



Notting Hill Housing

# Nothing Hill Housing

## Aylesbury Regeneration Boss Says Social Housing Is ‘Undesirable’

**Notting Hill Housing Trust (NHHT)** is Southwark Council’s development partner for the complete demolition of Aylesbury Estate’s 2700 homes and their replacement with up to 4200 new homes. NHHT is a Housing Association: ‘a private, non-profit making organisations that provides low-cost “social housing” for people in need of a home’. NHHT is one of the biggest Housing Associations in London. Since the 1980’s when local councils stopped building council homes, it has been Housing Associations that have increasingly been the main developers of low-cost social rented homes.

That might all sound fine and dandy but in the last decade the big Housing Associations have started to develop more and more private homes as a way to finance more ‘affordable’ housing. The problem is that such ‘affordable’ housing is now more likely to be either shared-ownership homes where you need a large salary to buy a percentage of a new home or the rent will be what is called ‘affordable rent’. Such ‘affordable’ rents are up to 80% the price of local private rented homes. So in Walworth this can start at £150 - £200 per week.



The Chief of Notting Hill Housing Trust is **Kate Davies**. In this position she takes home £200,000 a year. She is also a ‘Fellow’ of the **Centre for Social Justice (CSJ)**, a Conservative think tank. The main cheese of the CSJ is **Iain Duncan Smith**, former Tory prime minister and now their somewhat Benefits guru. He has been responsible for numerous attacks on those who rely on welfare benefits to get by. He has been the ideas man behind financial ‘sanctions’ on claimants who can’t satisfy ever and ever harsher Job Centre conditions. His Centre for Social Justice project pretends to be about ‘empowering’ poor people but there is no real

justice on offer. Only pressure and stress.

In 2008 Kate Davies contributed an Introduction to a Centre for Social Justice report on housing called ‘**Housing Poverty**’. She says ‘council estates are ghettos of needy people’. She says ‘council homes are subsidised by the taxpayer’ yet NHHT receives millions of taxpayers money to build unaffordable homes. She says council tenants ‘often pay little or no rent, and get their home maintained in good order for free’. She also maintains that ‘living on an estate can affect your health, your ability to work, the type of education your children will get and your life chances’ To top it all she adds that ‘social housing is not a desirable destination’ and that ‘private ownership is preferable to state provided solutions’ i.e council homes.



These are the typical ignorance and lies that feed the demolition of council estates and then the gentrification of these areas. In Southwark, NHHT are developing thousands of new homes on old council estate sites (Walworth, Camberwell, Peckham etc). In their ‘The Exchange’ development in Bermondsey they promised 44 social rent homes but after planning permission was approved they changed these to the ‘affordable rent’ category, a sleight of hand that was signed off by The Council themselves. With such underhanded tactics, tenants on Aylesbury are concerned that the promised social rent homes in the regeneration will be also whisked away at the last minute, just like the broken promises at Heygate.

The Council has said that Aylesbury will ‘not be another Heygate’ but Kate Davies and NHHT beliefs and policies mean that it’s very likely to be a repeat of the Heygate scandal. NHHT cannot believe that social housing is ‘undesirable’ while at the same being asked to ‘regenerate’ one of Southwark’s largest social housing estates. NHHT can’t be trusted.

**Aylesbury residents have a right to be nervous and demand answers and guarantees from NHHT.**