

UNITED WE STAND



The police lie. They said Roger Sylvester threatened his neighbour and that Mark Duggan had a gun. They said Joy Gardner was the most violent woman they'd ever met. They lose, move or destroy evidence and change their stories in court. Since 1990, 1,516 people have been killed by the police - and no-one has been charged.

Because the cops will go to any length to cover themselves, the families and friends of people killed in custody have been denied justice. They have seen their loved ones vilified in the press and the officers who killed them get off scot free.

We support United Families and Friends Campaign, a coalition of those affected by deaths in police, prison and psychiatric custody. Established as a network of Black families, the group now includes the families and friends of people from varied ethnicities. They include the families of Joy Gardner, Mark Duggan, Roger Sylvester, and many others killed in custody in our borough and elsewhere.

If you would like to support the campaign, check out their website: uffcampaign.org. Their annual procession is on 31st October, assemble 12 noon at Trafalgar Square. We'll be there, and we hope to see you there too.

GRAINGER DANGER

Plans to build a 22-storey monstrosity on the corner of Seven Sisters Road and Tottenham High Road were unveiled earlier this year. The mega-structure, at the site of Apex House, will contain 154 homes. None will be what we consider genuinely affordable. The sale of the site has been somewhat of a farce from the beginning and the connections with the Wards Corner site opposite go some way to explaining the dodgy dealings that have taken place.

Back in the summer of 2014, it was announced the building had been sold off to the UK's largest property developer, Grainger, who paid just £3.4 million for the public owned site. A figure the council tried to prevent going public.

The sale didn't go on the open market where by their own admission the Council could have got a better deal. A strange decision for a Council who are forcing through drastic cuts in services due to lack of funds. This smells of corruption, not just bad management.

At the same meeting it was stated the Apex House site could be used to build 100% council housing but, with the cost being some £13 million, it was claimed there was not enough money to fund this kind of much needed housing. Better then to gift a wealthy developer with the opportunity to make a nice little profit at the expense of local people's needs.

Apex House is currently home to the Council's housing office, where people go if they are homeless, facing eviction or struggling to pay their rent. It is somewhat ironic that the council is planning to evict their own staff and squeeze them into Marcus Garvey Library - whose current users are not too

pleased with the idea. As for those seeking help and advice from the housing office, it is highly unlikely that they will be able to afford a home in the new development when completed.

Grainger are also trying to redevelop the Wards Corner site over Seven Sisters tube station. The plans for 198 homes don't include any social housing; although the Council insisted this was a requirement they later backed down, saying they could provide social housing elsewhere. Hence the gift of Apex House.

Grainger have faced stiff opposition from local residents and traders. For the last eight years the Wards Corner Community Coalition (WCC) have been demanding their right to determine their own future and not be forced out by a greedy property developer or uncaring Council.

Despite the setbacks and obstacles put in their way, WCC have shown resilience and a determination to bring their own ideas to the table. Last April they were granted planning permission for their community led plan. WCC are a great example of what can be achieved when people join together to fight back against the bullying tactics of powerful organisations.

Although they have come so far, they still have a battle on their hands to achieve their aim, and need the support of local people to push forward their community plan. And people also need to demand Grainger focus on local needs in their plans for Apex House.

MORE INFO

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WHO WE ARE: In 1991, Haringey Solidarity Group (HSG) emerged from the Anti-Poll Tax campaign, formed by Haringey residents with a wide range of backgrounds and views. We wanted to create a long-term, vibrant, non-hierarchical group, unlike political parties where ambitions and posturing displace real politics.

We believe in ridding ourselves of the current system which places profit and power before people's needs. This involves getting organised, fighting back and collectively taking those decisions which affect our daily lives, communities and workplaces.

We think people must take control of their community and workplace struggles, support each other, encourage practical solidarity, build the necessary skills and knowledge for those struggles and generate strong, permanent, grassroots networks.

Many of us are involved with local residents', community and campaign groups within the borough. We support workers in dispute, campaigns against public service cuts and threatened community amenities. We are active on environmental, housing and claimants' issues and resist oppressive policing and state controls.

We encourage everyone to share their views at our open, monthly meetings where consensus is the aim. We would welcome your involvement at our meetings and discussion evenings and with practical activities including distributing this newsletter and producing other materials including posters and leaflets.

To learn more about HSG visit haringey.org.uk, befriend us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter @hsg, contact us at PO Box 2474, London N8, phone 0845 2235270 or email info@haringey.org.uk

HOMES FOR ALL

The Tories want only rich people to live in London. Since they came to power they have been systematically attacking everything that supports truly affordable housing.

First they introduced the bedroom tax, meaning that all council and housing association tenants with spare bedrooms have to pay extra to stay in their homes - even though there aren't enough smaller homes for everyone to move into.

Then they introduced the benefit cap, which limits the amount of benefits a household can get. Some households have had their housing benefit reduced to a measly 50p a week. From April 2016 the benefit cap will be reduced even further, meaning more and more people unable to pay their rent.

Now they're trying to introduce Pay to Stay: in London, social housing tenants earning £40,000 a year will have to pay market rents to stay in their homes. Not everyone earns this much - but housing in London is so expensive that more than half of those affected won't be able to afford to pay their rent.

If you add the fact that social housing funding has been cut by 60% since 2010, it becomes obvious that the government is doing all it can to destroy social housing.

It's already started happening: Genesis, one of London's biggest housing associations, has just announced it wants to stop building new social housing and consider going private instead. Councils have been selling off social housing to private developers, like the Aylesbury Estate in Southwark and the Sweets Way Estate in Barnet. The Labour-led council here in Haringey wants to demolish up to 4,000 homes on and around its council estates, including a plan to demolish the Broadwater Farm estate.

What can be done? Well, we could look at the Aylesbury and Sweets Way Estates for inspiration, where local residents and housing activists occupied the estates to prevent the council's goons from pulling them down. Groups like Haringey Defend Council Housing are protesting against Haringey Council's dodgy 'regeneration' plans, letting them know the people of Haringey are watching what they're doing.

We have to show resistance to the plans to make London housing affordable only to the rich - by whatever means necessary. Estates have already been pulled down, people have already been forced out of their homes by benefit caps and rent hikes. How much harder will it have to become to live here before we start fighting back?

LOCAL GROUPS: Haringey Defend Council Housing ([facebook.com/HDCpage](https://www.facebook.com/HDCpage)); Haringey Housing Action Group (haringeyhousingaction.org.uk)



"Capitalism is the extraordinary belief that the nastiest of people for the nastiest of motives will somehow work for the benefit of all."

AUSTERITY IS A LIE!

There seems to always be someone on TV or radio telling us we need to "tighten our belts". Politicians tell us to "suffer" a bit longer to get the country "back on its feet". Austerity, austerity, austerity - that's all we seem to hear nowadays. And it always comes from those with the most: the biggest houses; the best paid jobs; the largest cars. If we need austerity how come it's never the rich that have to give anything up?

Since 2005 the wealth of the UK's richest 20% has risen by 64%. For the poorest 20% it has fallen by 57%.

Austerity is a con. The Tories are using it to get what they always wanted. A society where the rich live in the lap of luxury while the rest of us fight each other for the scraps that are left.

As a country we have loads of money. The question is what we do with it. While the

government is cutting £12 billion from the welfare budget for those most in need, it gave £60 billion in grants, subsidies and tax relief to big business. There are thousands of public sector jobs cuts but we give the arms trade over £700 million a year in subsidies. No pay rises for workers yet politicians get a 10% pay rise. People are committing suicide because of the bedroom tax and benefit cap but private developers have been given £1 billion to build houses that they rent back to us at stupidly high prices. They are closing hospitals while corporation tax has been cut from 28% to 19% for big business.

Some graffiti recently appeared that said "the greatest trick the rich ever pulled was convincing the world that the poor are to blame". Too bloody right! The rich are doing what they always do. They are ripping us off so they can get even richer. They won't change until we challenge them. But

how do we change things? The rich seem so powerful. But don't believe their hype. The rich are actually shit scared of working and unemployed people coming together. That's why they are bringing in laws to try and make it harder for us to go on strike and getting rid of things like Legal Aid.

There's loads we can do. Support striking workers against their bosses. Every worker's victory is a victory for all workers. Don't buy into the "strivers v skivers" rubbish - we have enough money for everyone to have a decent living standard. Those in power use immigration to divide us so we fight amongst ourselves. Don't believe their lies. Support campaigns fighting to change things.

Austerity is a lie. We need to turn the tables. It should be the rich suffering - not us. They were the ones who screwed things up in the first place.

LIBRARIES: A RIGHT NOT A LUXURY

Haringey's Labour Council has unveiled plans to drastically change the Marcus Garvey Library.

In another attack on our public services the library would lose its dedicated youth space on the top floor. Half of the space would disappear, to be replaced by the Council's own Housing Customer Service Centre which is due to be moved from Apex House in Seven Sisters, despite announcing during a cabinet meeting last March that there would be "no loss of library space".

This outrageous decision means the library faces being closed for six months for refurbishment, without any suitable alternative space for library users during the closure.

Haringey Council have treated the library and its users with contempt and misled, if not lied, about the planned changes. They even hung floor plans in the library with misleading colour coding which hid the fact that the Library becomes a side service within the new Customer Service Centre, which represents a core change of use.

If you thought the Tories were bad, this Labour council further insulted the users of Marcus Garvey, by selling cherished libraries books on the cheap. Books that reflect the cultural diversity of our local community.

These decisions were made without any proper consultation with the community.



The council do this time and time again, showing that they have no respect for us or our public services.

The Friends of Marcus Garvey Library decided that this was too much to bear and fought

back. After a social media campaign the Council stopped selling the books, and then tried to claim they value our heritage. The fight to save all the library facilities is hotting up.

MORE INFO: friendsofmglib@gmail.com