

### Cosmetic cladding treated as insulation-thus exempt from taxation

However the cosmetic cladding which cost £8.7 million as refurbishment is highly flammable because of its high thermal conductivity. Grenfell Tower Block lacked water sprinklers; fire alarm systems and sufficient fire evacuation staircases, external and/or internal.

### **Inadequate fire rescue service**

Although the fire rescue service arrived within minutes of a telephone call about Grenfell House on fire, they had no fire suitable- rescue -vehicles because none of their ladders or water hoses reached higher than the twelfth floor.

### *Poverty at Grenfell House in contrast to City Buildings*

*The privileged have the best that money can buy. The Oligarchs in London have more money than many third world countries altogether.*

## Where are the lawyers? Is the media running this country?

The Prime Minister of the UK has hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of police surrounding her, yet the Prime Minister of the UK, who is NOT lawyer but a geography graduate with no post-graduate qualifications was privileged to be given a job at the Privy Council and then as Home Secretary and now Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Yet the Prime Minister of the UK, with millions of pounds at her disposal- FAILED to secure someone experienced and qualified in **law** at post-graduate level at least- to instruct *her on the law*.

## Residents of 400 tower blocks in the UK at risk of death by fire

If one considers the recent terrorist offences in the United Kingdom, the whole of London is at risk merely due to no high ladders to reach people say at the City of London's *Gherkin* high rise building<sup>1</sup>. However, the difference between Grenfell Tower Block housing poverty stricken residents and the elitist Gherkin City Office building is that the Gherkin has high technology sprinkler systems, automatic electronic alerts to security agencies and the best that money can buy.

## **Death toll at Grenfell Tower Block fire 17 June 2017 is 58**

As at Saturday 17 June 2017, the Metropolitan Police announced the death toll to 58 persons- from 6 on Monday; and 20 on Tuesday.

## **No government –paid trauma counselling for fire victims**

The government has announced provision of trauma counselling for those fire fighters working at Grenfell Tower on 12 and 13 June 2017. No such mental health assistance has been promised for the remaining residents of the 600 who had resided at Grenfell House.

## **Police announced launched investigation as at 16 June 2017**

The Metropolitan Police in front of television and other media at Kensington, London, UK, stated that a police investigation is now taking place.

They did not provide the remit for this police investigation and under what legislation it was decided to investigate or what they are investigating.

There will be inquests held in relation to the 58 deaths (to date) in this appalling and devastating fire.

## **Will the police seek to influence the inquest?**

**Will the Inquest be heard before the end of the police investigation and so not influence this criminal investigation? This inquest is of particular importance and should not be planned strategically to be abolished because of the announcement of a formal police investigation. This must not be allowed to happen because the INQUEST is important since it allows, through a jury, a voice for public reproach of corporations for their neglect of safety. This particular inquest must take place because it will play a part in not giving too much discretion to the executive arm of London in England. On the other hand, if the inquest takes place after the police investigation is concluded with no resulting prosecution, this would restrain**

**The inquest jury from a finding of ‘unlawful killing of these 58 people. It was the 1988 Fennell report which recommended that where there has been a formal police investigation, an inquest would not be necessary. One can already see the strategies of this government to make light of 58 dead people through government policies of selling off state properties and cronyism of contractual relations.**

## **Can the building contractors be prosecuted for reckless manslaughter or for unlawful act manslaughter?**

In past cases such as the P & O Ferry disaster, where P & O was charged with reckless manslaughter, the charge is unlike a murder charge under common law where proof is required that the defendant intended to cause death or grievous bodily harm.

A person is reckless if he or she or it (the limited company) does an act which in fact creates an obvious and serious risk of causing physical injury and has either failed to give any thought to the possibility of there being any such risk, or has recognised that there was some risk involved and has nevertheless gone on to do it, as in the caselaw of *Tesco Supermarkets v Natrass* (1972). Legal scholar Duff argued that recklessness can be defined as indifference. The indifference which constitutes recklessness is a matter of the practical attitude which the action itself displays. It is not feelings of indifference. Recklessness in corporate crime draws on latent knowledge of risks in general and the attitudes it represents of not caring for the victim's life.

## **Suggested further reading**

**Beer, J. (2011) *Public Inquiries*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.**

**Editor, 'A residents' group has warned *for years* about an imminent fire risk in the 24-storey block where hundreds lived', *Independent*, Wednesday 14 June 2017.**

**Heyman, S. (2008), *Free speech and human dignity*, US: Yale University Press.**

**Herring, J. (2012) *Great debates: criminal law*, Hampshire- UK: Palgrave.**

**Partnoy, F. (2003) *Infectious greed*, London: Profile Books.**

***R v P & O European Ferries (Dover) Ltd* [1991] 93 Crim App R 73.**

**Norrie, A. (1991, 'A critique of criminal causation', *Modern Law Review*, 54: 685.**

**United Kingdom Newspapers; Sky Television, BBC News, June 2017.**

**Wells, C. (2011) *Abuse of Process*, Bristol: Jordan.**

# APPENDIX A

## KCTMO – Playing with fire!

Posted on November 20, 2016 by  
grenfellactiongroup

‘It is a truly terrifying thought but the Grenfell Action Group firmly believe that only a catastrophic event will expose the ineptitude and incompetence of our landlord, the KCTMO, and bring an end to the dangerous living conditions and neglect of health and safety legislation that they inflict upon their tenants and leaseholders. We believe that the KCTMO are an evil, unprincipled, mini-mafia who have no business to be charged with the responsibility of looking after the every day management of large scale social housing estates and that their sordid collusion with the RBKC Council is a recipe for a future major disaster.

Unfortunately, the Grenfell Action Group have reached the conclusion that only an incident that results in serious loss of life of KCTMO residents will allow the external scrutiny to occur that will shine a light on the practices that characterise the malign governance of this non-functioning organisation.

We believe that the KCTMO have ensured their ongoing survival by the use of proxy votes at their Annual General Meeting that see them returned with a mandate of 98% in favour of the continuation of their inept and highly dangerous management of our homes.

It is no coincidence that the 98% is the same figure that is returned by the infamous Kim Jong-un of North Korea who claims mass popularity while reputedly enslaving the general population and starving the majority of his people to death.

It is our conviction that a serious fire in a tower block or similar high density residential property is the most likely reason that those who wield power at the KCTMO will be found out and brought to justice!

The Grenfell Action Group believe that the KCTMO narrowly averted a major fire disaster at Grenfell Tower in 2013 when residents experienced a period of terrifying power surges that were subsequently found to have been caused by faulty wiring. We believe that our attempts to highlight the seriousness of this event were covered up by the KCTMO with the help of the *RBKC Scrutiny Committee* who refused to investigate the legitimate concerns of tenants and leaseholders. We have blogged many times on the subject of fire safety at Grenfell Tower and we believe that these

investigations will become part of damning evidence of the poor safety record of the KCTMO should a fire affect any other of their properties and cause the loss of life that we are predicting:

<https://grenfellactiongroup.wordpress.com/2013/01/28/fire-safety-scandal-at-lancaster-west/>

<https://grenfellactiongroup.wordpress.com/2013/01/30/more-on-fire-safety/>

<https://grenfellactiongroup.wordpress.com/2013/02/21/another-fire-safety-scandal/>

<https://grenfellactiongroup.wordpress.com/2016/01/24/grenfell-tower-still-a-fire-risk/>

**In October 2015 a fire ripped through another KCTMO property, the Adair Tower fire in North Kensington**

Fire causing mass panic and resulting in a number of residents taken to hospital suffering from smoke inhalation. It is reported that had it not been for the swift actions of the London Fire Brigade the consequences of this fire and potential loss of life could have been much worse.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/11967592/50-rescued-from-burning-flats-in-Kensington.html>

In the aftermath of the Adair Tower fire the London Fire Brigade found that the KCTMO had not been looking after the safety of residents properly and issued an Enforcement Order compelling them to improve the fire safety in the escape staircases and to provide self closing devices to all the tower block's front doors.

**A further audit by the London Fire Brigade of the neighbouring HAZELWOOD TOWER (located alongside ADAIR TOWER)**

found similar breaches of health and safety legislation and an Enforcement Order was also issued for this property forcing the TMO to address the serious concerns of the Fire Brigade's inspectors.

What is shocking is that a decade ago a fatality occurred due to a fire at Hazelwood Tower and the Fire Investigation Team ordered that the grills on the fire escape staircase be covered over. This never happened and it is believed that the uncovered grills at Adair House (Hazelwood Tower's twin block) acted like a chimney and were responsible for the accelerated spread of the fire and smoke damage.

In the last twenty years and despite the terrifying power surge incident in 2013 and recent fire at Adair Tower, the residents of Grenfell Tower have received no proper fire safety instructions from the KCTMO.

**Residents were informed by a temporary notice stuck in the lift and one announcement in a recent regeneration newsletter that they should remain in their flats in the event of fire.**

**There are not and never have been any instructions posted in the Grenfell Tower noticeboard or on individual floor as to how residents should act in event of a fire.**

**Anyone who witnessed the recent tower block fire at Shepherds Court, in nearby Shepherd's Bush, will know that the advice to remain in our properties would have led to certain fatalities and we are calling on our landlord to re-consider the advice that they have so badly circulated.**

**The Grenfell Action Group predict that it won't be long before the words of this blog come back to haunt the KCTMO management and we will do everything in our power to ensure that those in authority know how long and how appallingly our landlord has ignored their responsibility to ensure the health and safety of their tenants and leaseholders. They can't say that they haven't been warned!**

**ENDS+**

# **APPENDIX B**

## **ARCHITECTS FOR SOCIAL HOUSING**

### **MANIFESTO**

*Architects for Social Housing* (ASH) was set up in March 2015 in order to respond architecturally to London's housing crises. We are a working collective of architects, urban designers, engineers, surveyors, planners, film-makers, photographers, web designers, artists, writers and housing campaigners operating with developing ideas under set principles. First among these is the conviction that increasing the housing capacity on existing council estates, rather than redeveloping them as luxury apartments, is a more sustainable solution to London's housing needs than the demolition of the city's social housing during a housing shortage, enabling, as it does, the continued existence of the communities they house.

ASH offers support, advice and expertise to residents who feel their interests and voices are increasingly marginalised by local councils or housing associations during the so-called 'regeneration' process. Our primary responsibility is to existing residents – tenants and leaseholders alike; but we are also committed to finding viable alternatives to estate demolition that are in the interests of the wider London community.

ASH operates on three levels of activity:

**Architecture**  
**Community**  
and  
**Propaganda.**

*1. We propose* architectural alternatives to council estate demolition through designs for infill, build-over and refurbishment that increase housing capacity on the estates and, by renting or selling a proportion of the new homes on the private market, generate the funds to refurbish the existing council homes, while leaving the communities they currently house intact.

*2. We support* estate communities in their resistance to the demolition of their homes by working closely with residents over an extended period of time, offering them information about estate regeneration and housing policy from a reservoir of knowledge and tactics pooled from similar campaigns across London.

3. *We disseminate* information that aims to counter negative and incorrect perceptions about social housing in the minds of the public, and raise awareness of the role of relevant interest groups, including local authorities, housing associations, property developers and architectural practices, in the regeneration process. Using a variety of means, including protest, publication and propaganda, we are trying to initiate a wider cultural change within the architectural profession.

Whether you are facing the regeneration of your estate and in need of advice, or whether you want to offer your skills, expertise and time to our many projects, please get in contact.

E-mail: [info@architectsfor-socialhousing.co.uk](mailto:info@architectsfor-socialhousing.co.uk)

Twitter: @ASH Housing

Facebook: ASH (Architects for Social Housing)

Events: <http://www.opengardenestates.com>

Author [architectsocialhousing](#)Categories

Posted on March 26, 2015August 14, 2016.

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## **APPENDIX C**

### **Brent Housing Association**

▀ article at <https://brenthousingaction.wordpress.com/2014/03/06/are-international-financiers-are-dominating-the-regeneration-schemes-in-brent/>

**Are international financiers dominating the regeneration schemes in Brent?**

**March 6, 2014 ·  
by brenthousingaction ·  
in BHA Actions,  
Educational events**

Members of Brent Housing Action will today be joining housing activists from across London to demonstrate against the carving up of our city by international financiers and developers at the MIPIM gathering in Cannes next week.

**MIPIM is the world’s biggest property fair, where our cities and our land are up for sale. It takes place in Cannes, bringing together about 20,000 investors, developers, local authorities, and banks to figure out how to carve up our cities and sell off our land.**

The companies which attend MIPIM, and our government “representatives” who share their champagne, are responsible for the eviction of communities, the gentrification of our neighborhoods, and the housing crisis itself.

**This year, on March 12th, people in cities across Europe are taking action to denounce the sale of our cities. The actions have been called by the European Action Coalition for the Right to Housing and the City, and are supported in the UK by the Radical Housing Network. People in London are organising, and plans are brewing. We don’t want Boris Johnson and local councils selling our homes, because we have the rage that comes from our experience of corporate control. We are for quality, secure, truly affordable housing for all, and we will get it.**

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Join us, 6th March, 2.15pm, outside City Hall. Bring stories of your life in the housing crisis, or your struggle against it.

Follow #londonnotforsale for updates

The article below is part of BHA's response to our European colleagues' request for evidence of MIPIM's influence on local regeneration schemes. To view the 2127 investment banks, construction companies, housing providers and local authorities that have specified an interest in financing the "regeneration" of the UK, click [here](#) (please note you have to provide an email address and some personal details).

### **Who owns Brent Housing Partnership and does it matter?\***

Notes on the South Kilburn Estate Regeneration Master plan

Kilburn is part of Brent, a large borough in north-west London. For a number of years Brent was viewed as a traditionally working class area, containing large numbers of economic migrants from Ireland, the Caribbean, the Indian subcontinent and more recently Eastern Europe.

Since 2004 the borough has undergone a number of regeneration plans, the majority of which have involved properties managed by Brent Housing Partnership, an "Arm's Length Management Organisation" (ALMO) which Brent Council was legally obliged to create in 2003 as part of the then government's 'Decent Homes Programme'.

All of the redevelopments – the South Kilburn Estate, the Stonebridge Estate, the Barham Park Estate and renamed Craven Park Estate – have been "mixed tenure" housing, where Housing Associations have acquired many of the properties for shared ownership schemes or private purchase. On the South Kilburn Estate this has meant that many former council tenants have been contractually transferred across to the private landlord system. Craven Park only contains properties for partial or total sale.

Residents of the South Kilburn Estate have regarded the redevelopment of the multiple sites under the current masterplan as a classic example of the arrogance of housing developers, and a lack of due diligence and oversight on the part of

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Brent Council. Housing Activists view it as following the currently fashionable pre-gentrification policies outlined by sociologists such as Loïc Wacquant, under the title ‘territorial stigmatisation’: where locales, and their residents, are deliberately allowed to fall into disrepair with social and economic consequences that allow for Brent Housing Partnership to invoke radical plans to resolve “problem estates”.<sup>1</sup>

Under the remit of improving the area, and adding a planned 2,400 homes along the approximately 1km length of the estate the Council and its appointed developers have wrought destruction amongst the local community.

After the 2004 Masterplan was revised in 2009, the Council finally began the redevelopment and began the process of “decanting” tenants, owners and other occupiers from the Estate through the use of forced rehousing, compulsory purchase orders and either leaving inhabitable flats empty and allowing them to fall into disrepair. Delays, and the loss of revenue, obliged the ALMO to introduce a system of short-term temporary subcontracting wherein new occupants could be moved on at a month’s notice. This indicates the properties were obviously still suitable for habitation.

A Freedom of Information request sent to Brent Council dated 11<sup>th</sup> November 2011 regarding the planned demolition dates shows how poor the Council’s oversight has been – for example Fielding and Bronte House were due for demolition in June 2013, yet the hoardings around these two blocks were only erected in December 2013. The previous section, Phase 1b, was due to be completed in November 2013, yet it is still only half-built. This is a source of major concern for those being decanted. It’s not just a question of being forcibly decanted from your home, or from suffering from the mud, dirt and noise that comes from living alongside a building site... there are no longer any local places to rehouse existing tenants due to the ongoing delays. Tenants are being decanted out of the borough, or being moved into ‘temporary’ accommodation in other sections of the regeneration scheme(s). This has to be perceived as a massive failure on the part of a Council who has consistently made claims that it is working towards creating 3000 affordable new homes by 2018 to try to resolve their housing crisis.

Those tenants who have been successfully rehoused in the new properties have found that they are now in smaller flats with contracts run by the independent Housing Associations involved in the scheme: Network Stadium, Genesis, London and Quadrant (L&Q) and Catalyst.

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Pete Firmin, a local housing activist, points out this will disenfranchise former Brent tenants from direct involvement with the Council's Housing section and place them in the so-called 'affordable' housing market where they have a new private landlord who has been able to charge up to 85% of the current market price. The current market price is easy to work out as the one of the two completed sections of the redevelopment is already partially up for sale; Bourne Place, which consists of 134 apartments has 75 'general needs' flats, 29 shared ownership homes and 30 private sale properties; a one-bedroom flat will start at £284, 950. This is roughly equivalent to a cheap single bed property in the St John's Wood or a similarly flat small flat in Maida Vale or Queen's Park – traditionally "desirable" property ownership areas that form a triangle around the South Kilburn Estate.

This mix of affordable homes and private sales homes, further adds to the lack of truly affordable housing in the borough; in the Phase 1b sector mentioned earlier Catalyst Housing and the construction company Willmott Dixon will only be constructing 122 properties for existing residents – and 86 flats for outright sale. Given the "market rate" indicated above it is perhaps not surprising that in April 2013 the "Welfare Rights Advisory Team" from Network Stadium told two Brent Housing Action activists that the introduction of the Benefits Cap (which arrived in the borough in September of that year) would mean they would be unable to house claimants in their three- or four-bed flat as they "would immediately fall into arrears". The policy of "affordable homes" now also applies to those still managed by BHP. On 26<sup>th</sup> February 2014, South Kilburn Estate residents in Watling Gardens, one of the last remaining Tenant Management Organisation owned by Brent started a campaign to protest a rent rise of £300 per annum.

So how does this relate to MIPIM? Only Catalyst and Willmott Dixon, who are also building the private development at Craven Park in Brent, will apparently be present at this year's event (and Quintain Estates who are about to start a similar project with L&Q).

However, the communities mentioned here have already been subjected to the MIPIM 'effect'.

In 2010 Andy Donald, who is currently the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth made the following statement at MIPIM:

*'What I've learned is, when times are good, the big scale projects work well, but when*

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*times are not so good, it is best to try and present projects to politicians in a more chunked-up way, where they can generate momentum. Once things have started and momentum builds up it is really difficult to stop it, for funders to walk away. So as local authorities we try and take more responsibility to get things started, which might mean acting as a developer, to take things through planning ourselves, which builds confidence.'*

It should also be noted that Brent has signed a new ten year agreement with BHP, soon after the ALMO signed up Tom Bremner, formerly of L&Q, as chief executive. This January BHP appointed two new directors, one of whom was Keith Harley who came from Willmott Dixon. On his appointment Mr Harley commented:

“One of the key aims over the coming years is to increase the number of affordable housing to rent and buy and help deal with the chronic housing shortage in the borough.”

Brent are also currently holding a consultation on whether to declare three of the borough’s wards as “anti-social areas” with the purported intent of issuing “Selective Private Rental Licenses” (an extension of the existing Mandatory and Additional Licenses for House in Multiple Occupation properties) for private landlords in these areas. This will give the Council the option of taking out Compulsory Purchase Orders on those who are deemed to rent properties that are “not up to code” in a new set of standards being issued by the Council. The policy of territorial stigmatisation in the poorest regions of Brent continues.

\*The title is adapted from a MIPIM debating session at this year’s “UK afternoon”: “Who owns the UK and does it matter?” which is seeking investment opportunities for “new prime locations”. ENDS+

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<sup>1</sup> Wacquant,L. (2008) *Urban Outcasts: a comparative sociology of advanced marginality*, Bristol: Polity Press. See pp238-243)