

## FLAGSHIP REGENERATION AND TOP-DOWN POLICY AGENDA

### COMMUNITY-LED PLANNING AS AN ALTERNATIVE

*Image's source: "Community-led Regeneration: A Toolkit for Residents and Planners", Fitzpatrick and Sendra 2020*



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**Flagship regeneration and top-down policy agenda:  
community-led planning as an alternative**

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*“Assim como a rua se define pelas formas de sua apropriação, qualquer outro espaço é, também, caracterizado pelos múltiplos usos a que se presta (...). Por isso o espaço é apenas mais uma dimensão social. (...) Os eventos decidem a respeito das próprias qualidades formais do espaço. Produzem, moldam e esculpem os ambientes.” (Mello & Vogel, 1983, p. 73)*

*“Renewal planning, which is largely aimed at saving buildings, and incidentally some of the population, but at strewing the rest of a locality's population, has much the same result. So does too heavily concentrated private building, capitalizing in a rush on the high values created by a stable city neighborhood.” (Jacobs, 1992, p. 138)*

This research emerges from an empirical experience working as a technical assistant for evicted families during the Olympics' flagship regeneration in Rio de Janeiro. The work aims to investigate the roots of gentrification practices caused by urban regeneration strategies in the context of neoliberal governments and megaevents globally. The British case was chosen to contextualize the findings from Rio de Janeiro within a European framework, enabling a comparative analysis of similar phenomena.

Throughout theoretical and desk-based studies that propose a reflection utilizing a qualitative approach, this research examines the impacts of flagship regeneration on local communities. It evidences the importance of architects, planners, and policymakers in providing technical support for co-design processes in flagship regeneration contexts. Thus, three cases in London were defined as case studies of this research: Greater Carpenters, Focus E15, and West Kensington and Gibbs Green Communities; aiming to demonstrate a variety of approaches to face the same issue, which is state-led regeneration — a top-down approach practiced by authorities.

This work illustrates the importance of participatory methods to achieve a quality-built environment, rather than top-down regeneration. It demonstrates the social impacts of flagship regeneration and the need to plan and design spaces with their users instead of imposing projects on civil society.

**Keywords:** Flagship-regeneration; Bottom-up Approach; Co-design process; Megaevents; Gentrification.

Questa ricerca nasce da un'esperienza empirica nel ruolo di assistente tecnico per famiglie sfrattate durante il periodo di intensa rigenerazione urbana in occasione delle Olimpiadi di Rio de Janeiro. L'obiettivo principale è investigare le cause della gentrificazione derivante dalle strategie di rigenerazione urbana nel contesto di governi neoliberali e megaeventi a livello globale. Il caso britannico è stato scelto per permettere un confronto dell'esperienza empirica a Rio de Janeiro all'interno di un contesto europeo, facilitando un'analisi critica di fenomeni simili.

Attraverso studi teorici ed empirici che propongono una riflessione basata su un approccio qualitativo, questa ricerca esamina gli impatti della rigenerazione urbana intensiva sulle comunità locali. Si evidenzia inoltre il ruolo cruciale di architetti, pianificatori urbanistici e politici nel fornire supporto tecnico ai processi di co-progettazione per i progetti di rigenerazione di vasta scala. Tre casi studio a Londra sono stati selezionati per questa ricerca: Greater Carpenters, Focus E15 e West Kensington e Gibbs Green Communities. L'obiettivo è dimostrare la diversità degli approcci nell'affrontare la rigenerazione urbana guidata dallo Stato, un metodo top-down implementato dalle autorità locali.

La ricerca illustra l'importanza dei metodi partecipativi per conseguire un ambiente costruito di qualità, anziché adottare una rigenerazione top-down. Vengono evidenziati gli impatti sociali della rigenerazione urbana intensiva e si sottolinea la necessità di pianificare e progettare gli spazi in collaborazione con gli utenti, piuttosto che imporre progetti alla società civile.

**Parole chiave:** Rigenerazione urbana di punta; Approccio bottom-up; Co-progettazione, Megaeventi; Gentrificazione.

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source: focus E15 website



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## INDEX

List of Figures .....	p. i
List of Tables .....	p. vii
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>p.1</b>
<b>2. Urban Regeneration and Gentrification .....</b>	<b>p. 7</b>
2.1. Urban Regeneration Initiatives .....	p. 8
2.2. Conflicts and struggles related to urban regeneration processes and the risk of gentrification .....	p. 11
2.3. The role of community-led projects in regeneration processes .....	p. 17
<b>3. The British and London Context .....</b>	<b>p. 23</b>
3.1. Planning tools at National Level .....	p. 24
3.2. Planning tools at Local Level .....	p. 27
3.3. Flagship regeneration in London .....	p. 34
<b>4. Case Study: Community-led Regeneration in London .....</b>	<b>p. 39</b>
4.1. Methodology and methods .....	p. 39
4.2. Context and analysis .....	p. 41
4.3. Community initiatives (CIs) and bottom-up approach in London .....	p. 61
4.4. Alternatives to Council Flagship Regeneration .....	p. 67
4.4.1. <i>The case of Greater Carpenters</i> .....	p. 68
4.4.2. <i>The case of Focus E15</i> .....	p. 89
4.4.3. <i>The case of West Kensington Gibbs Green (WKKG)</i> .....	p. 105
<b>5. Final Remarks .....</b>	<b>p. 130</b>
5.1. Discussion .....	p. 130
5.2. Conclusion .....	p. 133
<b>References .....</b>	<b>p. 138</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

**Figure 1:** *Local Government in England, Wales and Scotland. Author's processing, based on data provided by UK Changing in Europe. Available on: <https://ukandeu.ac.uk/explainers/local-government-in-england-scotland-and-wales/> and accessed on June 2024* ..... p. 27

**Figure 2:** *London Boroughs. Author's processing, based on data provided by London Datastore.* ..... p. 27

**Figure 3:** *Great Britain and London's study area. Author's production* ..... p. 42

**Figure 4:** *Newham's area. Author's production* ..... p. 44

**Figure 5:** *Megaevents' impacts: the boroughs of Waltham Forest, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, and Newham hosted the Olympic Village and had a greater impact on urban regeneration processes. Author's processing* ..... p. 45

**Figure 6:** *London's Plan. Author's production, based on data from London Datastore, available on: <https://data.london.gov.uk/>, and accessed in May 2023* ..... p. 47

**Figure 7:** *Private Rents' map compared to the location of council estate regeneration in London. Author's production, based on data from the London Government. Available on: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/improving-private-rented-sector/london-rents-map> and [mappinglondonshousingstruggles.wordpress.com](http://mappinglondonshousingstruggles.wordpress.com), and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 48

**Figure 8:** *House Prices map compared to the location of council estate regeneration in London. Author's production, based on data from the Plumplot.co.uk. Available on: <https://www.plumplot.co.uk/London-house-prices.html> and accessed in May 2024* ..... p. 49

**Figure 9:** *London House Struggles data. Accessed in October 2023. Available on: [https://mappinglondonshousingstruggles.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/london-housing-struggles-map\\_dec-2014\\_low-res.pdf](https://mappinglondonshousingstruggles.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/london-housing-struggles-map_dec-2014_low-res.pdf), and accessed in June 2023* ..... p. 52

**Figure 10:** *Author's production combined with data and maps available on [www.alliesandmorri-son.com](http://www.alliesandmorri-son.com), accessed in October 2023* ..... p. 53

**Figure 11:** *Olympic Park location on a macro scale. Author's processing, based on London Datastore. Available on: <https://data.london.gov.uk/> and accessed in June 2023* ..... p. 55

**Figure 12:** *Olympic Park Plan, micro scale. Author's processing, based on London Datastore. Available on: <https://data.london.gov.uk/> and accessed in June 2023* ..... p. 56

**Figure 13:** *London's Plan compared to the Olympic Park location. Author's processing, based on London Datastore. Available on: <https://data.london.gov.uk/> and accessed in June 2023* ..... p. 57

**Figure 14:** *Percentage of affordable homes completed in the OA since its designation (2019-2041). Author's production based on data from [olympic-legacy-opportunity-area](http://olympic-legacy-opportunity-area)* ..... p. 57

**Figure 15:** *The impact of the Olympics on the whole city of London. Author's production, based on data from the London Government. Available on: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/improving-private-rented-sector/london-rents-map> and [mappinglondonshousingstruggles.wordpress.com](http://mappinglondonshousingstruggles.wordpress.com), and accessed in May 2024* ..... p. 60

**Figure 16:** *Community Initiatives (CI's) to respond to a top-down regeneration process in London. Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from the book "Community-led Regeneration: a toolkit for residents and planners", Daniel Fitzpatrick and Pablo Sendra, 2020*..... p. 65

**Figure 17:** *Case Studies' Location Map. Author's processing, based on information provided on [london.gov.uk](http://london.gov.uk) and accessed in May 2024* ..... p. 67

**Figure 18:** *Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Area. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's image. Available on: <https://greatercarpenterscouk.wordpress.com/our-work/image-gallery/> and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 69

**Figure 19:** *Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Hall for gathering. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's image. Available on: <https://greatercarpenterscouk.wordpress.com/our-work/image-gallery/> and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 70

**Figure 20:** *GCNF's co-design for the community-led regeneration plan. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's image. Available on: <https://greatercarpenterscouk.wordpress.com/our-work/image-gallery/> and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 71

**Figure 21:** *Early Proposals Masterplan. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing*..... p. 74

**Figure 22:** *Map of existing garages (total units:60). Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing* ..... p. 76

**Figure 23:** *Proportions of the existing types of uses on the public green space in Carpenters Es-*

*tate. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing* ..... p. 76

**Figure 24:** *Existing public and private green spaces. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing* ..... p. 77

**Figure 25:** *Proposed bus route (Line 205). Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing* ..... p. 79

**Figure 26:** *Existing bus route (Line 276). Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing* ..... p.79

**Figure 27:** *Proposed bus route (Line 276). Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing* ..... p. 80

**Figure 28:** *Proposed pedestrian network. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing*..... p. 81

**Figure 29:** *Pedestrian routes diagram. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing* ..... p. 82

**Figure 30:** *Proposed Cycling Network. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing* ..... p. 83

**Figure 31:** *Cycling Routes Diagram. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing* ..... p. 84

**Figure 32:** *Focus E15 activists in their 1st public action in January 2014. Focus E15 photo, available on: [focuse15.org](https://focuse15.org) and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 90

**Figure 33:** *Focus E15 activists. Focus E15 photo, available on: [focuse15.org](https://focuse15.org) and accessed in March 2024*..... p. 91

**Figure 34:** *On September 21st, 2014, the Focus E15 campaign celebrated its first birthday by occupying a disused block of flats on the nearly empty Carpenters Estate in Stratford, East London. Focus E15 photo, available on: [focuse15.org/e15-open-house-occupation/](https://focuse15.org/e15-open-house-occupation/) and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 92

**Figure 35:** *On September 21st, 2014, the Focus E15 occupation in Carpenters Estate disused block. Available in the book "Community-led Regeneration: A Toolkit for Residents and Planners", Fitzpatrick and Sendra 2020* ..... p. 92

**Figure 36:** *Public meeting for focus E15 campaign on the Carpenters estate 20 October 2014. Focus E15 photo, available on: [focuse15.org/events](https://focuse15.org/events) and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 93

**Figure 37:** *Sylvia's corner meeting point. Focus E15 photo, available on: <https://focuse15.org/syl->*

*vias-corner/ and accessed in March 2024* ..... p.94

**Figures 38, 39, 40 and 41:** *Focus E15 campaign against demolition. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2021/12/16/press-release-carpenters-estate-under-threat/> and <https://focuse15.org/photos/>. and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 95

**Figure 42:** *Focus E15 campaign against demolition. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2019/07/26/stranded-in-southend-expectant-mother-told-by-newham-council-that-she-hasnt-been-moved-far-enough-away-yet/> and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 96

**Figure 43:** *Focus E15 campaign against social cleansing. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2019/05/23/one-year-in-office-for-labour-mayor-rokhsana-fiaz-what-next/> and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 96

**Figure 44:** *Focus E15 activists protesting against the corruption of the borough's housing stock. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2018/01/12/newham-council-we-are-watching-you/> and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 97

**Figures 45 and 46:** *Focus E15 activists' resistance against displacement and housing conditions. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2020/12/31/our-lives-and-our-future-resistance-has-not-gone-away/> and <https://focuse15.org/category/housingcrisis/>, and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 97

**Figure 47:** *Mock eviction at the British Credit Awards protesting against the credit industry which profits on people who are struggling through the housing crisis. 12th February 2015. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2015/02/12/etb-wrap/> and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 98

**Figure 48:** *Brimstone House's residents protesting against temporary accommodation and its anti-social and prison environment. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2020/08/18/newham-legal-team-drag-their-feet/> and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 98

**Figure 49:** *Residents protesting over living conditions at overcrowded hostels and the Council's unsuitable housing offers. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2023/01/20/victory-council-forced-to-reinstate-housing-duty/> and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 98

**Figure 50:** *Street campaign against overcrowded living and poor-quality housing. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2020/08/17/abandoned-by-newham/> and accessed in March 2024* ..... p. 99

**Figure 51:** *The campaign hosted a public meeting to mark 10 years of housing campaign in East London. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2023/10/06/calling-friends-comrades-and-supporters-join-us-to-mark-10-years-of-existence-and-resistance/> and accessed in March 2024*..... p. 99

<b>Figure 52:</b> <i>Brimstone house residents having fun with Focus E15 campaigners. Focus E15 photos, available on: <a href="https://focuse15.org/2018/07/31/a-victory-in-court-but-the-fight-against-intentional-homelessness-goes-on/">https://focuse15.org/2018/07/31/a-victory-in-court-but-the-fight-against-intentional-homelessness-goes-on/</a> and accessed in March 2024</i> .....	p. 100
<b>Figure 53:</b> <i>On August 17th 2017, the campaign organized a march to expose residents' concerns about social cleansing and housing issues. Focus E15 photos, available on: <a href="https://focuse15.org/2017/08/15/march-of-the-towers-takes-off-in-the-east-end/">https://focuse15.org/2017/08/15/march-of-the-towers-takes-off-in-the-east-end/</a> and accessed in March 2024</i> .....	p. 100
<b>Figure 54:</b> <i>On February 10th, 2018, a public meeting hosted by the Focus E15 Campaign was held in the hall of Carpenters and Dockland Centre to discuss the rising homeless population in the borough while hundreds lie empty in the Carpenters Estate. Focus E15 photos, available on: <a href="https://focuse15.org/2018/02/10/positive-community-housing-meeting-held-in-east-london/">https://focuse15.org/2018/02/10/positive-community-housing-meeting-held-in-east-london/</a> and accessed in March 2024</i> .....	p. 101
<b>Figure 55:</b> <i>Focus E15 campaign salutes revolutionary women on International Women's Day. Focus E15 photos, available on: <a href="https://focuse15.org/2023/03/08/focus-e15-campaign-salutes-revolutionary-women/">https://focuse15.org/2023/03/08/focus-e15-campaign-salutes-revolutionary-women/</a> and accessed in March 2024</i> .....	p. 101
<b>Figure 56:</b> <i>Focus E15 campaign. Focus E15 photos, available on: <a href="https://focuse15.org/2020/04/13/reclaim-homes-from-the-usa-to-the-uk-online-public-meeting-register-now/">https://focuse15.org/2020/04/13/reclaim-homes-from-the-usa-to-the-uk-online-public-meeting-register-now/</a> and accessed in March 2024</i> .....	p. 102
<b>Figure 57:</b> <i>Campaign against demolition on 17th March 2015. Available on: <a href="https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/images/">https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/images/</a> and accessed in March 2024</i> .....	p. 106
<b>Figure 58:</b> <i>View of the estates from one of the flats, January 2017. Available in the book "Community-led Regeneration: a Toolkit for Residents and Planners", Fitzpatrick and Sendra 2020</i> .....	p. 107
<b>Figure 59:</b> <i>Residents voting for the Right to Transfer on 17th March 2015. Available on: <a href="https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/images/">https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/images/</a> and accessed in March 2024</i> .....	p. 108
<b>Figure 60:</b> <i>Existing buildings map. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 109
<b>Figure 61:</b> <i>Existing Landscapes and Community Facilities map. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 110
<b>Figure 62:</b> <i>The Resident-Led Design Process: 1st workshop to set up information collected and test ideas. Available on: <a href="https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/images/">https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/images/</a> and accessed in March 2024</i> .....	p.111
<b>Figure 63:</b> <i>Walking tour inside resident's home. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 112
<b>Figure 64:</b> <i>The walking tours to gather information and opinions. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 113
<b>Figure 65:</b> <i>The walking routes mapped during the walking tours, representing residents' typical daily or weekly routes through the estate. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 114
<b>Figure 66:</b> <i>A Feedback Map containing things said by the residents about their homes and the estate throughout the previous consultation sessions. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 116
<b>Figure 67:</b> <i>Areas identified for improvement based on the walking tours. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 117
<b>Figure 68:</b> <i>Resident's participation in two workshops to draw up ideas and discuss alternative options to the estates. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p.118
<b>Figure 69:</b> <i>Aerial images designed by the residents together with architects during the 1st workshop to test some ideas. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 119
<b>Figure 70:</b> <i>Consultation event with feedback on the emerging proposals. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 120
<b>Figure 71:</b> <i>A volunteered resident presenting one of the proposals to the other neighbors and leading a discussion to receive feedback during a consultation event. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 120
<b>Figure 72 and 73:</b> <i>Two of the twelve panels with a breakdown of proposals commented with Post-it notes to highlight positive aspects in green, disapproved ideas in red, and suggestions in yellow. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 121
<b>Figure 74:</b> <i>Design proposals: view from the Northeast. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 122
<b>Figure 75:</b> <i>Design proposals: view from the Southwest. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 123
<b>Figure 76:</b> <i>Physical 3D model showing the proposed improvements and additional homes at both estates. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington &amp; Gibbs Green</i> .....	p. 124

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1:</b> <i>The English Planning System: London Exception. Author's processing, based on information available on Francesca Bragaglia's Ph.D. thesis</i> ..... p. 25	<b>Table 13:</b> <i>Indicative of jobs capacity according to London's Plan 2021. Author's production, based on information provided on london.gov.uk and accessed in October 2023</i> ..... p. 58
<b>Table 2:</b> <i>The Three-Tier Planning System in London. Author's processing, based on information available on Francesca Bragaglia's Ph.D. thesis</i> ..... p. 25	<b>Table 14:</b> <i>Number of affordable homes completed in the opportunity areas designated in 2004 until nowadays. Author's processing, based on information provided on london.gov.uk and accessed in October 2023</i> ..... p. 59
<b>Table 3:</b> <i>Evolution of the English Planning System from 1900 to 2020. Author's processing, based on information available on: <a href="https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Rethinking-the-Planning-System-for-the-21st-Century.pdf">https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Rethinking-the-Planning-System-for-the-21st-Century.pdf</a> and Accessed in June 2024</i> ..... p. 26	<b>Table 15:</b> <i>Actions against a top-down regeneration process. Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from the book called "Community-led Regeneration: A Toolkit for Residents and Planners", Daniel Fitzpatrick and Pablo Sendra, 2020</i> ..... p. 63
<b>Table 4:</b> <i>Key Local Government Structures in England. Author's processing, based on information provided by Newlocal.org.uk . Accessed Dec 28th, 2023</i> ..... p. 29	<b>Table 16:</b> <i>How is the community organized to respond to a top-down regeneration process? Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from the book "Community-led Regeneration: a toolkit for residents and planners", Daniel Fitzpatrick and Pablo Sendra, 2020</i> ..... p. 64
<b>Table 5:</b> <i>English Local Government Structures: differences between single-tier and two-tier councils. Author's processing, based on information provided by Newlocal.org.uk . Accessed Dec 28th, 2023</i> ..... p.29	<b>Table 17:</b> <i>Case Studies' Tools to respond to a top-down regeneration process. Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from the book "Community-led Regeneration: A Toolkit for residents and Planners", Daniel Fitzpatrick and Pablo Sendra, 2020</i> ..... p. 66
<b>Table 6:</b> <i>English Planning System: differences between the local level in London vs. Birmingham. Author's processing, based on information provided by Birmingham City Council and Newlocal.org.uk. Accessed June 7th, 2024</i> ..... p. 30	<b>Table 18:</b> <i>Policies proposed by the community for the design of NP strategies. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's data translated into author's processing</i> ..... p. 73
<b>Table 7:</b> <i>London Plans implemented since 2004. Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from Francesca Bragaglia's Ph.D. thesis</i> ..... p. 31	<b>Table 19:</b> <i>Projected timescales for the Plan's objectives and policy delivery. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing</i> ..... p. 85
<b>Table 8:</b> <i>The 6+1 phases of the Neighborhood Planning process. Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from Francesca Bragaglia's Ph.D. thesis</i> ..... p.33	<b>Table 20:</b> <i>Objective and Policy Delivery timescales. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing</i> ..... p. 86
<b>Table 9:</b> <i>Population growth over 10 years, author's production based on data from Census 2021</i> ..... p. 42	<b>GC Box 1:</b> <i>GCNF Neighborhood Plan: vision and draft policies</i> ..... p. 87
<b>Table 10:</b> <i>London Real House Prices. Author's production, based on data from the Plumplot.co.uk. Available on: <a href="https://www.plumplot.co.uk/London-house-prices.html">https://www.plumplot.co.uk/London-house-prices.html</a> and accessed in March 2024</i> ..... p. 50	<b>CG Box 2:</b> <i>"Refurbish don't demolish the Carpenters Estate!"</i> ..... p. 88
<b>Table 11:</b> <i>London House Price Rank: With an average price of £711k, London is the most pricey region out of 10 England and Wales' regions. Author's production, based on data from the Plumplot.co.uk. Available on: <a href="https://www.plumplot.co.uk/London-house-prices.html">https://www.plumplot.co.uk/London-house-prices.html</a> and accessed in March 2024</i> ..... p.50	<b>E15 Box 1:</b> <i>"Move families out of Brimstone House NOW!"</i> ..... p. 103
<b>Table 12:</b> <i>Indicative of homes capacity according to London's Plan 2021. Author's production, based on information provided on london.gov.uk, and accessed in October 2023</i> ..... p.58	<b>E15 Box 2:</b> <i>"Newham Council offers slum housing or the street"</i> ..... p.104
	<b>WKG Box1:</b> <i>The launch of People's Plan and co-design workshop</i> ..... p.127
	<b>WKG Box2:</b> <i>What's next? Further steps after the People's Plan</i> ..... p.128

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This research emerges based on my personal experience volunteering to reconvert an abandoned building in the city center of Rio de Janeiro into social housing for an evicted social movement due to the Olympics' flagship regeneration. During my experience as a technical assistant student there, I got involved with the origins of displacement and evictions in Rio as well as the planning tools used to promote those practices.

Therefore, this research started willing to deepen my understanding of the roots of gentrification practices caused by urban regeneration strategies in the context of neoliberal governments in a global sense. To do so, I will investigate the case of the Community-Led Regeneration in London, in the context of the British Flagship Regeneration and its planning tools defined by the London Planning Authority (LPA).

The concept of urban regeneration emerged in the late 19th century when many cities were facing rapidly growing populations and the sanitary conditions available could not meet its demand. Bramley (2004) states that urban regeneration is defined as the recovery or renewal of lost vitality, whether physical or social.

Based on the literature, it is possible to affirm that urban regeneration is a complex and multifaceted concept. For instance, according to Smith (2002) as well as Coletta and Acierno (2017), it is defined as a strategy connected with liberal urban policies. As stated by Raco (2009), urban regeneration is a policy seeking to link urban development to social objectives, which propagates a regeneration discourse that increases urban inequalities. Moreover, Watt and Smets (2017) also indicate urban regeneration as a discourse, once it is used to justify gentrification and displacement of existing residents of a specific area defined by the government to be invested.

Since its first appearance in the 19th century, urban regeneration has been a strategy used by the government for demolishing and making significant interventions in specific neighborhoods that are considered profitable to redevelop to receive an economic return. As defined by the UN-Habitat<sup>1</sup>, urban regeneration brought back underutilized land and redistributed opportunities, improving people's lives. However, the UN affirms that urban regeneration can also bring the risk of gentrifying private space or even privatizing public areas.

On the one hand, in the European Union framework, urban regen-

<sup>1</sup> The UN-Habitat definition of urban regeneration, available on: <https://unhabitat.org/topic/urban-regeneration>, accessed in May 2023.



source: focus E15 website

<sup>2</sup> The European Union is one of the most urbanized areas worldwide. To realize the full potential of the European Union and deliver its strategic objectives, the Urban Agenda for the EU was launched as a document aiming to involve Urban Authorities in achieving Better Regulation, Better Funding and Better Knowledge, established by the Pact of Amsterdam in 2016, in the context of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Sources available on: [https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/european\\_union](https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/european_union) ; <https://www.urbanagenda.urban-initiative.eu/urban-agenda-eu#:~:text=The%20Urban%20Agenda%20for%20the%20EU%20strives%20to%20establish%20a,in%20urban%20areas%20and%20regions> ; and <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/urban-agenda/library/pact-amsterdam> ; accessed in April 2024.

<sup>3</sup> World Bank Definition, available on <https://urban-regeneration.worldbank.org/about>, accessed in May 2023.

<sup>4</sup> London Plan 2021, available on <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/london-plan-2021>, accessed in April 2023.

eration has been launched in the policy field of regional development. The newest advanced urban regeneration strategies, which are present on the Urban Agenda for the EU in the context of Cohesion Policy, are characterized by the integrated approach, related to social, economic, and environmental aspects, which are responsible for generating sustainable urban development based on the strategic guidelines of the EU, which was launched in the Pact of Amsterdam<sup>2</sup> (European Union, 2010, page 3).

On the other hand, according to the World Bank definition<sup>3</sup> (2016), every city has pockets of underused land or decaying urban areas which result from changes in urban growth and productivity, weakening the city's image. In order to address the issues of urban decay, these cities have designed complex processes of urban regeneration (World Bank, 2016). Therefore, while the European Union seeks to use urban regeneration strategy as a tool for inclusive urban development, the World Bank definition presents a discourse of urban regeneration that justifies the use of this strategy as a tool for improving areas facing urban degradation.

Additionally, the British Authority mentions in the latter London Plan<sup>4</sup> that too many areas in London are still experiencing deprivation. To address this issue, it is important to focus on sustainable and inclusive regeneration. Although the London Plan stresses its goal of working with local communities, community organizations see urban regeneration strategies as practices sold by the government as benefits to local communities. But in reality, it is only gentrification, displacement, and council estates demolition target as mixed-communities policy (Lees, 2014, p.7).

As already introduced, London was selected as a case study area for this research. That is because urban regeneration first appeared in England as a social reform strategy, aiming to improve the sanitary conditions for urban poverty during the fast industrialization of cities in the early 19th century.

However, to tackle the problem of urban deprivation, flagship regeneration practices combined with top-down approaches have been used there. For that reason, London is currently facing the pressure of rent price increases as well as the production of entrepreneurial urban strategies in the context of neoliberal urban policy development, as reported by Raco (2014).

In the British case and many other contexts, urban regeneration normally happens through state-led planning, as indicated by many authors such as Brener (2002), Smith (2002), Shaw (2008), Parker, Street, and Wargent (2018) as well as Lindner and Sandoval (2021). In this way, the following research question emerges: what are the alternatives to state-

led regeneration? This work intends to investigate if it is possible to perform state-led and community-led work together to regenerate an area.

Then, this research aims to demonstrate the positive aspects and contributions of the bottom-up approach to revitalizing a place affected by urban decay. Seeing flagship regeneration causing gentrification as a global tendency, this research expects to analyze this strategy and demonstrate alternative solutions.

To better illustrate, the structure of this research is divided into five chapters composed of 12 sections and 3 subsections. In the first chapter, the research is presented with an introduction. In the second chapter, the concepts of urban regeneration and gentrification are addressed in a broader sense, according to a literature review. This chapter is divided into sections related to: urban regeneration initiatives (section 2.1), conflicts and struggles related to urban regeneration processes and the risk of gentrification (section 2.2) as well as the role of community-led projects in regeneration processes (section 2.3). Those themes lead to the reflection on the Right to the City, which helps to better understand the study cases issue through the practices of displacement and evictions (mentioned in section 2.2) and participation in the context of urban regeneration (addressed in section 2.3).

The third chapter focuses on the British and London context regarding planning tools at different levels, such as the National scenario (section 3.1) and the Local one (3.2). This chapter aims to better understand the policy regulations framework before addressing the issue of flagship regeneration (section 3.3) in the study area.

In the fourth chapter of this research, the methodology and research methods are presented (section 4.1) based on the research process, and the research method through data investigation and analysis of prior findings on the same matter. The section 4.2 highlights a framework containing the context and the analysis of the studied area of the research.

In the section called "Community Initiatives (CIs) and bottom-up approach" (4.3), a variety of cases in London are demonstrated as an alternative to top-down urban planning other than council-state demolition, according to Sendra and Fitzpatrick's (2020) literature.

Then, three different study cases presented in Fitzpatrick and Sendra's book called *Community-led Regeneration: A Toolkit for residents and planners*, 2020, are investigated to analyze a variety of methods to address the same issue, such as the case of Greater Carpenters (sub-section 4.2.1), the case of Focus E15 (sub-section 4.2.2)

and the case of West Kensington and Gibbs Green (subsection 4.2.3).

Further, the fifth and last chapter is divided into 2 sections that intend to debate the positive aspects of combining state-led and community-led planning processes (section 4.3), answering the research question, presenting a chapter of discussion (section 5.1), and then some short conclusions (section 5.2) about the researched topic.

## 2. URBAN REGENERATION AND GENTRIFICATION

In this chapter urban regeneration and its different approaches are presented in a general overview, aiming to demonstrate the variety of meanings and different actors involved with this complex concept. Further, the definition of urban regeneration adopted to read the thesis phenomena is demonstrated, then, moving to the urban regeneration initiatives implemented worldwide and its struggles, in order to understand it as a problematic phenomenon of global cities.

As previously mentioned, urban regeneration is a complex concept, which emerged in the 19th century. According to a variety of authors and organizations, urban regeneration can operate differently. To illustrate it, Smith (2002), Colomb (20017), Shaw (2008), Raco (2014), as well as Hubbard and Lees (2018), define urban regeneration as a strategy. Furthermore, Raco (2009) also indicates it as a policy that propagates a regeneration discourse, while Watt and Smets (2017) identify urban regeneration as a discourse to justify gentrification and evictions, similarly as the community organizations point out.

Additionally, the European Union (EU) defines urban regeneration as a policy response to generate sustainable urban development, following the UN-Habitat definition<sup>5</sup>, which aims to achieve social cohesion, sustainable development, and economic opportunities through urban regeneration practices. On the contrary, the World Bank and many other different private actors involved identify urban regeneration as a process to tackle urban deprivation, using it as an excuse to produce gentrification in many cities on a global scale.

*“Urban regeneration brings back underutilized assets and redistributes opportunities, increasing urban prosperity and quality of life. Urban regeneration initiatives are complex, lengthy and run the risk of gentrifying private space or privatize public one. At UN-Habitat we work for urban regeneration that ensures affordability, access to services and involvement of local residents to promote local economic development, where public space is a key element of interventions, and cities reduce environmental impact and GHG emissions. The preservation and valorization of historic and cultural heritage is a key opportunity for urban regeneration as well.(...) Urban regeneration requires a diversity of approaches, such as redevelopment of brownfields, densification and intensification strategies, the*

<sup>5</sup> UN-Habitat definition of Urban Regeneration, available on: <https://unhabitat.org/topic/urban-regeneration>, accessed in March 2023.

*diversification of economic activities, heritage preservation and reuse, public space reactivation and strengthening of service delivery.*" (UN-Habitat, 2021)

Urban regeneration is a strategy that aims to redevelop areas that often deal with urban decay. Following Jonas, McCann, and Thomas (2015), urban regeneration is defined as a state-led redevelopment strategy implemented in established neighborhoods in order to redesign areas considered unhealthy by the government, transforming them into attractive neighborhoods for investment. Therefore, the approach presented by Jonas, McCann, and Thomas (2015), which defines urban regeneration as a "strategy tool" to redevelop underused areas is the one that is going to be centrally used to interpret the thesis phenomena and answer the research question along this work.

### 2.1. Urban Regeneration Initiatives

Since its first appearance in the 19th century, urban regeneration has been a strategy used by the public authority for demolishing and making significant interventions in specific neighborhoods that are considered profitable to redevelop to receive an economic return.

Osborne and Rose (1997) define the problem of the 19th-century city as connected to the early industrial city due to the emerging issue related to urban planning and the lack of sanitary conditions in industrial cities as well as the dangers of the city regarding the presence of slums, prostitution, crime, diseases, and decay. The rapid population growth, the lack of fresh water and sewage infrastructures as well as the spread of epidemics due to the sanitary conditions contributed to the emergence of a "bacteriological city", as reported by Gandy (2006).

In that period, the city was transformed into a "laboratory of conduct", remarked by the diffusion of the private bathroom and the increase of codes concerning body conduction used as a tool for social displacement (Osborne and Rose, 1999, p. 740). In Europe, the emergence of providing sanitary conditions in the cities contributed to the "Hausmanization" of the cities, which implemented ample roads, sewage networks, waste disposal centers, and green spaces as "respiratory" places in the city (Graham and Marvin, 2001, p.55). However, according to Harvey (2003), Haussmann was responsible for creating spatial seg-

regation in the city, due to the increase in rental prices, speculation, and slum removal.

*"Their 19th-century versions presented urban problems as diseases of the social body and provided urban reformers justifications for the "Hausmannization" of cities throughout Europe and the Americas."* (Holston, 2009, p. 248)

Later on, the extraordinary urbanization due to the rapid population growth during the 20th century helped to generate even more social inequalities and urban peripheries in cities worldwide (Holston, 2009, p.245). In this period, cities were facing the decline of the Fordist sectors due to international competition and mass unemployment, which contributed to deindustrialization.

Deindustrialization caused transformations in the urban shape of cities since promoted the abandonment of entire shorelines, port areas, and docks. In addition, the process of deindustrialization and the growth of the business sector had impacts concerning the transformation of the cities' occupational class structure, due to the decay of the working-class groups and the growth of a new professional group (Hamnett and O'Hanlon, 2009, p. 211).

During the 1960s and 1970s declining areas of privately rented inner-city housing were remodeled through social cleansing and urban renewal practices in order to change that area into owner occupation of professional groups, which increased their demand for housing near the city center where their jobs were mainly located (Hamnett and O'hanlon, 2009, p. 212). As stated by Ferreri and Lees (2015), in the US, the 1970s was an epoch marked by the fiscal crisis, resulting in citizen mobilization related to neighborhood protection.

Consequently, during the 1970s and the 1980s, severe political struggles were happening due to the displacement of entire communities caused by gentrification (Ferreri and Lees, 2015, p. 15). Therefore, Ferreri and Lees (2015) claim that the 1970s — a period of fiscal crises in the US —, contributed to intense citizen mobilization concerns about neighborhood preservation against urban renewal practices.

After the global debt crisis of the early 1980s, neoliberal urban regeneration programs were diffused worldwide due to the efforts of the United States and other G-7 states aiming to discipline the capital market, as described by Swyngedow (2002). Nevertheless, the spread

of regeneration discourses, in political terms, resulted in wider processes of the production of urban inequalities (Henderson and Raco, 2009, p. 302).

Smith (2002) argues, that the intense campaigns in Europe promoting urban regeneration and suburban sprawl in Europe and the United States, were responsible for representing the crisis of social reproduction through the territorialization of the production of urban space. Janin Rivolin (2017) affirms that the inadequate regulation of spatial development was responsible for originating the global crises as well as contributing to the increase of unequal distribution of wealth.

As shown, urban regeneration has been used as a “strategy tool” by governments in the US and Europe which transformed into a tendency worldwide where governments implement a neoliberal urban agenda in order to improve specific parts of the city facing urban decay, enforcing slum clearance and displacement of residents. According to Jacobs (1992), slum clearance and urban renewal are related and contribute to increasing social issues, once old buildings are replaced by new projects with lower dwelling densities.

Analyzing the literature, it is possible to affirm that the attraction of private investment in industrial areas represents a tendency that leads lower-income residents to be pushed out of their neighborhoods and deepen into poverty due to the rise of rental prices. As stated by Smets and Watt (2017), a policy consensus was transformed into an international discourse in the US, UK, and Australia, linking the neighborhood decline with public housing devaluation, and proposing demolitions and social cleansing as a solution for poverty concentration.

Therefore, it is clear that urban renewal usually works as a top-down strategy, implemented through a new policy defined by the local government in the context of a neoliberal regime. Although it is a strategy defined by a policy agenda, the state-led regeneration brings up spatial negative effects (Harvey, 2003, p. 234) on the landscape and in the social structure of its neighborhood, becoming an important topic to be dealt with by policymakers.

As demonstrated before, the urban regeneration strategy emerged in the 19th century pursuing to solve problems of poverty concentration and sanitary conditions. However, afterward, it was transformed into a tool used by neoliberal governments worldwide to attract investments in decadent areas of the city, resulting in mass processes of displacement and social clearance, which affected the social structure of many

communities everywhere. The next section will introduce the conflicts caused by urban regeneration when it is used as a “strategic tool” by the local government to improve deteriorated areas causing gentrification.

## *2.2. Conflicts and struggles related to urban regeneration processes and the risk of gentrification*

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In the European context, urban regeneration practice started in the 19th century due to urban problems and diseases, aiming to implement urban reforms based on the “Haussmannization” of cities (Holston, 2009, p. 248). The hazard of cities was defined as the presence of slums, crime, diseases, decay, prostitution, and many other factors that threaten urban city life (Osborne and Rose, 1997, p. 740). Therefore, in the European case, as defined by Gandy (2006), the idea of a “bacteriological city” through the implementation of new urban policies appeared as a solution to the illness of this century.

Since the 1990s, in England, Labor governments have determined council estates for several regeneration programs justified by the “mixed communities’ policy”, which was an idea inspired by HOPE IV, a program in the US (Lees, 2014, p. 7). According to Lees (2014), this program argued that mixing low-income communities with middle-income communities would bring everyone to the middle class, aiming to decrease deprivation and social exclusion.

In the American context, the concept of ‘mix’, refers to the mix of uses and functions as well as a social mix of communities (Colomb, 2007, p.8). Although regeneration and social mix discourse has been sold everywhere as a benefit to local communities, Lees (2014) states that it was just gentrification labeled differently.

Since 1997 the UK New Labor government launched initiatives of neighborhood regeneration aiming to tackle social exclusion, creating an agenda for the “Urban Renaissance” of British cities. However, the “Urban Renaissance” agenda is responsible for producing negative effects in urban communities, such as gentrification and the transformation of public areas (Colomb, 2007, p. 1).

Henderson and Raco (2009) claim that the diffusion of regeneration discourses takes attention away from some other strategies that contribute to generating inequalities, such as employment conditions, the housing market, and the welfare state. Following the literature, a va-

riety of authors affirm that the discourse of regenerating urban spaces is usually followed by new forms of social exclusion and marginalization (MacLeod, 2002; MacLeod & Ward, 2002; Holden & Iveson, 2003; Lees, 2003; Raco, 2003c; Johnstone, 2004; Coaffee, 2005).

The concept of social cleansing as described by Porteous and Smith (2001), implies both the short-term removal of tenants and property owners to enable the estate redevelopment as well as the long-term migration of residents due to the increase of costs of living and attraction of wealthy householders to the neighborhood.

*“This implicates estate regeneration within the wider processes of gentrification in the capital which, accompanied by austerity urbanism and welfare benefit reforms (e.g. the bedroom tax, the capping of local housing allowance, changes in eligibility for housing benefit for the under 35s and so on), are breaking up working class communities which are often long-standing and characterized by forms of social and cultural capital that can compensate for a lack of economic prosperity (Lees 2008; Lees and White, under review). The latter is particularly emphasized in the campaigns led by some resident groups and estates against displacement, including those campaigns which have invoked the ‘right to stay put’ (see Lees and Ferreri 2016; LTF et al. 2014).”* (Hubbard and Lees, 2018, p. 12)

Therefore, as described by Watt and Minton (2016) estate regeneration has been criticized by activists and urban planners as a tool for social cleansing, which includes the loss of social housing, breaking up the existing neighborhood, and the displacement of low-middle income residents (Watt, 2018, p.73). Additionally, concepts such as the social mix and Urban Renaissance have been used in policy documents to justify practices of urban regeneration as seeking to achieve social cohesion in communities when it is just promoting rapid gentrification and socio-spatial polarization.

*“The cities of advanced market economies have changed dramatically in the last 50 years. Disinvestment in the 1950s and 1960s and/or de-industrialisation in the 1970s affected them all, with worldwide reverberations. Gradually, some inner neighbourhoods in most of the larger cities began to experience reinvestment. The process had a pattern, usually involving the restoration of run-down 18th and 19th century housing and requiring the eviction of low-income tenants.*

*The transition from lower to higher socio-economic status residents was accompanied by a shift in housing tenure, from rental to owner occupation. Factories and warehouses also began to be converted to lofts or apartments, and streetscapes were ‘rejuvenated’ with*

As shown, in the UK and also worldwide, estate regeneration and social mix are being used as a discourse of the Urban Renaissance agenda, which through policy documents, promotes gentrification and displacement of existing residents to attract investments and wealthy householders for a neighborhood. This mainly happens due to the partnership between public and private sectors, defined by Harvey (1989) as a policy mechanism established due to the transition of Fordism to the regime of flexible accumulation, in 1970.

Post-20th century, due to the global financial crisis generated by the US crash in 1929, to minimize the financial recession, the US sought to implement the model of Keynesianism as a strategy to recover their economy (Harvey, 1989, p. 11-12). John Maynard Keynes established Keynesianism as the state’s main actor in controlling the economy and providing basic needs to rebalance the financial system.

Furthermore, Keynesianism is marked by the “welfare state” which proposes the end of the free market and the return of state intervention, the opposite of Fordism, which contributed to generating the crisis of 1929, when the state was in charge of balancing the mass production (Farias, 2019, p. 16). In this period, the context was marked by the instability of the means of production which reflected in the social organization of society, contributing to ensuring social disparities.

This framework resulted in the decline of the postwar economic model, contributing to the reduction of state intervention which was seen as a barrier to economic growth in 1960 (Brenner, 2002, p. 350). Then, Harvey (1989) states that the Liberal discourse gained attention through the government of Margaret Thatcher in the UK and Ronald Reagan in the US, which contributed to finishing the “welfare state” and introduced the economic model based on privatization policies.

In that period, both the US and UK governments implemented measures that favored the implementation of neoliberal policies through tax reduction, privatization of national entities, money creation control, financial regulation flexibility, and limitation of trade union powers. Thus, after the 1970s neoliberalism became significantly used as a strategy to minimize the impacts of the global crises caused during the previous

decade.

In the 1980s, the assault of trade unions and welfare rights organizations was a crucial moment in the global turn toward neoliberalism. The neoliberalism turn was marked worldwide by the intense cutbacks in social expenditures and the welfare state, transferring the responsibility for their well-being to individuals (Harvey, 2006, p. 151). However, even though neoliberalism aims to minimize state interference in all its dimensions, it strongly contributed to increased social polarization.

Therefore, the introduction of a new economic model had an impact on the urban shape of cities once it was transformed into financial areas in order to boost the real estate market. As Harvey (1989) claims, cities started adopting a private urban management model, called Urban Entrepreneurialism, seeking to attract job opportunities and external investments, as well as to transform cities into attractive places for capitalist development. In this way, public-private partnerships became a tool of urban planning connected with urban regeneration.

*“As Sassen argues, these logics of expulsion have arisen under contemporary neoliberalism and globalization as opposed to the post-War, Keynesian Welfare State era which was “driven by a logic of inclusion” (Sassen, 2014, p. 212). In the UK, the latter included large-scale social housing provision plus statutory homelessness support, both of which have substantially diminished consequent upon long[1]term neoliberalism plus post-crash austerity cutbacks. Under the latter, expulsions in the form of tenant evictions have multiplied (Paton and Cooper, 2016; 2017). In 2015, there were 42,728 repossession in the private and social rental sectors by county court bailiffs in England and Wales, the highest annual figure since 2000 (MOJ, 2016). Evictions have also soared in Spain, Greece and Ireland as a result of mortgage foreclosures in the wake of the 2007-8 crash and subsequent austerity measures (Brickell et al., 2017).” (Watt, 2018, p. 68)*

As illustrated, the practice of neighborhood disinvestment followed by a preceding reinvestment accompanied by residents' displacement emerged, representing a crucial procedure of gentrification, reported by Jacobs (1961) and Smith (1979). In real cases such as Rio de Janeiro and Barcelona ports as well as London docks, urban policies supported authorities to displace residents, favoring the interest of the

private sectors.

The term gentrification appeared first in the 1960s when Ruth Glass (1965) defined it as a process of displacing the working class in order to refurbish a quartier to attract upper-class residents. Additionally, state-led urban renewal since the 1980s has ensured gentrification and privatization of the housing sector presented as a form of urban regeneration.

As stated by Smith (2002), in the context of North America and Europe, it is possible to point out three waves of gentrification. The first wave, observed by Glass (1964), represents sporadic gentrification. The second wave, which happened in the 1970s and 1980s, became a wider urban and economic refurbishment process, labeled by Hackworth (2000) as an “anchoring phase” of gentrification. While the third wave emerged in the 1990s, identified as generalized gentrification (Smith, 2002, p. 440).

The 1970s were marked by the establishment of global cities, however, the economic system changed and transformed not only into a capital invested in the production sector but also into a capital market to attend to the needs of the new structure of urban areas. Smith (2002) affirms that the discourse of globalization associated with a concept of “new urbanism” emerged in Europe and North America focusing on the criteria of scale construction associated with a process of gentrification. In this period, the liberal urban policy was boosted in the US and Europe due to the economic crises of the 1970s and the provision of liberal urban policies during the Ronald Reagan government in the US as well as Margaret Thatcher in the UK, who transferred responsibilities from the national government to the local authorities and private market.

Therefore, the starting point of the neoliberal urban agenda was reinforced by the beginning of neoliberal governments, combining authority power with urban policies, representing a new aspect of gentrification. Later on, at the end of the 20th century, gentrification processes changed with the inclusion of public-private partnerships related to urban planning (Smith, 2002, p. 440-441).

As can be seen, during the rise of neoliberalism governments globally, seeking to minimize the capital crisis provoked by deindustrialization and postwar, urban regeneration turned into a strategy used by the state to gentrify designated areas, seeking to bring investments through public-private partnerships to recover the local economy. Recently, gentrification became an attempt to recapture the value of a

<sup>6</sup> Rio's Port regeneration in the framework of the Olympic Regeneration Plan of 2009-2016, available on: <https://portomaravilha.com.br/portomaravilha>, accessed in June 2023.

<sup>7</sup> "Marvelous Port", Rio's largest urban redevelopment project, available on: <https://rionwatch.org/?p=56700>, accessed in June 2023.

<sup>8</sup> Which in English is called Urban Development Corporation (UDC), is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as several organizations started by the British government to develop and improve areas of the inner cities, including London's Docklands in 1981. It was regulated by law in the Local Government, Planning, and Land Act of 1980. As defined by Pinson (2022), the UDC works to create the condition of real state market intervention in areas of urban decay, it is a characteristic of neoliberal governments that seek to use public policies to extend mechanisms of market and its effects. Available on: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/1998/0110653963> <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/urban-development-corporation#:~:text=%E2%80%8Ban%20of%20several%20former,new%20offices%2C%20houses%20and%20industries>, accessed in June 2023.

<sup>9</sup> Estatuto da Cidade, available on: [https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/leis/leis\\_2001/l10257.htm](https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/leis_2001/l10257.htm) and <https://www2.senado.leg.br/bdsf/bitstream/handle/id/70317/000070317.pdf>, accessed in June 2023.

<sup>10</sup> In Portuguese means "Certificados de Potencial adicional Construtivo", which are the sale of titles to finance the

place (Zukin, 1991, p. 192). Thus, regional governments started to adopt major redevelopment projects, aiming to attract private investment into industrial areas, such as docks, riverbanks, and rail yards (Shaw, 2008, p. 1701).

*"(...), the transformation of mile after mile of old wharf and warehouse properties along both banks of the Thames suggests that gentrification in London is more expansive than in most North American cities. Insofar as it is an expression of larger social, economic, and political relations, gentrification in any particular city will express the particularities of the place in the making of its urban space. And yet, to differing degrees, gentrification had evolved by the 1990s into a crucial urban strategy for city governments in consort with private capital in cities around the world."* (Smith, 2002, p. 440-441)

Following the authors' concepts already cited, the council's tenants have been pushed out of their neighborhoods due to the rise in rentals, which confirms Smith's theory (2002) that urban regeneration became a tool for gentrification, increasing social disparities. Additionally, as demonstrated, this aspect is not only exclusive to the British scenario but is associated with other cases where neoliberal governments started to boost investments to transform the image of their city and elevate it as a global context.

Comparing the case of London with the case of Rio de Janeiro – where I had an experience working with a social movement evicted due to the Olympics regeneration plan<sup>6</sup> –, there, the Porto *Maravilha* Urban Operation<sup>7</sup> was responsible for establishing a new form of occupation for the shoreline of Rios's port, based on modernizing the urban infrastructure, making the area more sustainable, and focusing on socioeconomic development.

Similar to London's case and many other gentrification processes, Rio's regeneration plan 2009-2016 happened through the establishment of the Urban Consortium Operation<sup>8</sup> (OUC, in Portuguese), allowed by the Federal law nº 10257/2001<sup>9</sup> which validated the public-private partnership in the harbor of the city, seeking to obtain financial sources for regenerating that area through the implementation of Cepacs<sup>10</sup>. This instrument was created by a policy (law 10.257/2001<sup>11</sup>) to finance large projects without needing the municipality's resources.

Nevertheless, according to Rolnik (2019) and the UN Human Rights<sup>12</sup> reports, the public-private partnership became a strategy of

public policy in Rio and many other cities worldwide, to attract international and national capital to insert the city into the global competition bringing many human rights violations, such as evicting entire communities and its low-income residents.

As demonstrated, the diffusion of gentrification has various dimensions, such as transforming the role of the state, including the city in the global financial market, and increasing social disparities (Smith, 2002, p. 441). For that reason, to analyze the effects of Urban Entrepreneurialism and demonstrate alternative solutions to flagship regeneration other than gentrification, it is important to introduce the Right to the City.

### 2.3. The role of community-led projects in regeneration processes

The right to the city was first proposed by Henri Lefebvre (1968) in his book *Le Droit à la Ville* and later transformed into the Right to the City (1996), a version in English, demonstrating the working-class struggle that sought to participate in the decision-making process of the city. From this period, the Right to the City has been used to criticize neoliberalism and practices of designing cities. Afterward, the "right to the city" has been requested by authorities, scholars, and social movements as a reclaim of the city and to recreate its spaces during the context of capitalism, demonstrating its effects on social interactions as well as the increase of social inequalities in many cities worldwide (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 80).

According to Lefebvre (1996), the right to the city is a political claim and a demand for social justice, social change, and the realization of technological and human advances after the 2nd World War. This concept concentrated attention on ordinary citizens instead of the private sector redevelopment, representing a more democratic and social perspective of public participation (Jonas, McCan, and Thomas, 2015, p. 39-40).

Additionally, Merrifield (2011), states that the request for the right to the city became a stronger request when the role of financial capital in the neoliberalism framework, which uses political power to support their interest by using urban regeneration projects. Because of this, in 2010, during the World Urban Forum in Rio de Janeiro<sup>13</sup>, the United Nations adopted the Right to the City in their charter, requesting to include

Urban Development Corporation (UDC) of degraded areas by offering the possibility to buy those certifications to the ones (landowners or private enterprises) that want to increase the constructed area of a project in the location of the regeneration plan.

<sup>11</sup> Estatuto da Cidade, available on: [https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/leis/leis\\_2001/l10257.htm](https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/leis_2001/l10257.htm) and <https://www2.senado.leg.br/bdsf/bitstream/handle/id/70317/000070317.pdf>, accessed in June 2023.

<sup>12</sup> The UN Human Rights Council, Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing as a Component of the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living, available on <https://digitallibrary.un.org/search?f1=author&as=1&sf=ti>, accessed in Dec 2022. [The 5th edition of World Urban Forum, located in Rio de Janeiro in 2010. The most important focus in this edition was The Right to the City: Bridging the Urban Divide, focusing on key aspects of sustainable urbanization. Available on: https://wuf.unhabitat.org/wuf5 and on https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019-05/wuf-5.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees/54300000.html), accessed in June 2023.

<sup>13</sup> The 5th edition of World Urban Forum, located in Rio de Janeiro in 2010. The most important focus in this edition was The Right to the City: Bridging the Urban Divide, focusing on key aspects of sustainable urbanization. Available on: <https://wuf.unhabitat.org/wuf5> and on <https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019-05/wuf-5.pdf>, accessed in June 2022.

it as a goal to be achieved in the context of all nations' development within the following 30 years after this Forum.

In the 5th World Urban Forum, Harvey (2010) argued the need for a radical new urban politic since urban development has been driven by big-business interests, which are responsible for benefiting the elite and neglecting the poor. Moreover, the author discussed that the Right to the City must be a concept to fight since the ones involved in political and economic power would not retreat from their interests.

As illustrated before, the Right to the City has been used to demonstrate the social impacts of gentrification in neoliberal contexts, which normally are responsible for displacing or even evicting residents from their neighborhoods and denying them other rights, such as the right to participate and shape their territory. Additionally, the Right to the City is not only defined by a unique meaning but composed of a broad definition. As claimed by Harvey (2004), it is not only a right to access what already exists but a right to change it according to our desire, producing a new type of urban society.

The many kinds of rights requested by the Right to the City are composed of social, economic, political, and environmental rights which are reclaimed to protect local communities and their residents. This research seeks to demonstrate the many types of rights connected to the right to stay in the city, focusing on the right to adequate housing, the right to participate in political discussions as well as the right to shape the city in a neoliberal framework.

Moreover, the balance between the right to participate and the right to the city is demonstrated in the last part of this research through the community-led initiatives (Chapter 3) in the study case part. That is because, as can be seen, the Right to the City could be defined as an essential right to guarantee citizens living conditions, everyday life, and political participation to safeguard entire communities and implement a more democratic decision-making process under the context of urban planning.

Accordingly, the relationship between the Right to the City, urban policies, and urban design is presented, aiming to introduce a discussion about the need for public participation in the decision-making processes of cities, which contributes to minimizing social exclusion and urban injustices. In this way, it is important to highlight how urban policy agendas are used as a tool to displace and evict entire communities, creating social exclusion and social polarization in neighborhoods as a global

tendency.

Although the Right to the City could be defined as a common fight involving many different groups, normally it is a working-class slogan or a political ideal adopted by social movements, as Harvey (2008) affirms. Thus, the Right to the City might be seen not only as the right to be maintained in the city but also as a democratic right to make decisions and use the city.

According to the UN-Habitat (2011)<sup>14</sup>, forced population displacements are a massive and growing global problem, characterized by millions of people being affected annually. For that reason, the impacts of the top-down urban regeneration agenda should be considered relevant, enforcing the importance of public participation in decision-making planning processes in the context of urban policy agendas.

One of the most relevant impacts of top-down urban regeneration is the practice of forced evictions by local authorities. The terms "eviction" and "forced eviction" are characterized by development-induced forced displacements, most suitable in the definition of "forced eviction", although the literature preferred a more neutral term of "population displacement" and "involuntary resettlement". (Du Plessis, 2011, p. 29).

Cernea (2007) reported that involuntary population displacement happens due to the need to build modern industrial and transportation infrastructures, expand energy generation, implement urban renewal, and enhance social services. However, forced population displacement carries a social pathology that must be always avoided due to its social impacts.

As reported by Du Plessis (2011), forced evictions are a global problem that results in every year millions of people worldwide being evicted without any consultation or compensation. This logic of expulsion has emerged during contemporary neoliberalism and globalization in opposition to the post-War, in the context of the Keynesian Welfare State period which was operated by a logic of inclusion (Sassen, 2014, p.212).

*"In the UK, the latter included large-scale social housing provision plus statutory homelessness support, both of which have substantially diminished consequent upon long-term neoliberalism plus post-crash austerity cutbacks. Under the latter, expulsions in the form of tenant evictions have multiplied (Paton and Cooper, 2016;*

<sup>14</sup> The UN-Habitat report addressing the eviction impact methodologies globally. Available on: <https://unhabitat.org/losing-your-home-assessing-the-impact-of-eviction>. accessed in June 2023.

<sup>15</sup> The UN Human Rights Resolution regarding forced evictions. Available on: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/forced-evictions-and-human-rights>. Accessed in June 2023.

<sup>16</sup> The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Available on: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights>. Accessed in June 2023.

2017). *In 2015, there were 42,728 repossessions in the private and social rental sectors by county court bailiffs in England and Wales, the highest annual figure since 2000 (MOJ, 2016). Evictions have also soared in Spain, Greece and Ireland as a result of mortgage foreclosures in the wake of the 2007-8 crash and subsequent austerity measures (Brickell et al., 2017).*" (Watt, 2018, p. 68)

Despite the efforts of communities and organizations to resist and develop alternatives, the problem of forced evictions is increasing worldwide. For this reason, the UN Commission on Human Rights defined that forced evictions constitute a gross violation of human rights, regarding the right to adequate housing, based on Resolution 1993/77<sup>15</sup>. According to the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1991)<sup>16</sup>, forced evictions can be justified only in the most exceptional cases and it must follow the principles of international law.

The impacts of forced evictions are considered drastic by researchers, national and international NGOs, civil society, and community leaders since evicted populations have their property damaged or destroyed, their social networks broken up, and their access to essential services lost, contributing to psychological effects on the affected population. Because of the enormous impacts of the eviction process, the residents sometimes risk their lives to resist it (Du Plessis, 2011, p. 3-4).

Marcuse (1986) indicates a relationship between gentrification and displacement when he defines the concept of "exclusionary displacement" which in his definition means when people are excluded from a place they might have lived or worked if the place had not been regenerated. Additionally, the scholar characterizes the concept of "gentrification-induced displacement" as "gentrification anxiety", indicating the feeling of eviction threat after the residents receive a notice to quit that area (Watt, 2018, p.74).

Thereby, it is important to highlight the impacts of mega-events in the implementation of the right to adequate housing, reinforcing the practices of eviction and displacement. According to the literature, it is clear that the impact of mega-events harms vulnerable populations, once past experiences have shown that urban regeneration projects implemented in the preparation of mega-events commonly result in extensive human rights violations (Rolnik, 2009, p. 4).

*"Regrettably, the legacy of hallmark events on the situation of these people has been far from positive. The alleged economic benefits of staging the games are not spread evenly throughout the local population. Instead, old disparities appear to be exacerbated as the processes of regeneration and beautification of the city usually focus on areas mostly populated by poor and vulnerable groups."* (Rolnik, 2009, p.6)

As illustrated, displacement and forced evictions are common characteristics of the preparation of mega-events, because of the demand for space to construct sports infrastructures, accommodation, and roads through urban redevelopment, which usually requires demolition of existing houses to clean spaces for those new constructions. Therefore, the creation of a new international image of the city usually results in the beautification of the main areas by removing poverty evidence.

Although the urbanization projects aim to improve the image of the city, mass displacement could also result in an indirect process, defined by Rolink (2009) as a process of gentrification, and costs of housing increase due to the improvement of the city's image. In addition, the use of mega-events as a tool to improve cities' image and relocate them into a global economy was not always like this, until the 1930s. Rolnik (2009) states that the Olympic Games and International sporting events left few traces on the urban landscape, such as in the case of Los Angeles City which used the games to improve the local economy.

However, after the 2nd World War, the mega-events movement changed and started to use sports as a social goal by constructing public sports infrastructures and promoting sports activities. Later on, in the 1970s, policies of constructing sports infrastructures in central areas became a strategy for urban renewal, as claimed by Rolnik (2009) in the UN Report<sup>17</sup> on adequate housing. In 1980, the International Olympic Committee adopted the incorporation of the private sector in the promotion of the games, while in the 1990s the organization of mega-events became part of the city's strategic planning in order to reinsert them into the global economy.

Consequently, the mega-events become an economic development strategy, combining urban infrastructure renewal and real estate investment, producing social impacts on the local population. In 1992, the Olympic Games in Barcelona and their new approach to moderniz-

<sup>17</sup> The UN Human Rights Council Report, 13th section, Agenda item 3: Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights including the right to development. Available on: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/679318?ln=en>. Accessed in June 2023.

<sup>18</sup> “Marvelous Port”, Rio’s Largest Urban Redevelopment Project, 10 Years On. Available on: <https://rioonwatch.org/?p=56700>. Accessed in June 2023.

ing infrastructure and the image of the city had a great impact on social and economic development (Rolnik, 2009, p. 3-4). In the case of London 2012, the construction of Queen Elisabeth Olympic Park and many facilities around the city contributed to reinforcing the practices of council estate demolition and social cleansing in the city.

*“(…) in London, the Clays Lane State, a historic social housing on the Olympic Park site where around 400 people lived, was demolished. According to the London Development Agency, the site did not meet the Government’s Decent Homes Standard.”* (Rolnik, 2009, p.8-9)

Moreover, Rio’s 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games can be compared in a similar context. Rio’s strategic plan defined the revitalization of the Port area through real estate development and social inclusion. However, the project was mainly marked by forced evictions, lack of transparency, and incomplete development of the designed plan.

According to Rio on Watch (2019) <sup>18</sup>, the strategic plan for the megaevents in Rio was an emblematic practice of whitewashing Brazil’s black history and made Rio’s low-income population invisible. This because the largest slave port in the world — home of Rio’s first favela —, called Morro da Providência, was assigned as an “Interest Area” for the implementation of a cable car connecting the Port, evicting many residents to its implementation and revitalization of the Port zone.

As previously presented, the impact of urban regeneration and beautification of the city is enormous in low-income neighborhoods and slums, enforcing housing demolitions in order to open space for new infrastructures. In this framework, policies and special laws are implemented to clean the city, which results in a series of removals, increasing even more the amount of homeless population in those cities.

The UN indicates the practice of evictions and displacement for mega-events urban redevelopment as a human rights violation, which should be as much as possible avoided. For that reason, Rolnik (2009), indicated the need for the right of participation and information of local communities in the context of mega-events.

In this way, it is possible to understand the urgent need for public participation in the context of urban regeneration, seeking to show the importance of public consultation in urban redevelopment projects, once its positive contribution maintains social cohesion avoiding the in-

crease of inequalities through community participation in decision-making processes. Therefore, in the next section, the planning tools in the British scenario used to support the community-led regeneration practices are demonstrated, aiming to give a context to the study cases of this research.

### 3. THE BRITISH AND LONDON CONTEXT

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland are union states, and each nation has autonomy regarding public policies. In the spatial planning instruments matter, England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland work differently but in a common framework (Bragaglia, 2022, p.172). The UK planning field has a discretionary system without legally binding zoning (Nadin and Stead, 2014), making regulation plans unnecessary, such as land-use rights, if a project meets collective objectives (Bragaglia, 2022, p.172).

Therefore, the most symbolic characteristic of the UK planning system is that it is a binding zoning system, which means that regulation plans are not required. So, UK spatial planning is characterized by a level of negotiation by the stakeholders involved (Bragaglia, 2022, p.172). Due to its flexibility in achieving collective goals, Janin Rivolin (2017) states that the UK planning system is also known as a performative model.

Thus, this flexibility contributed to the inclusion of local community participation in spatial planning decision-making since the 1960s, once the authorities started demonstrating an interest in allowing the community to make their own decisions on planning at the local level. Additionally, the desire to include residents in planning discussions was ensured by the rise of discourses such as social innovation and co-production (Parker, 2017 & Bragaglia, 2022).

In the last decade, all countries of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland have been experiencing community planning tools at a local level, resulting in a non-hierarchical process once it allowed the residents to express their interest in the choices that are going to affect their lives. Jansen (2019) affirms that the authorities justified the creation of the “Big Society” through the tradition of community engagement in neighborhood changes. As a result, it changed the relationship between the state and civil society, since it pushed down the power from the National

to the Local Level, shifting planning responsibility from the authorities and giving the communities the possibility of thinking about and designing their surrounding area, which represented a decentralization of powers and responsibilities.

### 3.1. Planning tools at the National Level

Planning tools in England have two different scales: The National and the Local level. The third scale — as demonstrated in the schema below (Table 2) — was the Regional level and was abolished since the Localism Act 2011 (Bragaglia, 2022, p. 212).

Additionally, in England, the structure of the government varies depending on the area. For instance, there are ‘single-tier’ councils, where one unique authority is responsible for every function of the local government, and there are ‘two-tier’ councils, where local government responsibilities are shared between the authorities involved.

Even though most of England works on a ‘two-tier’ structure, London is an exception. Thus, London operates under a ‘single tier’ structure, which means that the Regional level — responsible for creating Local Plans — doesn’t exist and the Mayor of London is responsible for that function (Table 1).

The UK was one of the first countries to include citizen participation in spatial governance decision-making thanks to the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act (Table 3), and later on due to the Neighborhood Planning in 2011 (Bragaglia, 2022, p.172). Moreover, Neighborhood Planning was responsible for giving legislative power to local citizens contributing to community empowerment and the true realization of citizen participation in spatial planning.

The idea of the “Big Society” was to foster co-production plans by uniting local communities and planning agents. Therefore, as Bragaglia (2022) states, the Big Society can be seen as a coalition of many small active communities in which local people have a greater say in the decisions that affect their lives.

Since 1965, through the London Government Act 1963, London has been divided into 32 borough councils and the City of London, which together compose 33 local authorities, defining the administrative area of Greater London in England.

Twelve boroughs are designated as Inner London, while twenty

	NORMAL CASE	LONDON CASE
NATIONAL	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
REGIONAL	Authorities who create Local Plans	<div style="border: 1px dashed red; padding: 2px;">Authorities who create Local Plans</div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">The Mayor of London</div> <span style="font-size: small; vertical-align: middle;">replaced by</span>
COUNTY DISTRICT	Local Plan	The London Plan
TOWN / PARISH/ NEIGHBORHOOD	Neighborhood Plan	Neighborhood Plan

Table 1: The English Planning System: London Exception. Author's processing, based on information available on Francesca Bragaglia's Ph.D. thesis.

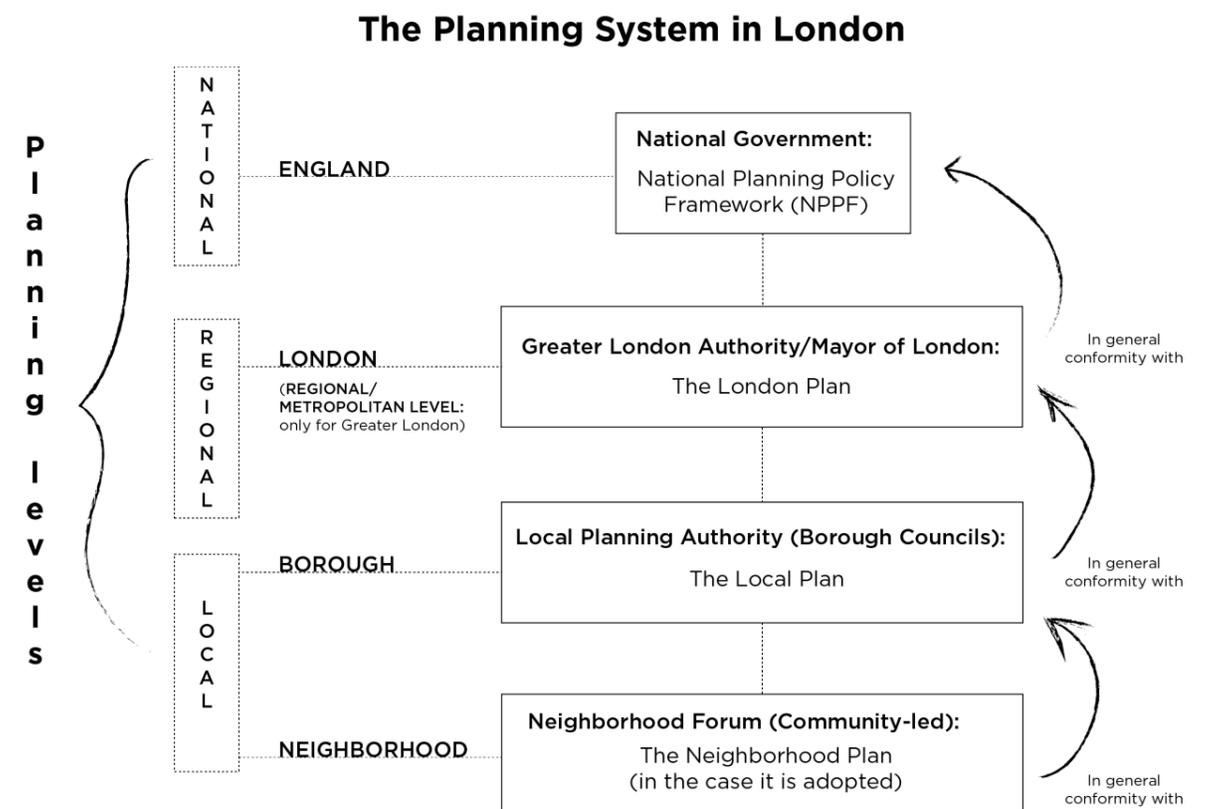


Table 2: The Three-Tier Planning System in London. Author's processing, based on information available on Francesca Bragaglia's Ph.D. thesis.

## 20th-21st century evolution of the English Planning System

1900	1909 Town Planning Act	Urban local authorities may make landuse plans. For the 1st time, a development can be prohibited if it does not accord to a local plan.
1910	1919 Town Planning Act	Requires urban authorities to produce plans; public subsidies for housebuilding.
1920	1922 Interim Development Order	Introduces concept of discretionary control on some individual planning applications.
1930	1932 Town and Country Planning Act	Plan-making extends to countryside.
	1935 Restriction of Ribbon Development Act	Local authorities can prevent development into the countryside, but must buy land or compensate landowners to do so.
	1938 Green Belt Act	
1940	1947 Town and Country Planning Act	All development requires permission from local authority and payment of a development charge. Every single local authority must produce a development plan.
	1955 Green Belt Circular	Government policy encourages Green Belt, "7 to 10 miles wide" around major cities.
1960	1968 Town and Country Planning Act	Structure and Local Plans separated. Opportunities for local participation increase.
1970		
1990	1990 Town and Country Planning Act	Consolidates planning legislation. Introduces section 106 agreements.
1995	Government Circular 06/98	Makes Affordable Housing the standard form of developer contribution.
	1999 Greater London Authority Act	Enables regional policy guidance for Greater London.
2000	2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act	Introduces Regional Spatial Strategies. Merges Local and Structure Plans.
2005	2008 Planning Act	Creates separate regime for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.
2010	2011 Localism Act	Abolishes Regional Spatial Strategies. Introduces Neighborhood Plans.
	2012 National Planning Policy Framework	Consolidates national planning policy guidance into one document.
2015	2016 Housing and Planning Act	Introduces mechanism of "Permission in Principle".
2020	2017 Neighborhood and Planning Act	Strengthens Neighborhood Planning system.

Table 3: Evolution of the English Planning System from 1900 to 2020. Author's processing, based on information available on: <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Rethinking-the-Planning-System-for-the-21st-Century.pdf> and Accessed in June 2024.

## 3.2. Planning tools at the Local Level

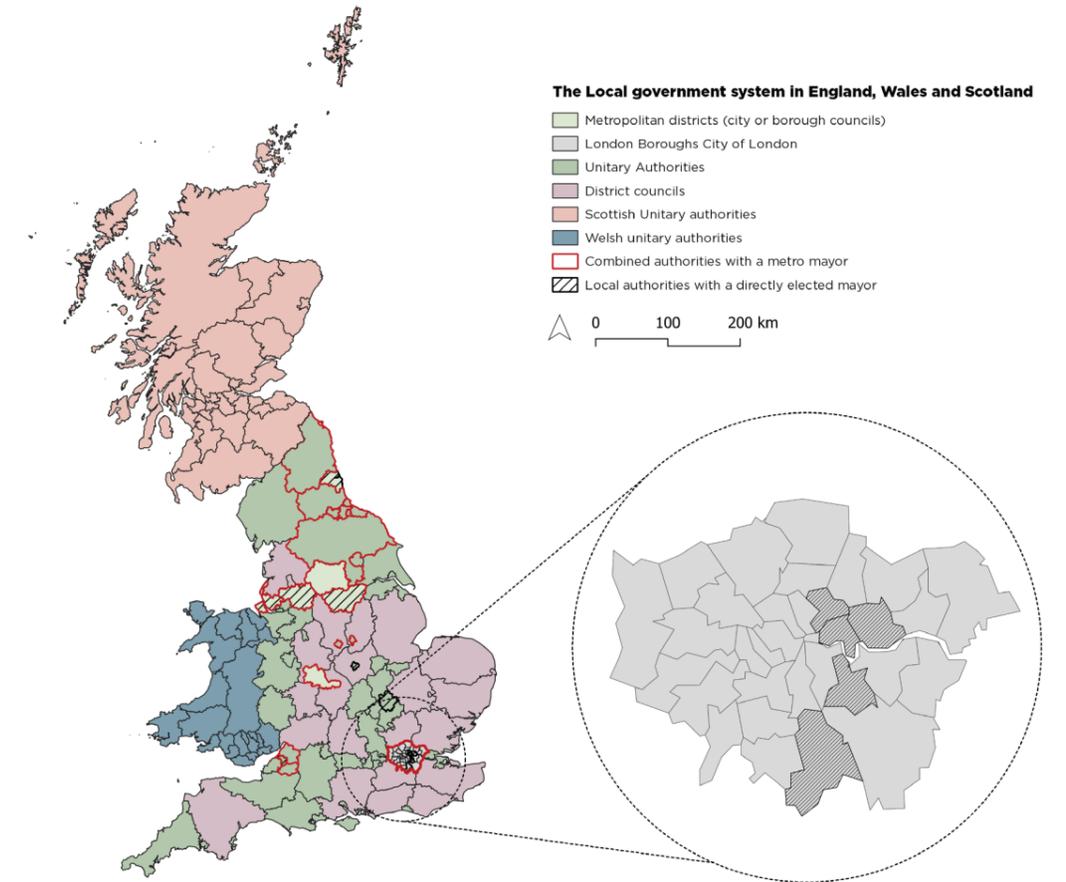


Figure 1: Local Government in England, Wales and Scotland. Author's processing, based on data provided by UK Changing in Europe. Available on: <https://ukandeu.ac.uk/explainers/local-government-in-england-scotland-and-wales/> and accessed on June 2024.



Figure 2: London Boroughs. Author's processing, based on data provided by London Datastore. 27

are defined as Outer London (Figure 2). Every borough is divided into wards and each ward is normally represented by 3 elected councilors, who are elected every four years.

The English Local Government structure is divided into tier councils, and in 2000, another tier of local government was created called the Greater London Authority (GLA). London has its unique form of strategic authority, which is the GLA, divided into 2 parts, containing: the Mayor of London and the London Assembly (Table 4, 5 and 6). The GLA is composed of the Mayor and the London Assembly, which is a democratically elected strategic authority. Thus, Londoners elect the mayor, while the Assembly comprises 25 elected members.

On the one hand, the London borough councils, alongside the City of London, are tasked with delivering essential services to the residents, including education, social, environmental, planning, and recreational amenities. On the other hand, the Mayor's responsibility is to outline a vision for the city and create strategic guidelines through the Spatial Development Strategy, also known as the London Plan.

The London Plan adopts an integrated approach across the environmental, economic, social, and transportation sectors for the city development. Additionally, there is a distinct separation of powers between the Mayor and the Assembly: the mayor has an executive role while the Assembly members have the authority to review and potentially veto the Mayor's decisions.

## English local government structures

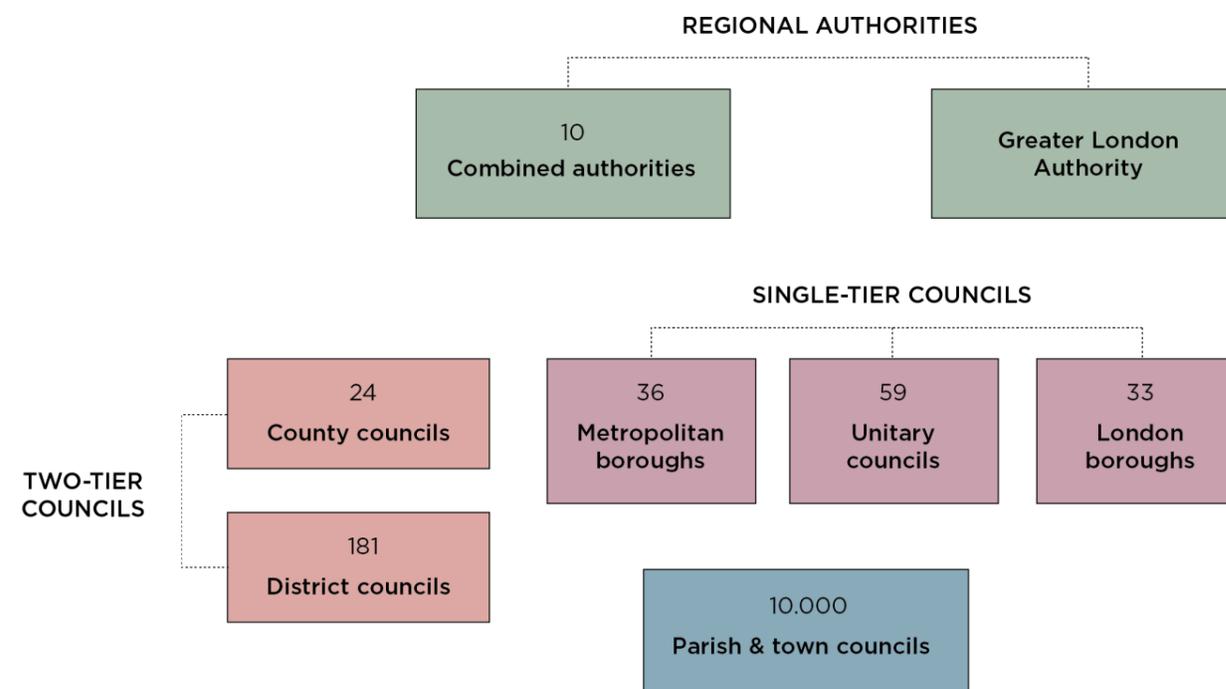


Table 4: Key Local Government Structures in England. Author's processing, based on information provided by Newlocal.org.uk . Accessed Dec 28th, 2023.

## English local government: types of councils

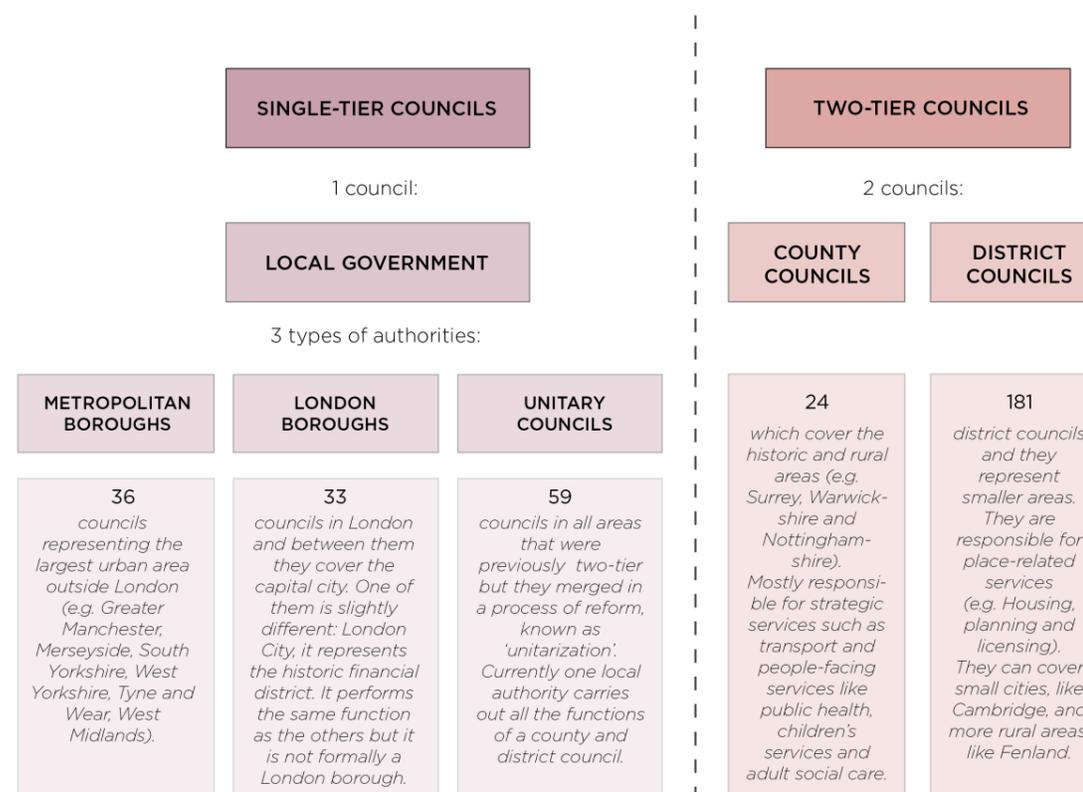


Table 5: English Local Government Structures: differences between single-tier and two-tier councils. Author's processing, based on information provided by Newlocal.org.uk . Accessed Dec 28th, 2023.

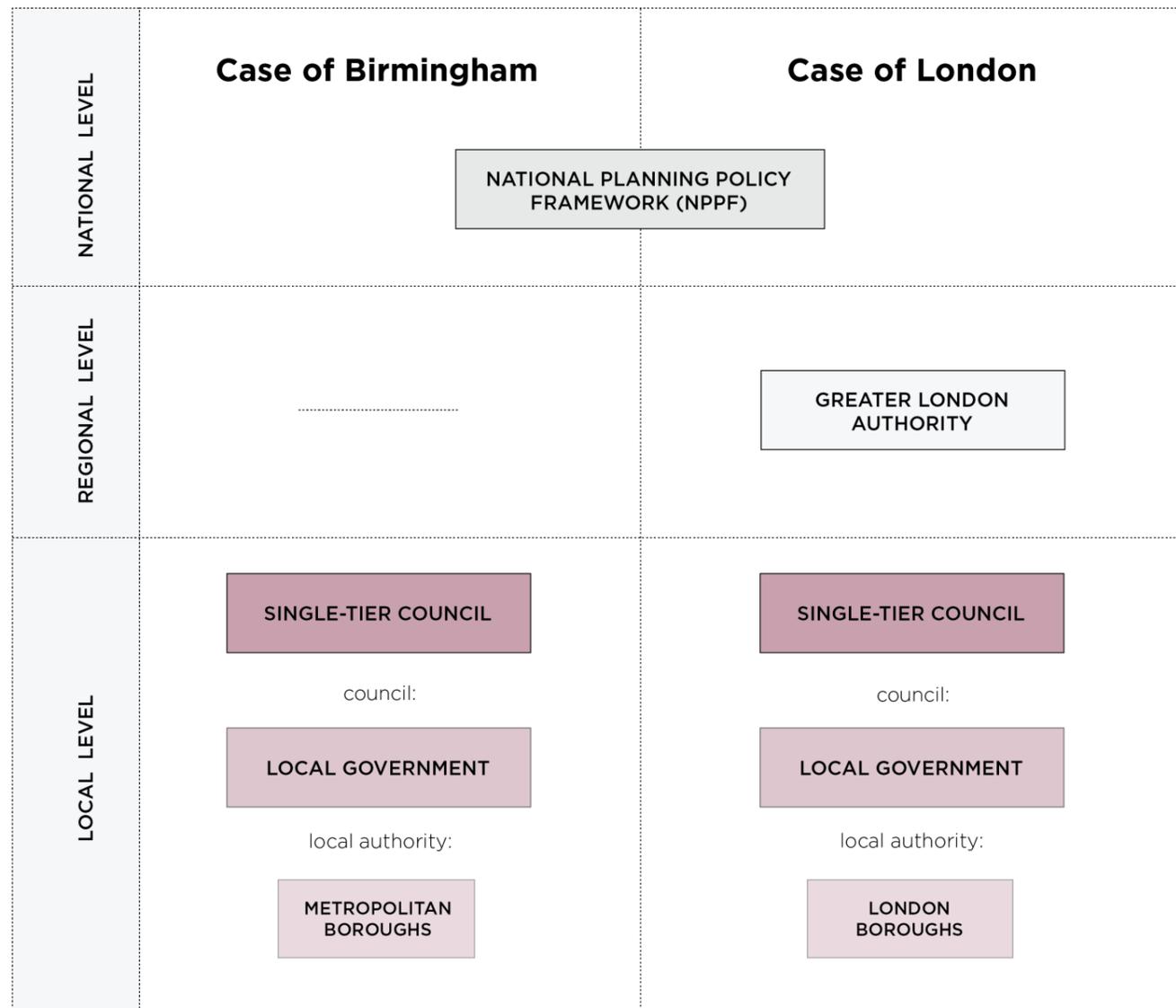


Table 6: English Planning System: differences between the local level in London vs. Birmingham. Author's processing, based on information provided by Birmingham City Council and Newlocal.org.uk. Accessed June 7th, 2024.

Under the Greater London Authority, the Mayor has an executive role, which is to set the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) of the city over the next 20-25 years, called the London Plan (Table 7). This document contains crucial policies to guide London's development in the framework of economy, infrastructure, housing, culture, and transport.

The first SDS was produced in 2004, while the latter London Plan was adopted in March 2021, according to the schema above (Bragaglia, 2022, p. 212-213). Additionally, the latest version defined Opportunity Areas for growth, which are areas defined by the government with significant capacity for development, indicating brownfields and places suffering from deprivation and urban decay as areas with great potential to be invested and improved (Table 7).

### London Plans implemented since 2004

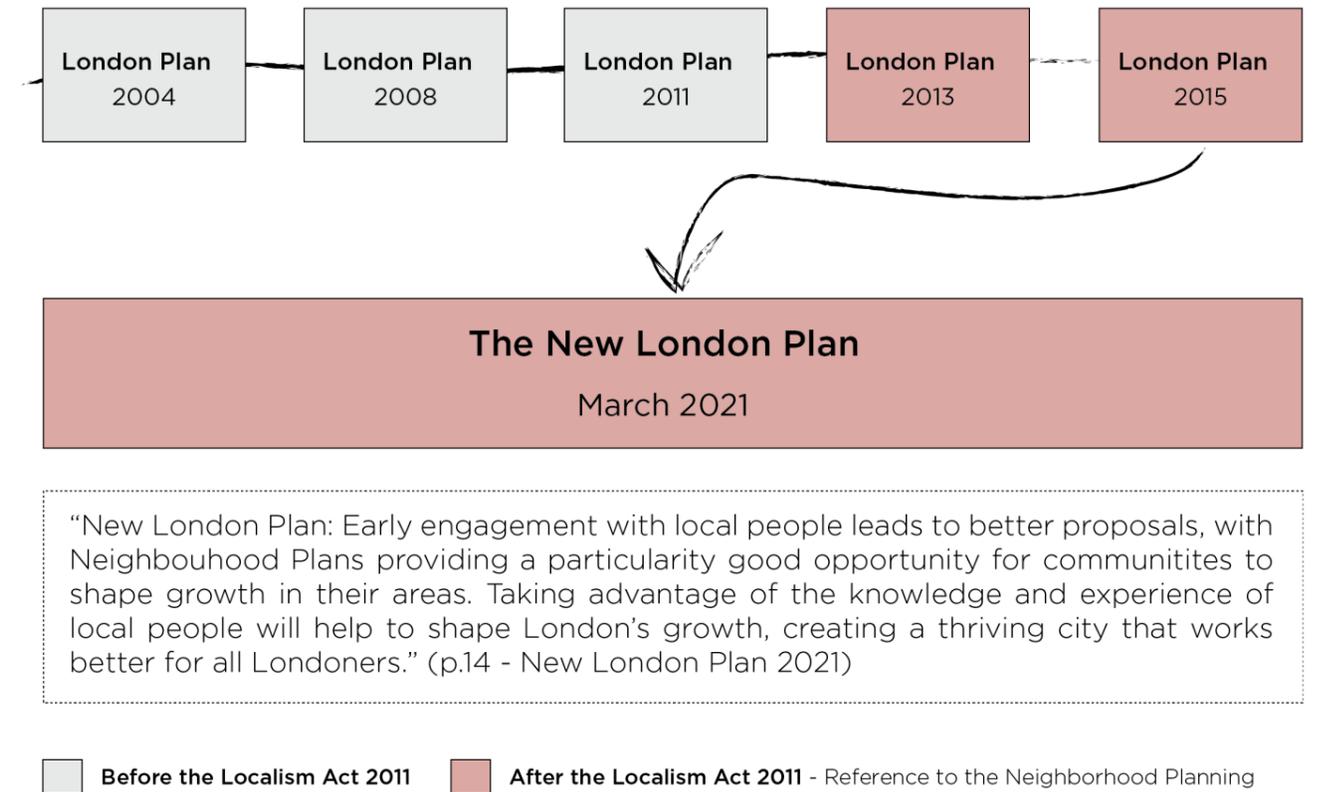


Table 7: London Plans implemented since 2004. Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from Francesca Bragaglia's Ph.D. thesis.

The Neighborhood Plan was introduced in England in 2011, after the Localism Act as a statutory form of planning, bringing up crucial aspects of the coalition of the "Big Society". In addition, the Localism Act introduced in England a variety of new rights for local communities regarding decision-making, creating a new form of urban governance.

In order to shift powers to local citizens, the Localism Act 2011 established 4 new community rights, including:

1. The Community's Right to Build, which enables local groups to propose small community-led transformations;
2. The Community Right to Challenge, which allows community groups to put in a proposal to run a local authority service that they believe they could provide better than the previously offered by the government;
3. The Community Right to Bid, introduced in April 2012, which offered actors to prepare and bid on community buildings and facilities;

4. Neighborhood Planning, as the most innovative tool, which enabled rural or urban communities to shape new developments in their area through a legal status of planning;

Then, it is possible to state that the Neighborhood Planning contributed to rebalancing the power, dividing it between the government and local people. However, not all planners support Neighborhood Planning. According to Bragaglia (2022), the Neighborhood Plan instrument suggested a redistribution of planning powers from planning professionals to the residents. Even though it is a community-led process, most of

*“One academic interviewed on this point suggests that these are actual ‘political-modulation’ tactics (see again Parker and Street, 2015) employed not only in London by local authorities less inclined to neighbourhood planning. These same authorities ‘have sometimes been quite hostile to neighbourhood planning and have used other means to prevent or persuade neighbourhoods not to do Neighbourhood Planning but have shifted the focus to other devices and ways of engaging with inhabitants. In the London context, this is, for instance, the case of Newham. According to the interviewees’ accounts and the desk-study, the Borough of Newham is one of the most active in London in participatory processes. Yet, it provides a minimal incentive for neighbourhood planning.” (Bragaglia, 2022, p. 217)*

Therefore, Neighborhood Planning is a co-production process (Parker, 2017a). To be defined, the plan itself passes through different stages. First of all, the neighborhood planning group defines a vision and the goals to be achieved in the consultation process, following the national and local policies. In this stage, the planning specialist must deal with technical and complex language. Usually, this technical expertise is paid with the Neighborhood Forum funding and often, this specialist, is who plays a central role in writing the plan.

Further, Bragaglia (2022) affirms that the draft plan goes through six weeks of consultation with the local community before revising it and then sent to the Local Authority (Table 8). Then, after consultation and other alterations, the Neighborhood Plan plus other documents that explain its participatory process

## Phases of the Neighborhood Planning process

		STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
PHASE 1	IDENTIFICATION AND DESIGNATION OF A NEIGHBORHOOD AREA AND A NEIGHBORHOOD FORUM (ONLY IN NON-PARISH AREAS)	Local community identification of the boundary of the neighborhood planning area	Apply to the local Planning Authority for the area to be designed and the Neighborhood Forum - for non-parish area	Creation of a Neighborhood Forum Constitution - for non-parish area	The Local Planning Authority publicises and consult on the application and arrive at a decision on the Neighborhood Area and Forum	Development of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Local Planning Authority
PHASE 2	INITIAL EVIDENCE GATHERING AND ELABORATING THE PLAN'S DRAFT	Local community's definition of a vision and goals	Consultation and community engagement	Evidence gathering	Draft details of the proposals for the Plan	
PHASE 3	PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION	Consultation on those proposals for a minimum of six weeks				
PHASE 4	SUBMISSION OF THE PLAN TO THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY	Submission of the Neighborhood Plan or order proposal to the Local Planning Authority	The Local Authority launch the plan or order for a minimum of 6 weeks and invites representations	An independent examiner is appointed for the examination of the neighborhood plan or order		
PHASE 5	INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE PLAN	The independent examiner makes recommendations and evaluates if the draft plan or order meets basic conditions and legal requirements	The Local Planning Authority considers the examination and decides whether the NP should be proceed to the referendum or needs modifications			
PHASE 6	REFERENDUM AND NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN APPROVAL	Hold a Referendum on the draft NP to ensure that the community decides whether the plan should be part of the development plan of the area	The LPA may extend the area in which the referendum is to take place to include other areas, not included within the neighborhood area	If the majority of those entitled to vote is in favour of the plan (or order), it must be formally adopted by the local authority	The policies of the neighborhood plan integrated into the local plan	
PHASE 7	IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN	Need to re-designate the forum after five years from its first approval by the local authority	Monitoring the Plan and prospects for a reviewed Plan			

Table 8: The 6+1 phases of the Neighborhood Planning process. Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from Francesca Bragaglia's Ph.D. thesis.

is sent to the local planning authority. Thus, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the stakeholders involved in that process and the results they can achieve.

Throughout the present section, it was possible to comprehend the spatial development strategies in the National and Local context of England. To have a better understanding of how the city changed based on flagship regeneration as well as the influence of planning strategies on the transformation of the urban shapes, the next section will introduce the case of London regarding planning strategies and city redevelopment in the context of mega-events.

### 3.3. Flagship Regeneration in London

As discussed in prior sections, Rolnik (2009) claims that mega-events can be an opportunity to enforce the right to adequate housing, once the redevelopment processes during the preparation of these events can promote infrastructural and environmental improvements in the host city. These improvements could include the enhancement of mobility, the development of sanitation, the construction of new dwellings, or even the rehabilitation of the existing ones, increasing the availability of the housing stock in host cities.

However, the author states that a variety of past experiences proves that redevelopment projects implemented in the preparation of mega-events normally result in human rights violations focused on the right to adequate housing. This is because the staging of the games works as a catalyst for the implementation of housing development plans in the host cities (Rolnik, 2009, p. 4).

*“Thus, host cities normally experience unprecedented construction activities that translate into greater availability of jobs and housing stock. Given the number of dwellings needed to accommodate large numbers of visitors, the city is faced with large-scale redevelopment and urbanization. Urban development also often includes public plans for urban renewal, generally the “beautification” and “upgrading” of certain areas. Both central and peripheral areas of host cities are subject to transformation.”* (Rolnik, 2009, p.4)

Additionally, the great demand for space to construct sports facilities, accommodations, and roads to connect those venues is allowed by urban redevelopment projects that enforce demolitions to open space for new constructions (Rolnik, 2009, p.6). Then, London was also a focal point for mega projects during this period, when public spaces, streets, and buildings were constructed (Imrie, Lees, and Racco, 2009, p.5).

In that period, a social-political process in London placed urban regeneration as the focus of the capital’s competitiveness, such as in other cities where regeneration was used by politicians as a strategy to remove obstacles to economic growth and to create the social and physical growth to compete for international investment (Imrie, Lees, and Racco, 2009, p.5).

Ferreri and Trogal (2018) define this practice as a transnational machine for urban growth, once the London 2012 Olympic Games used forms of spectacular urbanism to deliver new leisure and consumption spaces, contributing to the increase of surveillance of public spaces, bringing the ideal of a risk-free public places and enforcing dynamics of

*“The London 2012 Olympic Games have not been an exception. Urban scholars have studied its exceptionalism in relation to a growing militarisation of space (Graham 2012) and to multiple dynamics of displacement and exclusion (Kennelly and Watt 2012; Watt 2013), linked to longer histories of urban development.*

*(...) The area, rebranded Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (QEOP), had been physically and symbolically fenced off view for seven years (DorleyBrown 2012) and its opening as an entirely new redesigned public space offered an experience of spectacular disorientation.*

*(...) As many other corporate sporting megaevents, Olympic Games are significant tools for urban development (Chalkley and Essex 1999; QGold and Gold 2008), which is delivered through increasingly complex public-private regulatory frameworks (Raco 2012, 2014). In the case of the QEOP, the area is now governed by the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), which, as typical of urban development corporations (Imrie and Raco 1999; Imrie and Thomas 1999), has absorbed functions of planning and territorial governance previously held by local authorities.”* (Ferreri and Trogal, 2018, p. 510-511)

Thus, it is possible to affirm that the preparation of mega-events somehow contributed to accelerating urban transformations in the host city, once planning regulations changed to allow the implementation of new urban developments which were necessary to accommodate the Olympic infrastructures. In the case of London, the London Plan was a key focus tool in allowing the execution of urban redevelopment projects in the city. In addition, the London Plan was responsible for establishing development priorities for the city and it defined 28 opportunity areas as sites where growth should be concentrated (Imrie, Lees and Racco, 2009, p.6).

Therefore, the flagship regeneration in London — as in many other cities such as Barcelona in 2002 and Rio de Janeiro in 2014 and 2016

<sup>19</sup> Rio de Janeiro hosted in 2014 the World Cup and in 2016 Olympics, which were responsible for the implementation of new planning strategies in the city since 2009 to be able to host those mega-events and follow all the requirements necessary to accommodate the games.

19—, worked as an impulse to accentuate social disparities in the whole city, not only in the surrounding area of the Olympic Park. This is because of the implementation of new planning regulations that permitted the transformation of different sectors such as transportation, economy, and housing to follow the needs of the mega-events.

In this way, it is possible to point out that even though the greatest and most direct impact of the Olympics' flagship regeneration in London was in the 4 main boroughs that hosted the Olympic Village (boroughs of Waltham Forest, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, and Newham), the whole city changed due to the application of new planning regulations, impacting in different ways all citizens life.

### *4.1. Methodology and methods*

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As indicated initially, this research originated from my direct engagement working with evicted families due to Rio's World Cup and the Olympics' flagship regeneration. It aims to understand the roots of gentrification processes and evictions mainly caused by state-led urban regeneration.

This study seeks to enhance my comprehension of the subject while extending the research initiated during my bachelor's at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio), under the mentorship of Professor Maira Machado Martins. The research findings were later presented at some scientific seminars and awarded with honorable mention by the Institute of Architects of Brazil. The central focus of this research is to critically examine top-down urban regeneration agendas and purpose alternatives, demonstrating the benefits of integrating community-led with state-led planning.

Therefore, this work is based on pre-existing investigations combined with new resources that will confirm prior findings. My work aims to add new evidence of the positive aspects of community-led planning to minimize the social impacts of urban regeneration and gentrification on local communities.

This research methodology is based on a qualitative approach, incorporating a comprehensive analysis of literature, planning documents, community plan reports, and media coverage related to the actions of community organizations. Initially, a mixed-method approach was proposed; however, due to difficulties in engaging relevant stakeholders and a lack of responses, this thesis has adopted a desk-based research strategy guided exclusively by qualitative methods. Therefore, to conduct this work, the following research question was defined:

**What are the alternatives to state-led regeneration?**

This research question structures the work and leads to other sub-questions, which are answered during the explanation of regeneration policies in the UK as well as on the findings of the three selected study cases and its research question.

The research's primary interest is focused on the roots of urban

regeneration and the impacts of gentrification worldwide, which is centered on the case of London since all the cases lead to the London case, identifying this process as a global phenomenon. Therefore, the time and space of this research are mainly placed in the city of London, analyzing its urbanization process from the 19th century until nowadays and emphasizing three different study cases as the main focus of this investigation.

The central focus of this research has been to understand how urban regeneration can be used by neoliberal governments, since its 1st appearance, to impose new forms of urban planning as well as its role in increasing social disparities. The research question intended to achieve findings on who is promoting it, how it works, and by which tools it is implemented, aiming to show the importance of a participatory approach in urban planning projects to put together the government and private actors' interests with residents' needs.

For this reason, the bottom-up approach (see e.g. Robinson and Shaw 2003, Lees and Raco 2009, Moulaert 2019, Ferreri 2019, and Bragaglia 2022) has oriented this work toward examining the roles and the impacts of community-led planning (see e.g. Ferreri 2019) in designing cities. For Imrie, Lees, and Raco (2009) London represents a notable shift from local government to local governance, in which regeneration initiatives should be part of a bottom-up process facilitated by elected local authorities and community involvement. However, while these practices are recognized for fostering social innovation and addressing local needs (see e.g. Bragaglia 2022) they also generate tensions concerning the governance structure for regeneration practices (see e.g. Imrie, Lees, and Raco, 2009).

Therefore, the research question is used to guide this investigation through the following steps:

- 1) Review of existing literature regarding urban regeneration and gentrification in a broader sense and the case of London;
- 2) Collection and analysis of available data and documents;
- 3) Investigation of Community initiatives (CI's) in London;
- 4) Analysis of three current study cases in London;
- 5) Critical discussion based on the final findings of the research, creating a framework for future investigation in the same field;

The 1st subject is because this research topic has been widely

investigated not only in London but worldwide, caused by a gentrification phenomenon in a neoliberal context promoted by flagship urban regeneration projects and planning policies (see e.g. Raco and Henderson 2009). The central part of the work is concentrated on an investigation, observation of current cases, and literature review focused on a research desk method.

In terms of survey methods, this research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing a discourse analysis to address the research questions through various resources. Consequently, a desk-based research method is used, utilizing multiple tools such as data collection, review of prior research, and critical analysis of selected case studies. This comprehensive approach was applied to answer the research question that guides this thesis.

#### 4.2. Context and Analysis

As mentioned before, London was defined as a study case because the UK together with the United States were pioneers in using urban regeneration as a strategy (see e.g. Smith 2002, and Coletta and Acierno 2017) since the 19th century, contributing to the diffusion of this practice worldwide in a context of globalization and neoliberalism governance to attract international investment and improve city's image.

The most important aspect of urban regeneration and gentrification practices in London happens due to its past industrialization and the need to improve sanitary conditions to control epidemics in the 19th century. However, after the 20th century, this phenomenon changed into a global trend as urban regeneration became a strategy to enhance the city's image, attracting international capital to many cities worldwide (see e.g. Smith, 2002, and Coletta and Acierno, 2017).

London is the capital of England and the United Kingdom, composed of 8.797 million inhabitants in mid-2021 (London Datastore, 2023). The population size in the city has increased by 16.6% from 2011 to 2021, which is higher than the overall increase for England in the same period, which registered a 6.6% growth (Census Population, 2021).

The London Region, known also as Greater London (Figure 3), is divided into the City of London and 32 boroughs administrated by the Greater London Authority (GLA) (London Datastore, 2023).

In addition, according to the latter census, the borough of Ne-

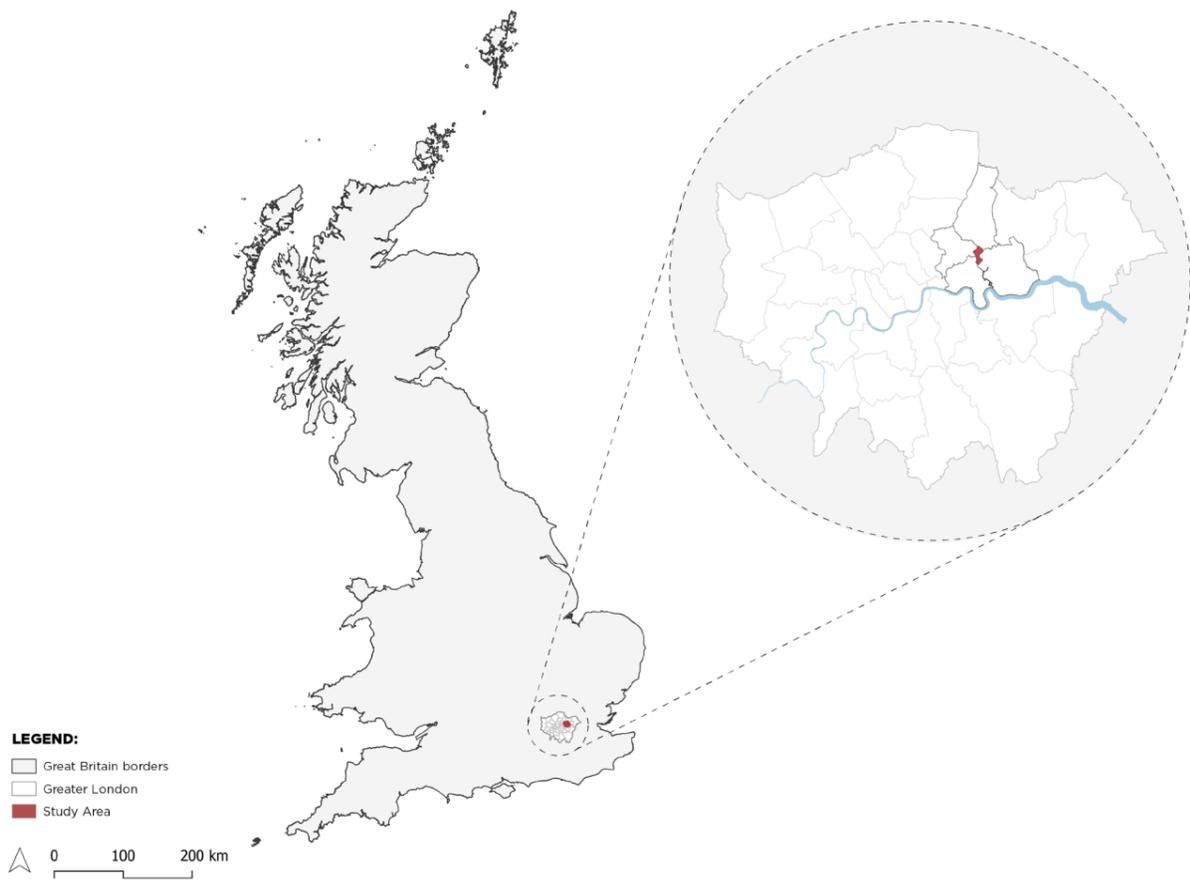
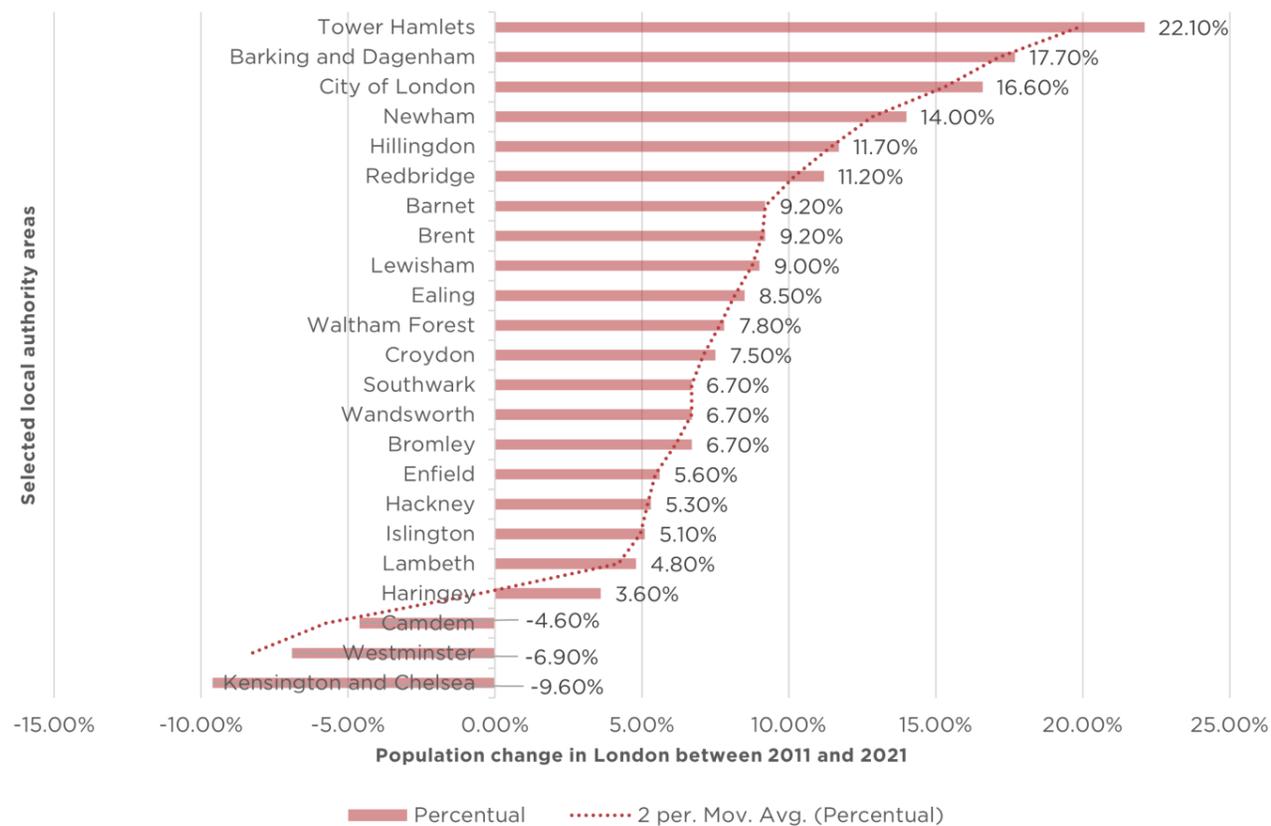


Figure 3: Great Britain and London's study area. Author's production.



42 Table 9: Population growth over 10 years, author's production based on data from Census 2021.

wham had the 4th highest population change in Greater London (14%) from 2011 to 2021, followed only by Tower Hamlet (22%), Barking and Dagenham (17.7%) and City of London (16.6%) (Table 9).

Then, it is pertinent to introduce the background of the United Kingdom and London, emphasizing their powers in transforming the area. In England, the local government structures vary in every area. Commonly, there are two-tier councils – the county and the district councils –, dividing local government functions. In contrast, metropolitan areas like London and certain English districts operate under a single-tier structure, where councils are responsible for all services of their area.

According to the London Council website<sup>20</sup>, since 1965, London has 32 borough councils other than the city of London. As it states, the city of London represents a historic and financial district, however, it is not officially considered a London borough.

The borough of Newham has a particular importance for this research due to its historical experience of urban decay. Urban regeneration has been instrumental in revitalizing abandoned areas and attracting investments, a strategy that has significantly intensified during the Olympics' regeneration in London.

To explain Newham's importance for this work, it is better to contextualize: in the past, Newham was part of West Ham but due to the local government reform in 1965 it was transformed into the borough of Newham (Figure 4). During the 19th century, Newham played a crucial role as a transportation center, facilitated by the presence of the docks and wharves on the river Lea as well as the construction of Stratford Railway station in 1839. The infrastructure connected that locality with central London, highlighting its importance during that period.

In the 20th century, Newham was a degraded area suffering from economic decline populated by low-income families, foreigners, and workers, because of its proximity to the industrial district. However, this situation was reversed in the 21st century by the regeneration caused by the 2012 Summer Olympics and Queen Elisabeth Olympic Park.

The megaevents in London had a strong impact on the social and economic development of the city but also at Newham, once the Olympic and Paralympic games had their main base at the Queen Elisabeth Olympic Park, located at Stratford (Figure 5). During the megaevents, the event was used to uplift the local economy and create a new international image of the city (Rolnik, 2009, p.7) through the beautification

<sup>20</sup> London Councils, Essential Guide London Local Government. Available on: <https://londoncouncils.gov.uk/who-runs-london/essential-guide-london-local-government>. Accessed in December 2023.

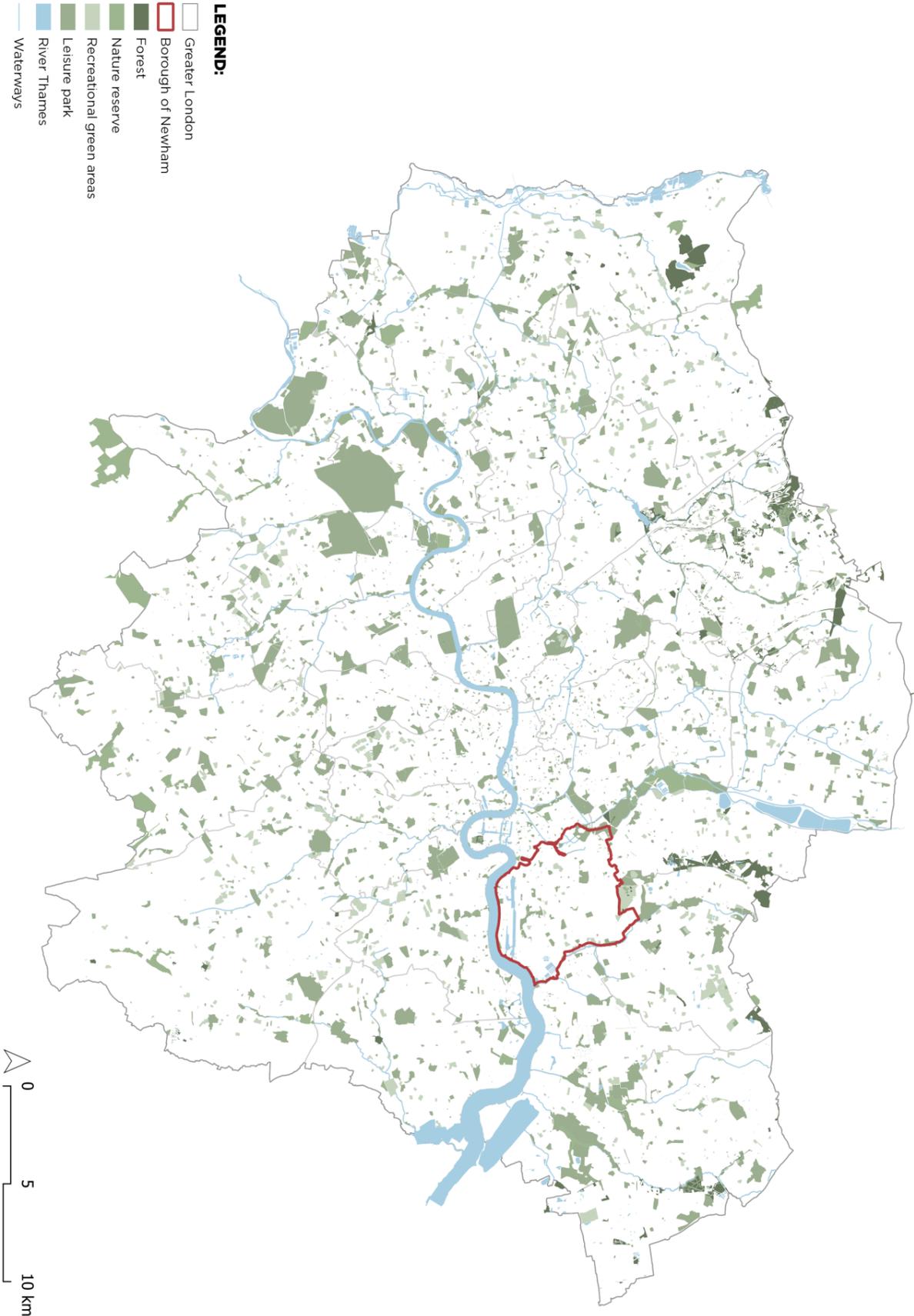


Figure 4: Newham's area. Author's production.

of the city to attract investments over the real needs of residents.

Therefore, in order to set an integrated, environmental, transport, and social framework for the development of London over the next 20-25 years, a strategic plan for London was set in 2004. The main objectives for the London Plan and the process of drawing, altering, and replacing it were defined by the Greater London Authority Act 1999 and the London Spatial Development Strategy Regulations 2000.



Figure 5: Megaevents' impacts: the boroughs of Waltham Forest, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, and Newham hosted the Olympic Village and had a greater impact on urban regeneration processes. Author's processing.

The 1st London Plan was published in 2004 and after the new mayor's election, an updated version was launched, which was called Planning for a Better London (July 2008), outlining the mayor's intended approach to planning. The Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) sets an integrated economic, environmental, transport, and social framework for the development of London over the next 20-25 years.

According to regulations, the London Plan should address topics of strategic importance for Greater London, such as promoting economic development and wealth creation, social development, and environmental enhancement in Greater London. Furthermore, the London Plan

(Figure 6), established in 2004, identified Opportunity Areas (OAs) as key sites for developing opportunities to accommodate new residences, employment opportunities, and infrastructures.

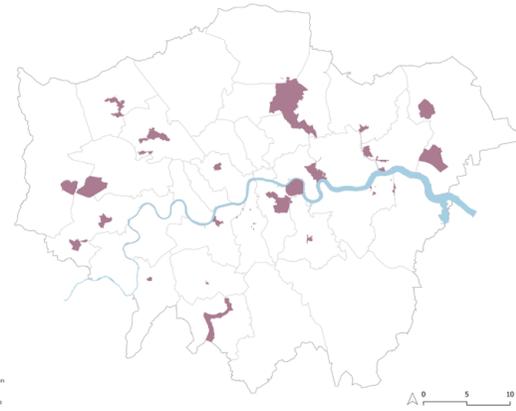
The 1st SDS aimed to transform strategic areas of London, such as East London, looking forward to achieving long-term benefits to that locality, lasting a legacy not only for sport but to the urban fabric of East London. Based on the London Plan and the defined Opportunity areas, the Olympic Legacy intended to cover the benefits of:

1) **Economy** – supporting new jobs, encouraging trade and investment in tourism;

2) **Sports** – developing more sports facilities and ensuring the school's participation in sports;

3) **Social and volunteering** – inspiring citizens to volunteer and encouraging social changes;

4) **Regeneration** – reusing degraded areas, increasing housing stock, and improving transportation connections;



LEGEND:

Greater London

River Thames

Housing Zones

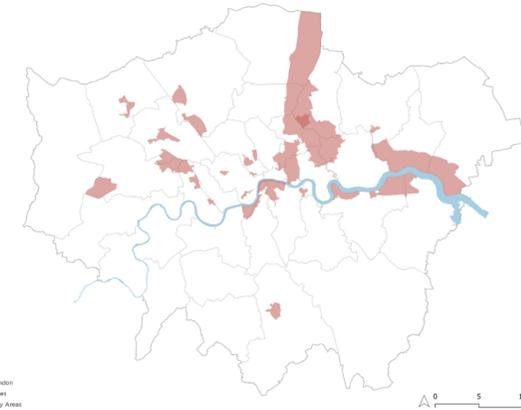


LEGEND:

Greater London

River Thames

Brownfield Register

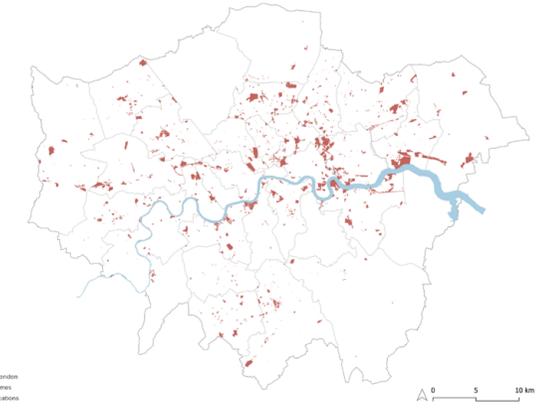


LEGEND:

Greater London

River Thames

Opportunity Areas

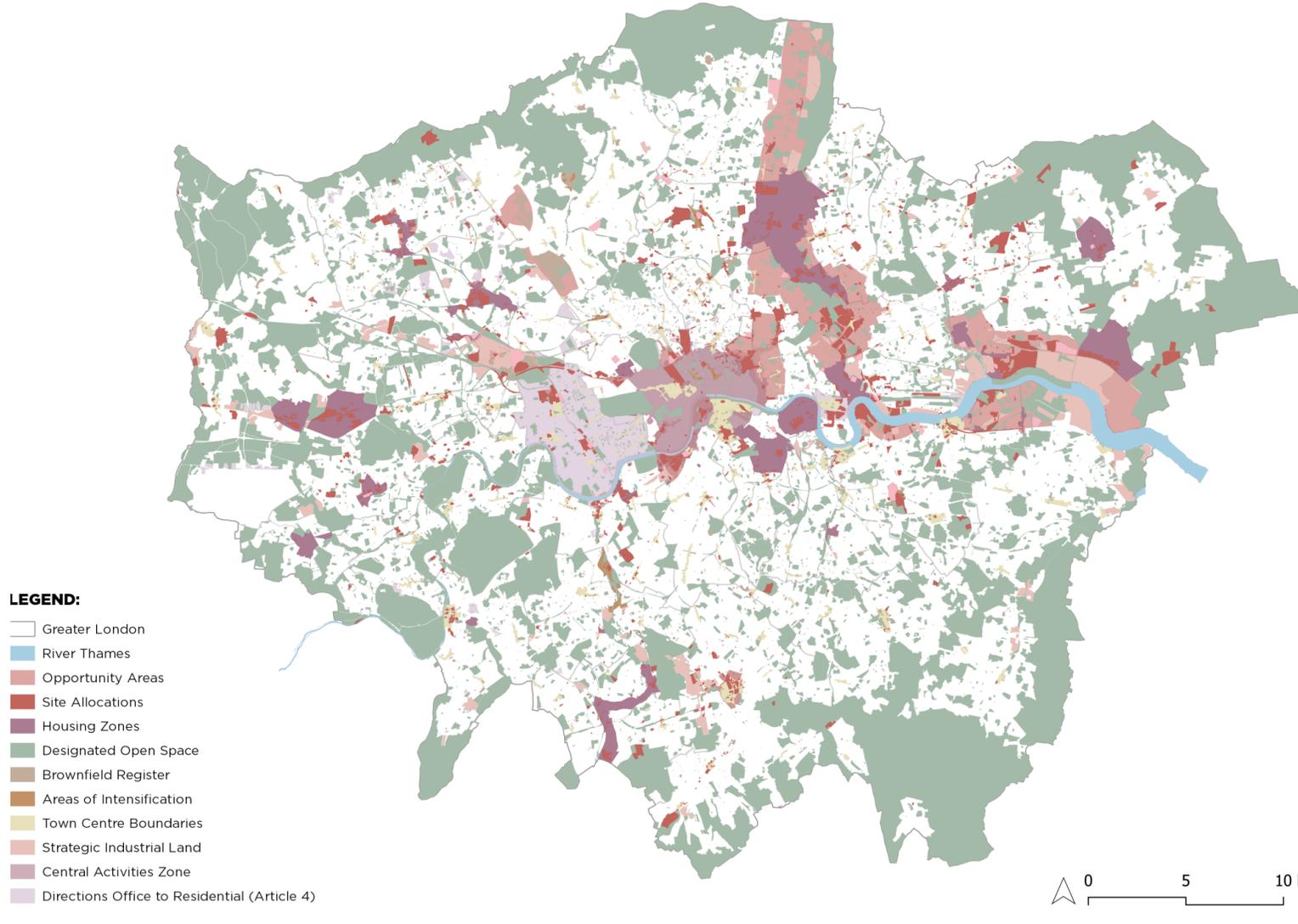


LEGEND:

Greater London

River Thames

Site Allocations



LEGEND:

Greater London

River Thames

Opportunity Areas

Site Allocations

Housing Zones

Designated Open Space

Brownfield Register

Areas of Intensification

Town Centre Boundaries

Strategic Industrial Land

Central Activities Zone

Directions Office to Residential (Article 4)

0 5 10 km

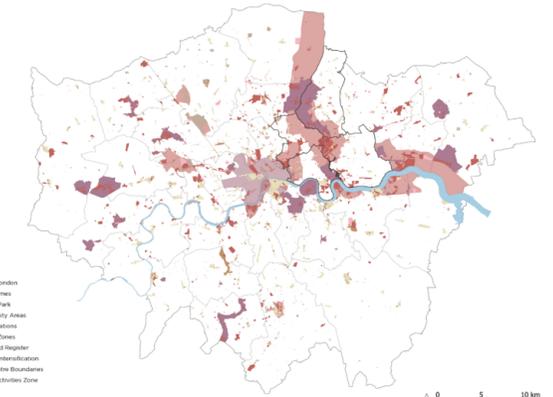


LEGEND:

Greater London

River Thames

Designated Open Space



LEGEND:

Greater London

River Thames

Town Centre Boundaries

Central Activities Zone

Figure 6: London's Plan. Author's production, based on data from London Datastore, available on: <https://data.london.gov.uk/>, and accessed in May 2023.

Figure 7: Private Rents' map compared to the location of council estate regeneration in London. Author's production, based on data from the London Government. Available on: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/improving-private-rented-sector/london-rents-mapand-map-pinglondonshousingstruggles.word-press.com>, and accessed in March 2024.

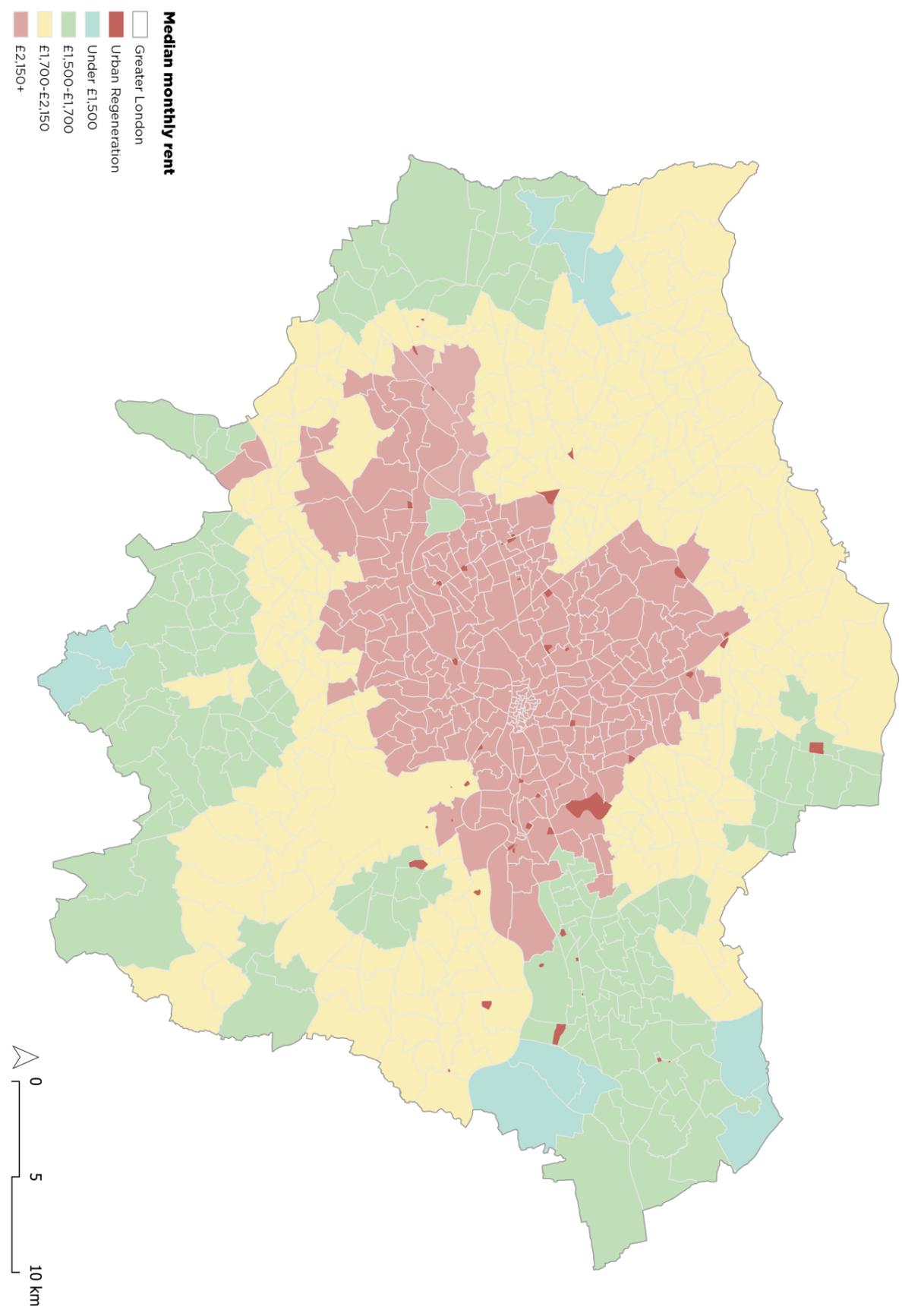
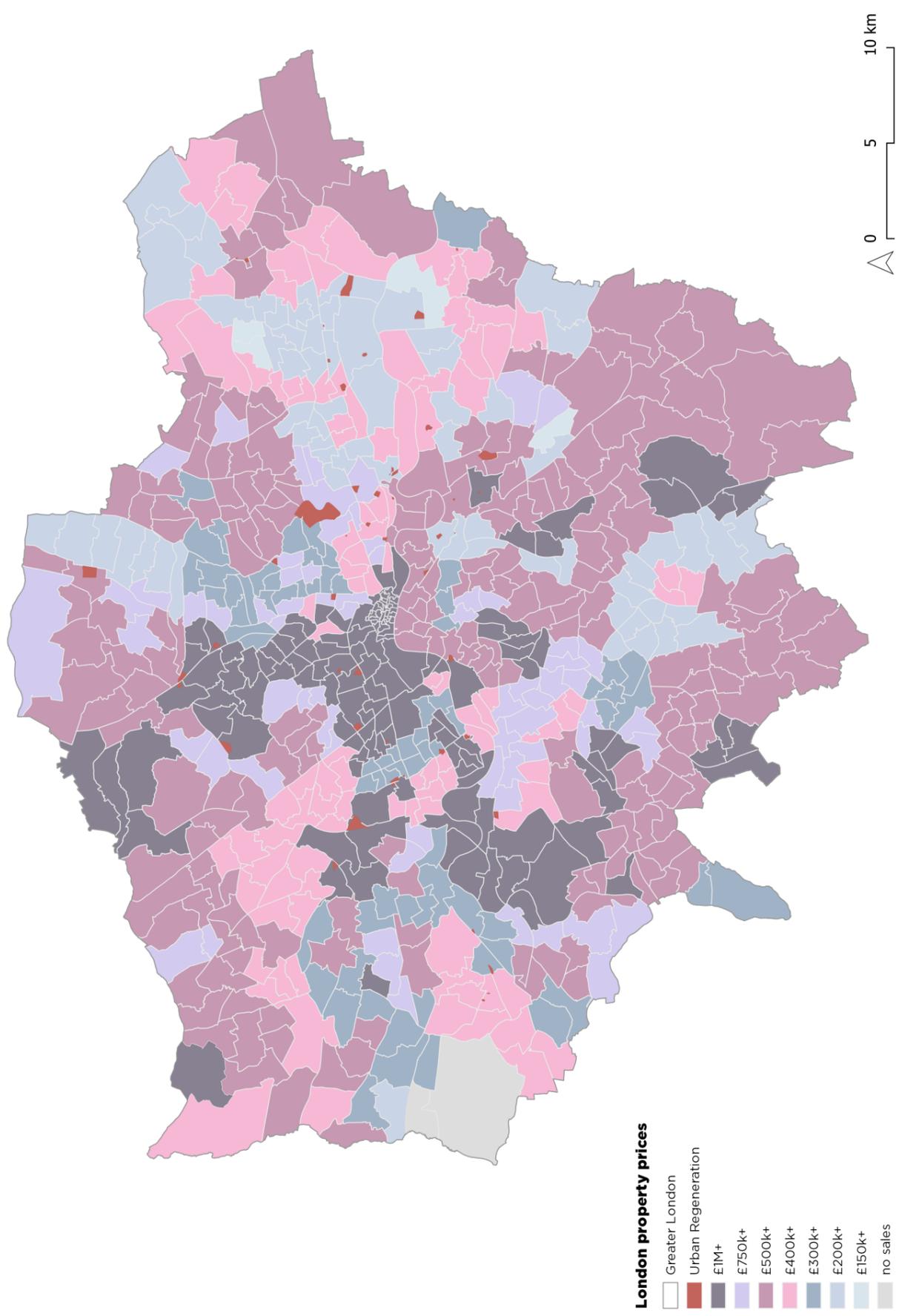


Figure 8: House Prices map compared to the location of council estate regeneration in London. Author's production, based on data from the Plumplot.co.uk. Available on: <https://www.plumplot.co.uk/London-house-prices.html> and accessed in May 2024.



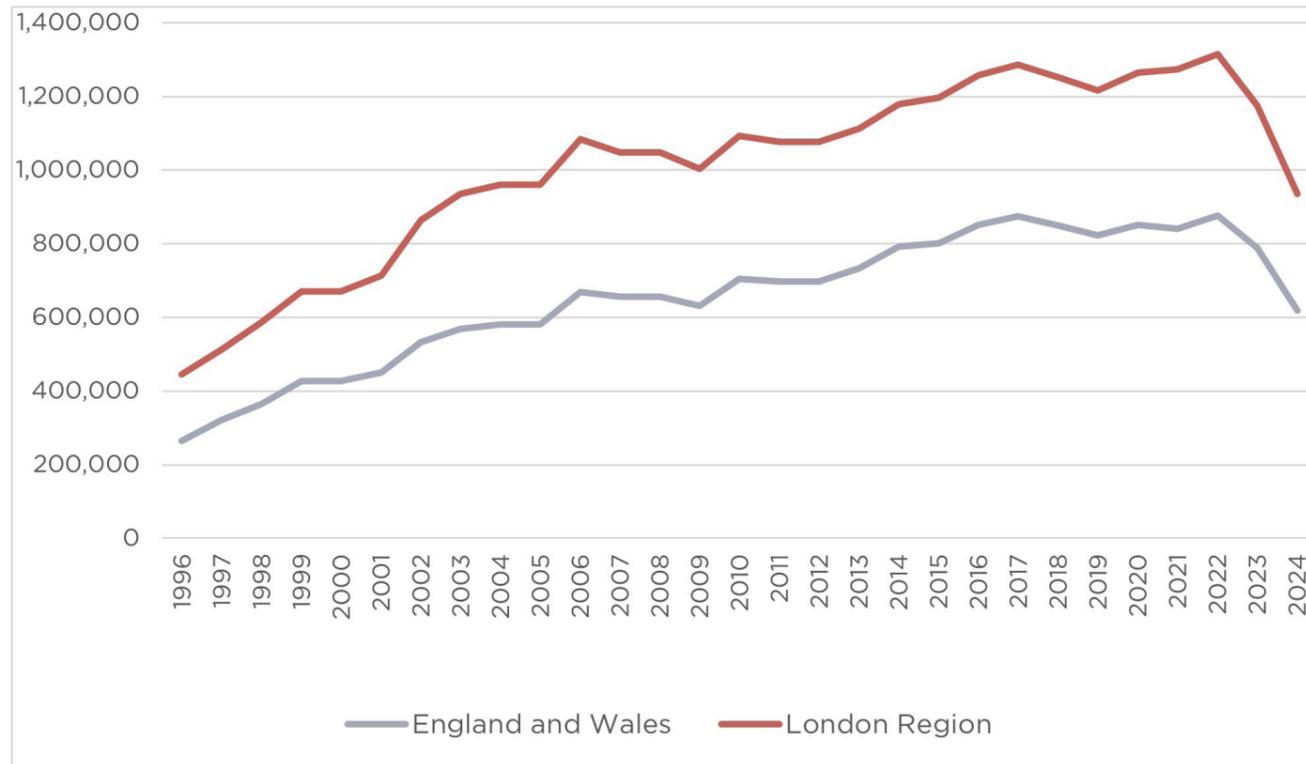


Table 10: London Real House Prices. Author's production, based on data from the Plumplot.co.uk. Available on: <https://www.plumplot.co.uk/London-house-prices.html> and accessed in March 2024.



Table 11: London House Price Rank: With an average price of £711k, London is the most pricey region out of 10 England and Wales' regions. Author's production, based on data from the Plumplot.co.uk. Available on: <https://www.plumplot.co.uk/London-house-prices.html> and accessed in March 2024.

As noticeable, London has been dealing with urban regeneration since the 19th century. However, it has been intensified with the publication of the 1st London Plan as a Spatial Development Strategy and the definition of the Opportunity Areas in 2004 (Figure 6).

For that reason, the city has been dealing with many urban regeneration projects as well as the increase of council's estates eviction, which are located in those strategic areas near town centers and areas of interest, according to the London Plan. Moreover, these flagship regeneration projects combined with resident displacement practices, enforce pressure on rental and housing prices (Figures 7 and 8), ensuring the gentrification phenomenon (Tables 10 and 11).

According to London's Housing Struggles, since 2005 more than 70 council estates have been under regeneration around Greater London. This includes more than 820.500 m2 of land changing from public to private ownership and about 164.203 residents affected by eviction or reallocations (Figure 9).

## LONDON'S HOUSING STRUGGLES

2005 - 2032

15.5 km<sup>2</sup>

Value of the land £52 billions

164.203 residents affected (including evicted)

More than 820.500 m<sup>2</sup> of land changing ownership from public to private

£27billions invested

More than 70 social housing estates going through regeneration

Demolition of more than 30.500 homes

SOURCE: mappinglondonshousingstruggles.wordpress.com

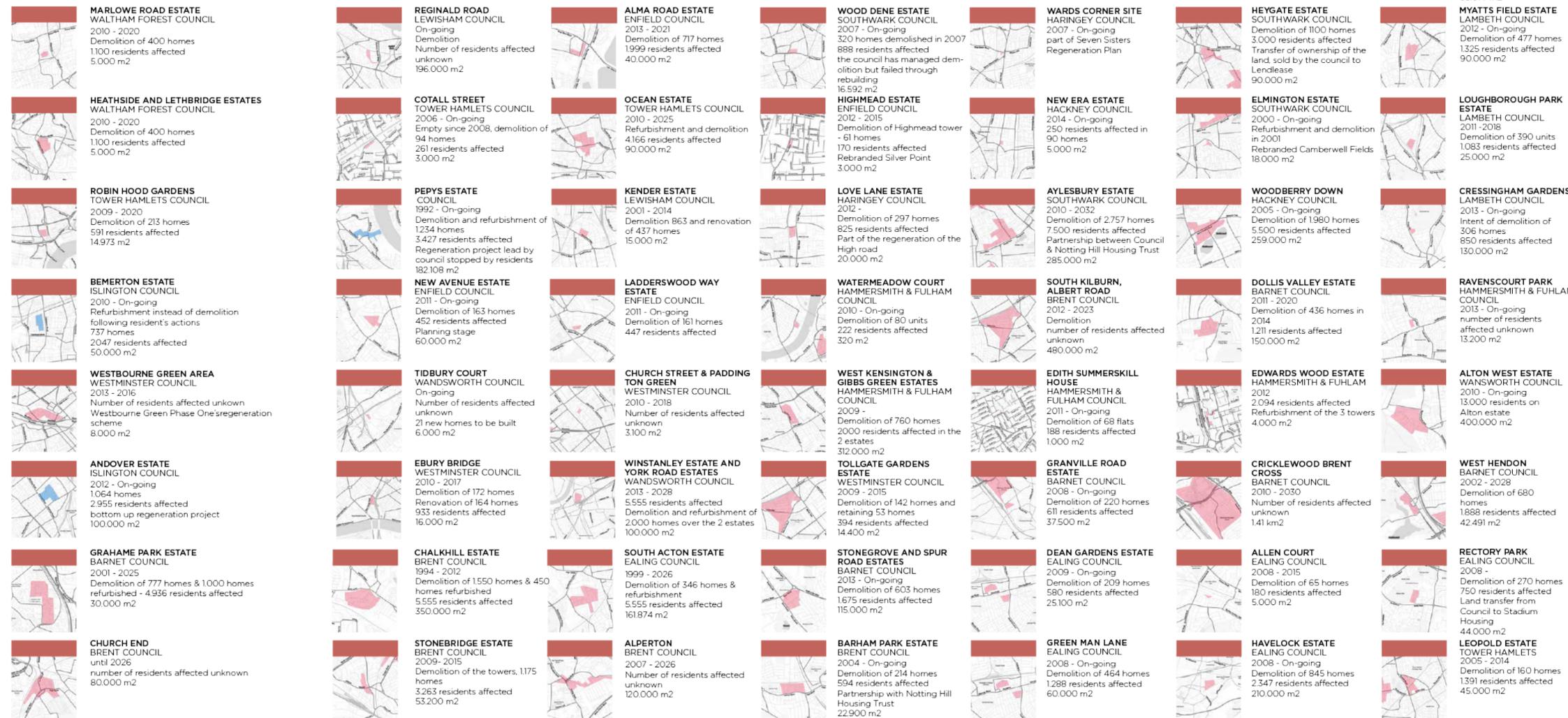


Figure 9: London House Struggles data. Author's processing based on data available on: [https://mappinglondonshousingstruggles.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/london-housing-struggles-map\\_dec-2014\\_low-res.pdf](https://mappinglondonshousingstruggles.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/london-housing-struggles-map_dec-2014_low-res.pdf), and accessed in June 2023. Accessed in October 2023.

As stated by Raquel Rolnik (2009), mega-events have both positive and negative effects: while they provide new job opportunities and contribute to the economic flow, they also exacerbate disparities, producing human rights violations by direct and indirect displacement of residents during the preparation of the megaevents. On the one hand, indirect displacement can be seen in gentrification and the escalation of housing prices due to the improvement of the quality of life in the regenerated area. On the other hand, the direct impact is apparent through forced evictions, which aim to clean the area to be replaced by new infrastructures.

Therefore, even though the borough of Newham and the other three boroughs that hosted the Olympic Village had a greater impact on urban regeneration, as demonstrated by the maps, the whole city of London was somehow affected due to the changes in the planning regulations of London to receive this megaevent.

For that reason, the borough of Newham was selected as an important area to be analyzed for this research. Because of the great influence of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park as a flagship regeneration in that area during the mega-events, it is important to consider its impact on the local community of Stratford, in the surrounding area of the Olympic

## TIMELINE

**PRE-GAMES SITE**  
Existing area before 2009: when the Strategic Regeneration Framework was published.



**OLYMPIC LEGACY**  
Post-games area: after the removal of the temporary infrastructures and the park's reopening as a public use.



**OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES, 2012**

Figure 10: Author's production combined with data and maps available on [www.alliesandmorrison.com](http://www.alliesandmorrison.com), accessed in October 2023.

<sup>21</sup> "Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park". The Olympic Legacy in London. Available on: <https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/our-stories/queen-elizabeth-olympic-park>. Accessed in October 2023.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.alliesandmorrison.com/projects/london-olympic-legacy>

Village before understanding the impacts of megaevents in the rest of the city and its Olympic legacy.

The Queen Elisabeth Olympic Park, first named The Olympic Park, even if it is not an official Royal Park, was later renamed to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Queen Elisabeth's monarchy (Figure 10). According to the Park's website <sup>21</sup>, the site occupies an area equal to four times East London boroughs and is recognized as the largest urban park built in the UK in the past century.

The idea was to create a regional park and renew a neglected city quartier through the rehabilitation of the Lea Valley as well as building around 10,000 new homes in the regenerated area. For that reason, strategic planning for the site, which takes into consideration the post-game landscape, was required. The aim of the project was based on the concept of a multifunctional landscape, focusing on prioritizing people and the environment, bringing the proposal of long-term sustainability as a principle of decision-making design.

The masterplan for the London Olympics (Figures 11 and 12) was conceived as a fringe masterplan, designed to explore enhancements and connections to the surrounding areas, even after the temporary infrastructures of the park were dismantled post-games. Moreover, the intention to host the Olympics in London aimed to boost a significant financial investment into broader benefits for all Londoners, integrating the park into the urban fabric.

However, mega-events such as the Olympics are instrumental in driving large-scale urban regeneration, influencing both resident's lives and the physical environment (Tables 12 and 13). As demonstrated by Allies and Morrison studio <sup>22</sup>, the Olympic Park played a significant role in increasing pre-existing inequalities between West and East London, areas that, historically, have some of the highest deprivation rates in the UK (Figures 13 and 14).



Figure 11: Olympic Park location on a macro scale. Author's processing, based on London Datastore. Available on: <https://data.london.gov.uk/> and accessed in June 2023.

**LEGEND:**

- Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (QEOP)
- Olympic Equipments
- Streets
- Buildings
- River thames
- Waterways
- Recreational green areas
- Nature reserve
- Forest



Figure 12: Olympic Park Plan, micro scale. Author's processing, based on London Datastore. Available on: <https://data.london.gov.uk/> and accessed in June 2023.

- ① Lea Valley Hockey Centre    ② ③ Lea Valley VeloPark Centre
- ④ Sports Area    ⑤ Olympic Village - New Homes
- ⑥ Street Market    ⑦ ⑧ Here East - press and broadcast centre
- ⑨ Copper Box Arena    ⑩ Olympic Stadium    ⑪ Aquatic Centre

**LEGEND:**

- Olympic Park
- Olympic Village - new homes
- Street market
- Olympic Equipments
- Buildings
- River thames
- Leisure Parks
- Open Areas
- Natural Reserve
- Recreational Green Areas



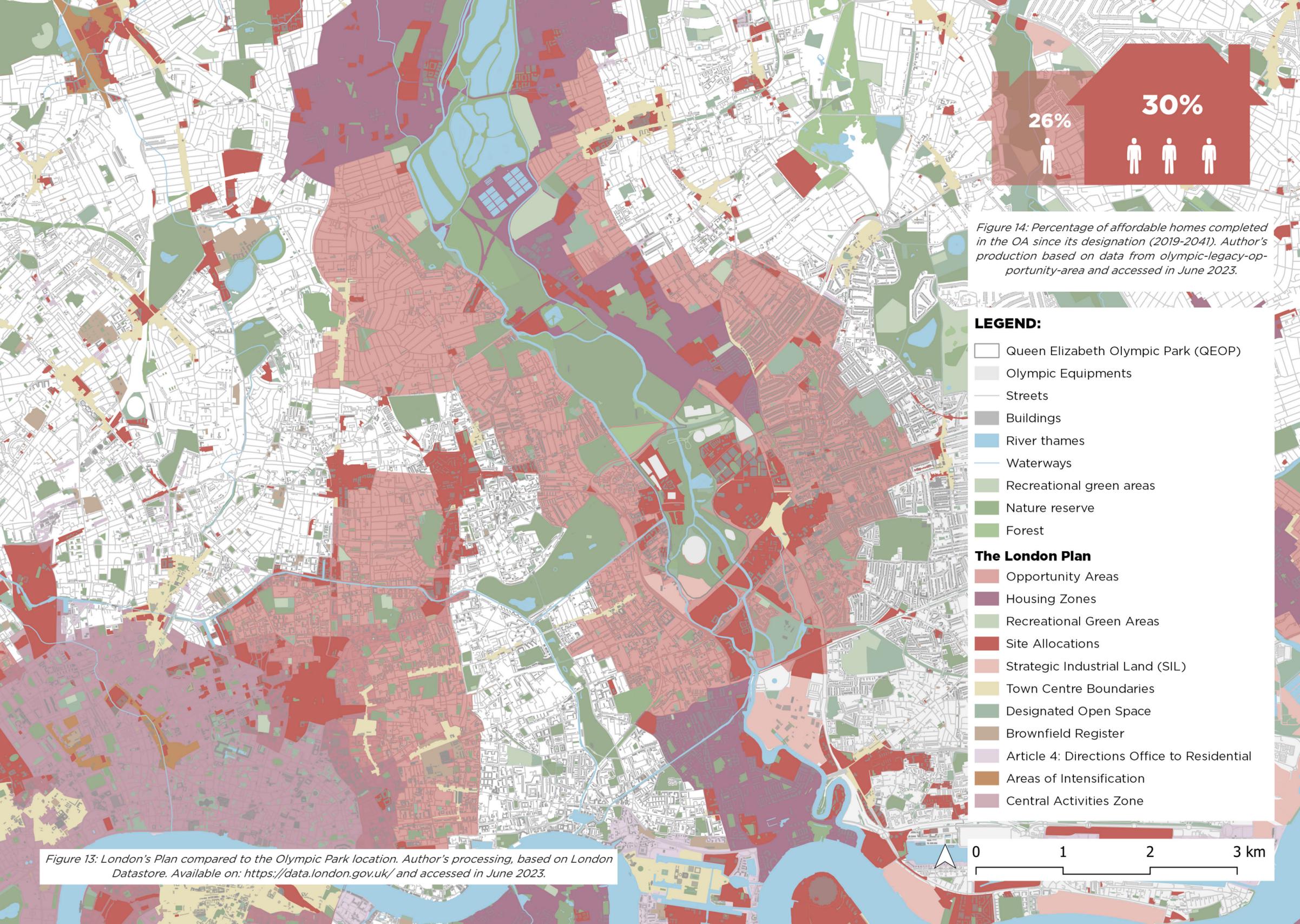


Figure 14: Percentage of affordable homes completed in the OA since its designation (2019-2041). Author's production based on data from olympic-legacy-opportunity-area and accessed in June 2023.

Figure 13: London's Plan compared to the Olympic Park location. Author's processing, based on London Datastore. Available on: <https://data.london.gov.uk/> and accessed in June 2023.

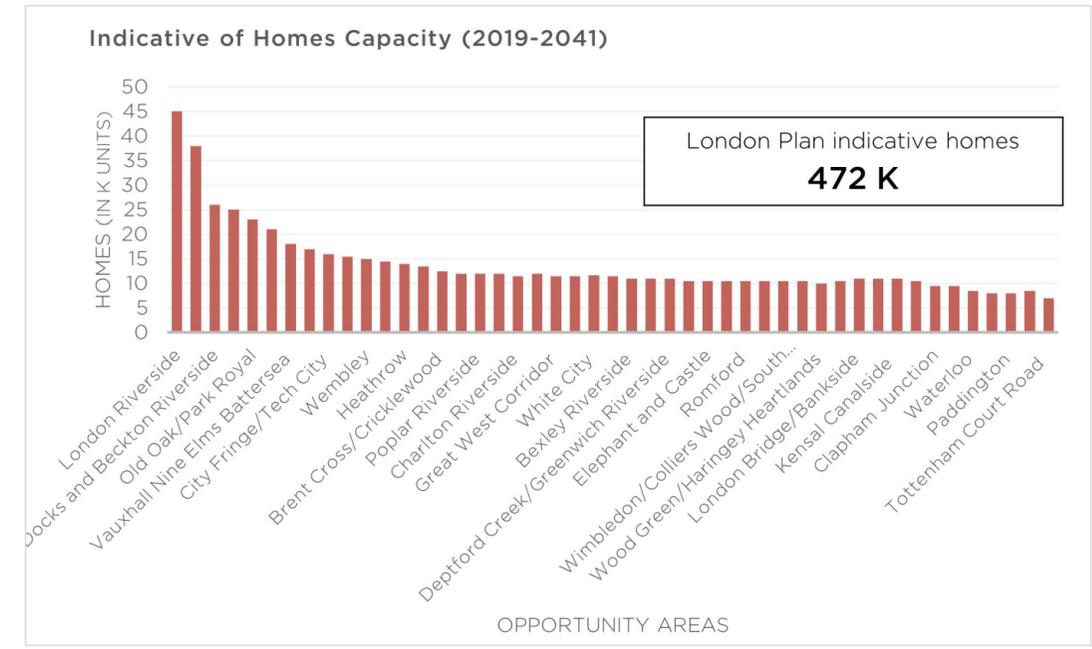


Table 12: Indicative of homes capacity according to London's Plan 2021. Author's production, based on information provided on london.gov.uk, and accessed in October 2023.

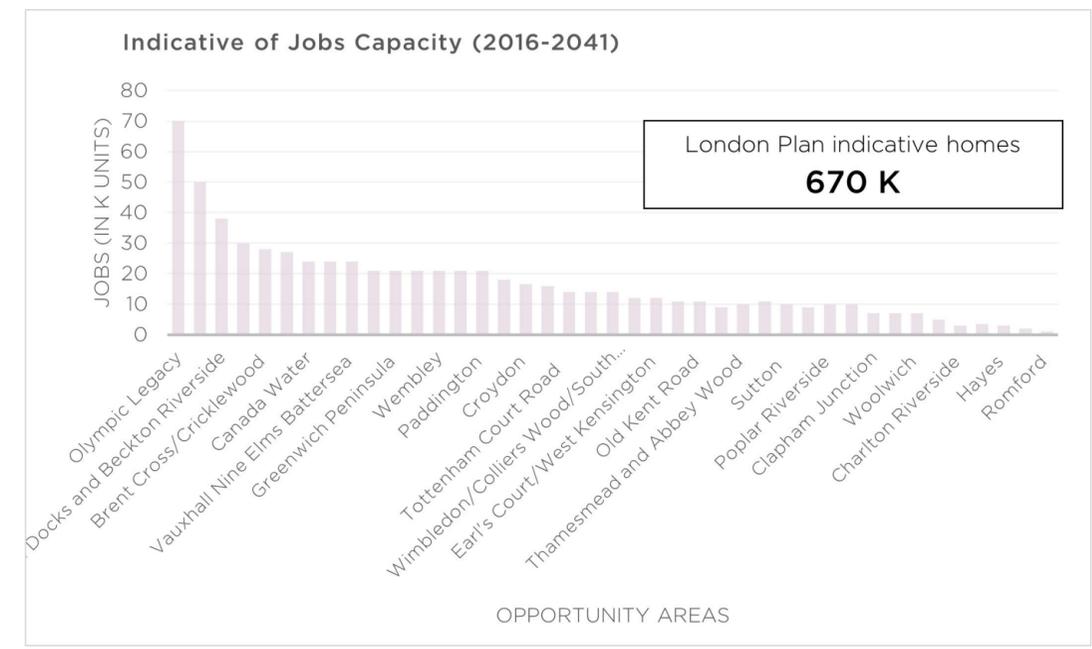


Table 13: Indicative of jobs capacity according to London's Plan 2021. Author's production, based on information provided on london.gov.uk and accessed in October 2023.

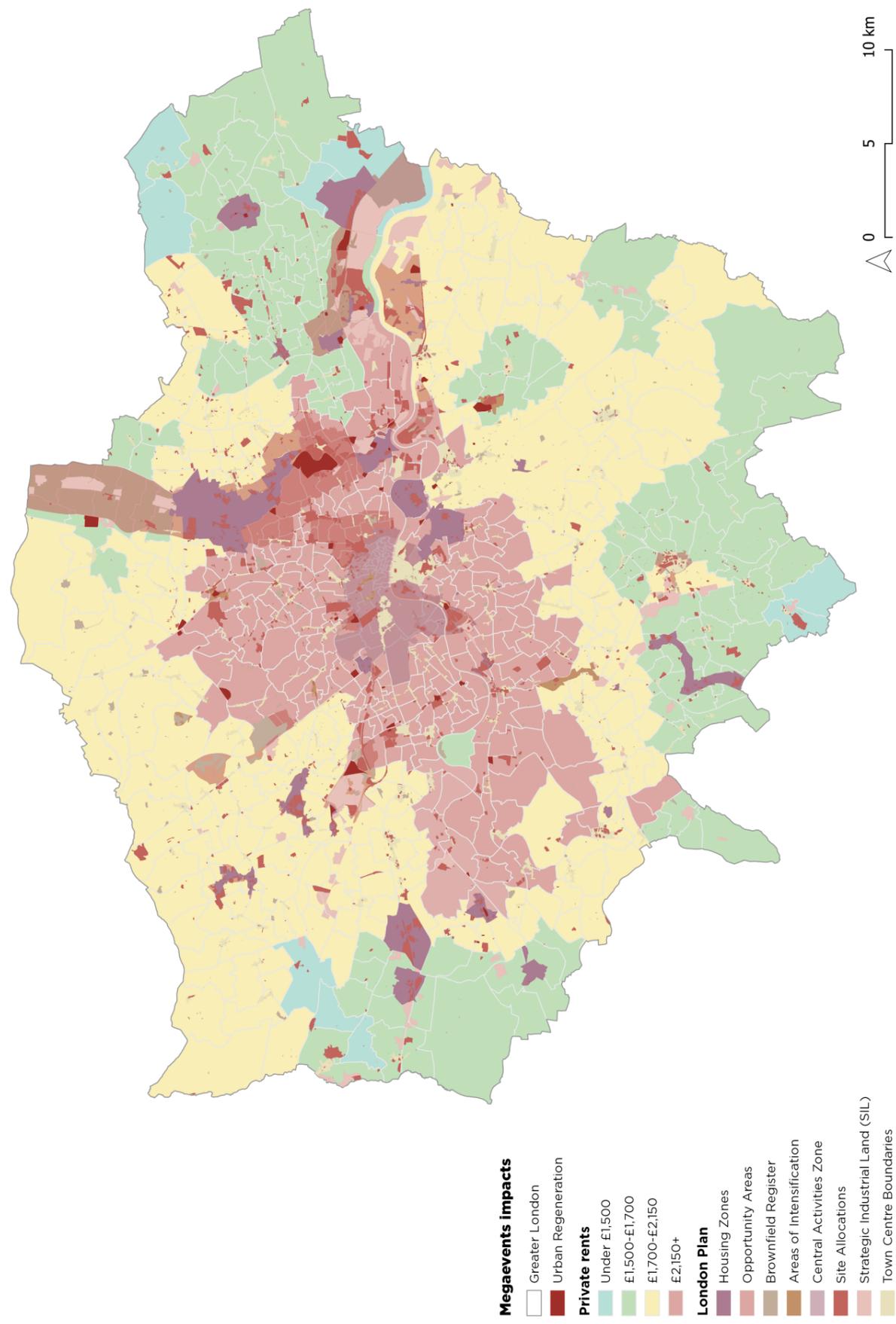
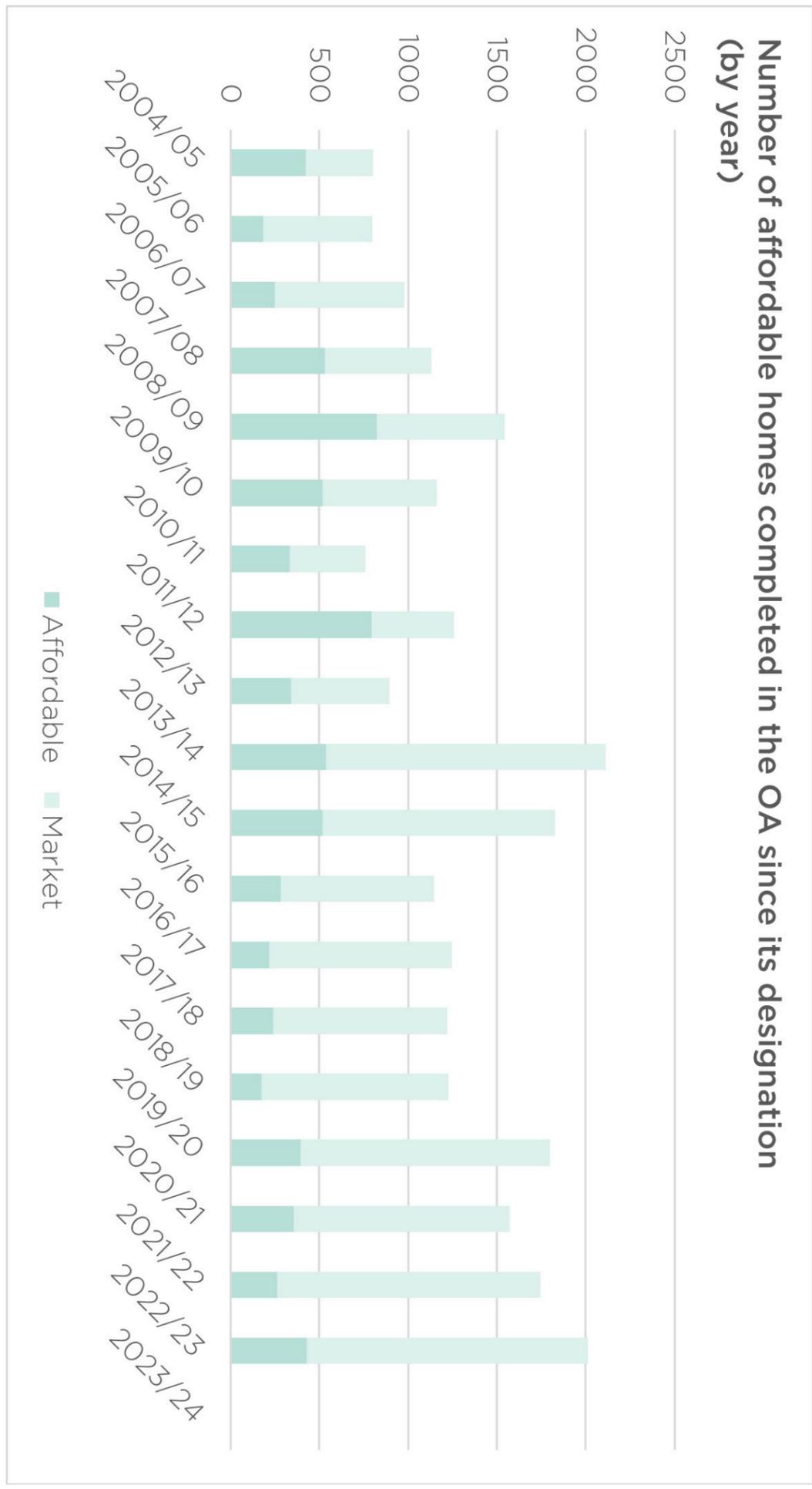


Figure 15: The impact of the Olympics on the whole city of London. Author's production, based on data from the London Government. Available on: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/improving-private-rented-sector/london-rents-map> and [mapping.london.gov.uk](https://mapping.london.gov.uk) and accessed in May 2024.

Throughout this analysis, it is possible to understand that flagship regeneration such as mega-events — like the Olympics and World Cup — have a greater impact on the local scale, contributing to elevating the rates of site reallocation, evictions, and social housing demand in the surrounding neighborhoods. However, those events also impact the whole city, once it requests the elaboration of a new urban agenda and the implementation of the latest planning tools adequate to the needs of the event's infrastructures.

Therefore, the impacts are enormous on the surrounding boroughs, but it also affects the entire city (Figure 15), as it is responsible for some changes in transportation connections, housing stock, and economic activities of the host city. For that reason, three study cases located in different boroughs of London are selected to be analyzed, seeking to demonstrate a variety of approaches and contexts to deal with a common issue.

#### 4.3. Community Initiatives (CIs) and bottom-up approach in London

The study case part of this research is based on Fitzpatrick and Sendra's book *Community-led Regeneration: A Tool Kit for Residents and Planners*. The book states that due to the world phenomenon of gentrification in cities, low-income residents have been displaced through the process of home demolition.

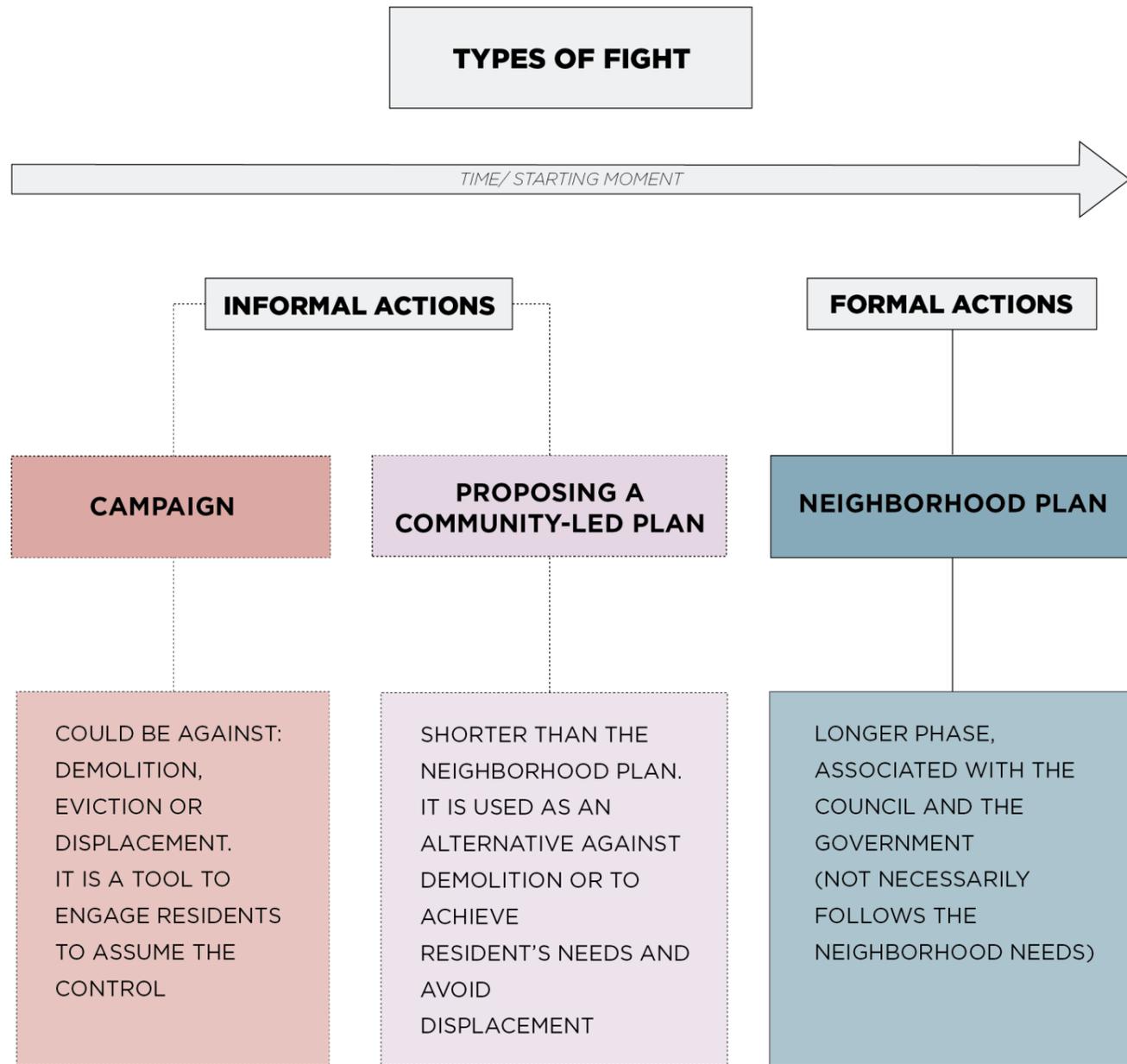
As the largest city in Europe, London is one of the most unequal and expensive cities which works as a wealth and poverty machine. However, it has a strong heritage of council housing thanks to the campaigns for better housing during the 19th and 20th centuries (Fitzpatrick and Sendra, 2020, p. xviii).

*"Municipalities (including the London County Council and its successor, the Greater London Council) were allowed to build and manage housing for their residents. The more progressive councils did so, and the proportion of households living in so-called 'social housing' (council plus housing association) rose to one-third of the population in England and Wales in 1981; the proportion in London was slightly higher. Since then the social sector has shrunk through the Right to Buy initiative and other losses, while councils have been forbidden from building and constrained even in*

*doing maintenance.(...) Council housing offered secure tenancies to diverse populations of London workers, with strong concentrations in central and inner London where Labour councils had been the most active builders. With the intensification of speculative developer pressure since the 1990s, pressure has mounted on councils to demolish and replace council estates with flats for the open market - and, to some extent, replacements for existing tenants. The social violence of these estate demolitions has made them the quintessential planning issue of twenty-first century London." (Fitzpatrick and Sendra, 2020, p. xviii)*

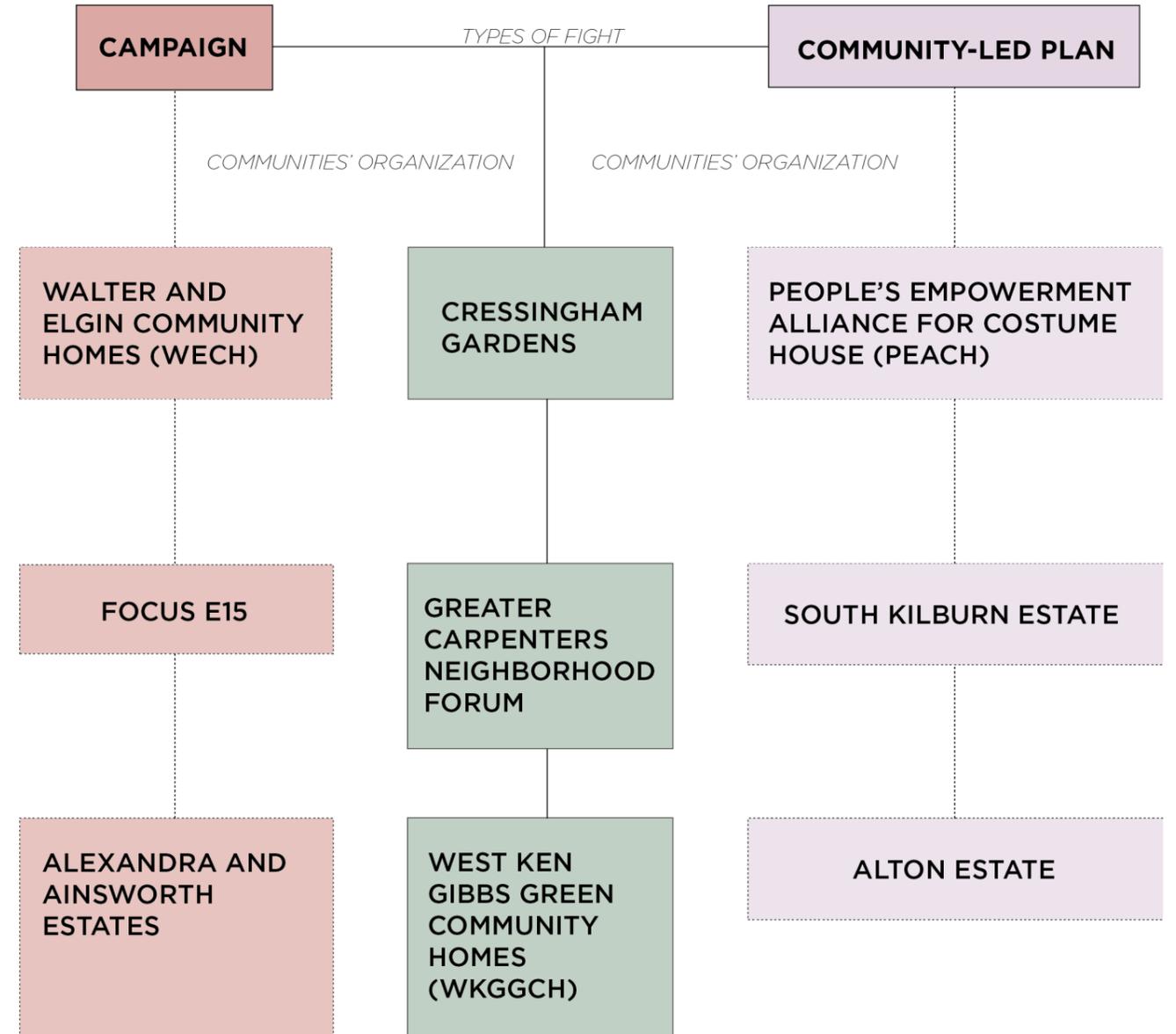
Therefore, the book highlights that engaging communities to participate in regeneration processes and be aware of formal spatial planning tools is vital to avoid displacement of residents. Accordingly, community organizations are using a variety of approaches to fight against social housing demolition and gain decision-making power (Tables 15 and 16).

As Fitzpatrick and Sendra (2020) affirm, communities are organized to respond to a top-down regeneration process in two different categories of fight, as the schema below demonstrates (Table 15).



- LEGEND:**
- Campaign
  - Community-led Plan
  - Neighborhood Plan

Table 15: Actions against a top-down regeneration process. Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from the book called "Community-led Regeneration: A Toolkit for Residents and Planners", Daniel Fitzpatrick and Pablo Sendra, 2020.



- LEGEND:**
- Fight through campaigns
  - Fight through community-led plans as an alternative to estate demolition
  - Fight through both campaign and community-led plan

Table 16: How is the community organized to respond to a top-down regeneration process? Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from the book "Community-led Regeneration: a toolkit for residents and planners", Daniel Fitzpatrick and Pablo Sendra, 2020.



FOCUS E15

WALTERTON AND ELGIN COMMUNITY HOMES

ALEXANDRA AND AINSWORTH ESTATES



PEOPLE'S EMPOWERMENT ALLIANCE FOR CUSTOM HOUSE



SOUTH KILBURN ESTATE



ALTON ESTATE



CRESSINGHAM GARDENS



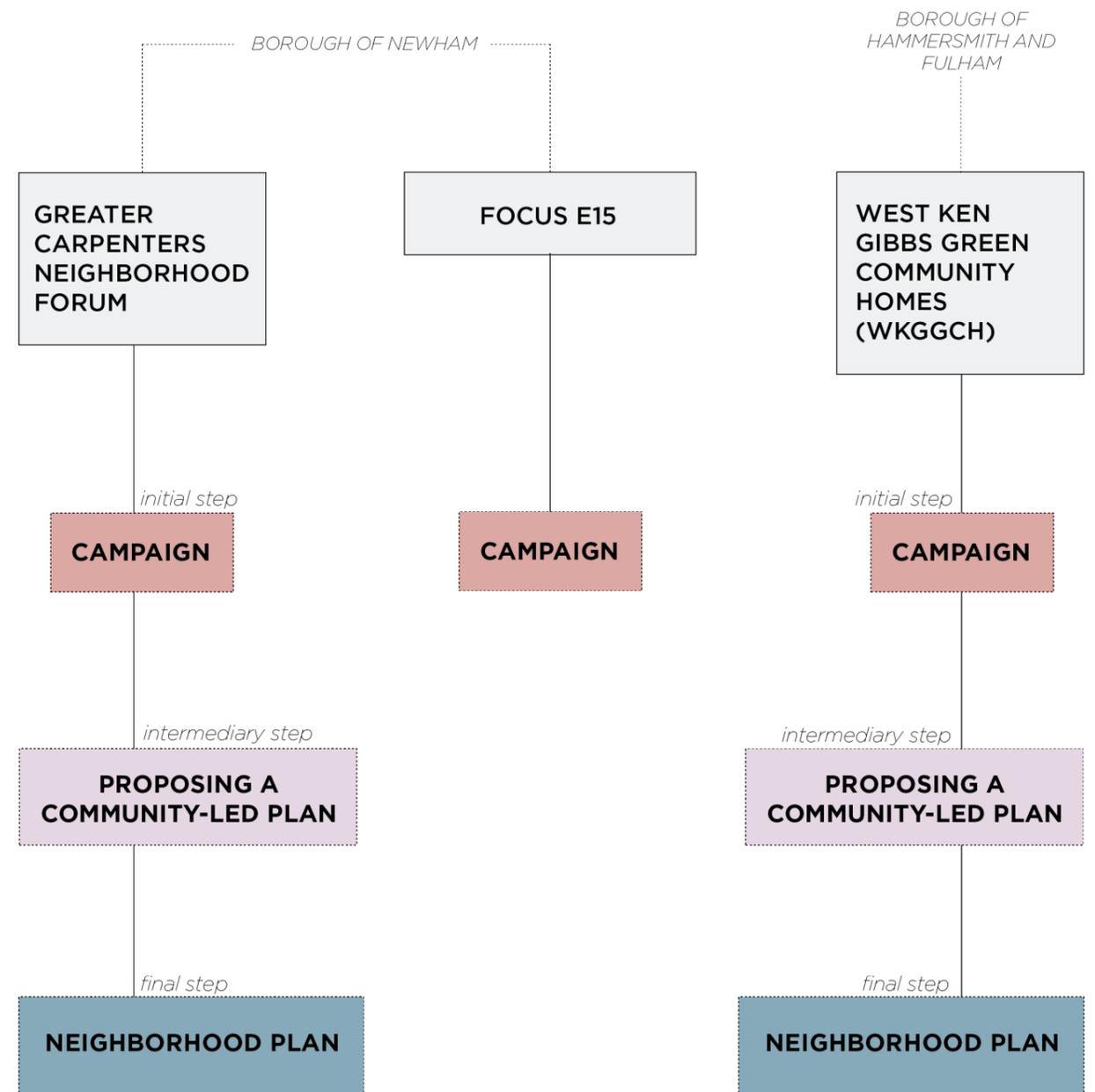
GREATER CARPENTERS



WEST KENSINGTON & GIBBS GREEN

Figure 16: Community Initiatives (CI's) to respond to a top-down regeneration process in London. Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from the book "Community-led Regeneration: a toolkit for residents and planners", Daniel Fitzpatrick and Pablo Sendra, 2020.

CASE STUDIES' TOOLS



LEGEND:

- First phase of CI's: Fight through campaigns
- Second phase of CI's: Fight through community-led plans as an alternative to estate demolition
- Final phase: After fighting through campaigns and presenting a Community-led plan, the community delivers a Neighborhood Plan to the authorities

Table 17: Case Studies' Tools to respond to a top-down regeneration process. Author's processing, based on information and data extracted from the book "Community-led Regeneration: A Toolkit for residents and Planners", Daniel Fitzpatrick and Pablo Sendra, 2020.

#### 4.4. Alternatives to Council Flagship Urban Regeneration

After analyzing the overall community initiatives in London to respond to state-led urban regeneration (Figure 16), three distinct cases of Fitzpatrick and Sendra’s (2020) research were chosen to investigate a variety of real evidence about the community bottom-up approach against estate demolition (Table 17). Thus, two cases that are going to be examined – the Greater Carpenters (4.4.1) and Focus E15(4.4.2) cases – are located in the borough of Newham, while the third one – the case of West Ken Gibbs Green Community Homes (4.4.3) – is located in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

Additionally, the selection of those three specific cases was based

on the fact that each one has a specific approach to dealing with the problem of top-down urban regeneration. For instance, the case of Focus E15 (4.4.2) addresses the issue through a strong campaign against housing struggles, meanwhile, the Greater Carpenters (4.4.1) faces it through both campaign and Neighborhood Plan and oppositely, the case of West Ken Gibbs Green Community Homes (4.4.3) tackles the problem via People’s Plan and co-design methods.

For that reason, those three cases were selected, seeking to demonstrate three different approaches to face the same issue. The aim of this study is to investigate the responses of different cases of top-down strategies and the methodologies adopted to mitigate council estate demolitions. It seeks to provide a critical analysis of the central challenges and propose alternative approaches that integrate both state-led and community-led urban regeneration methods.

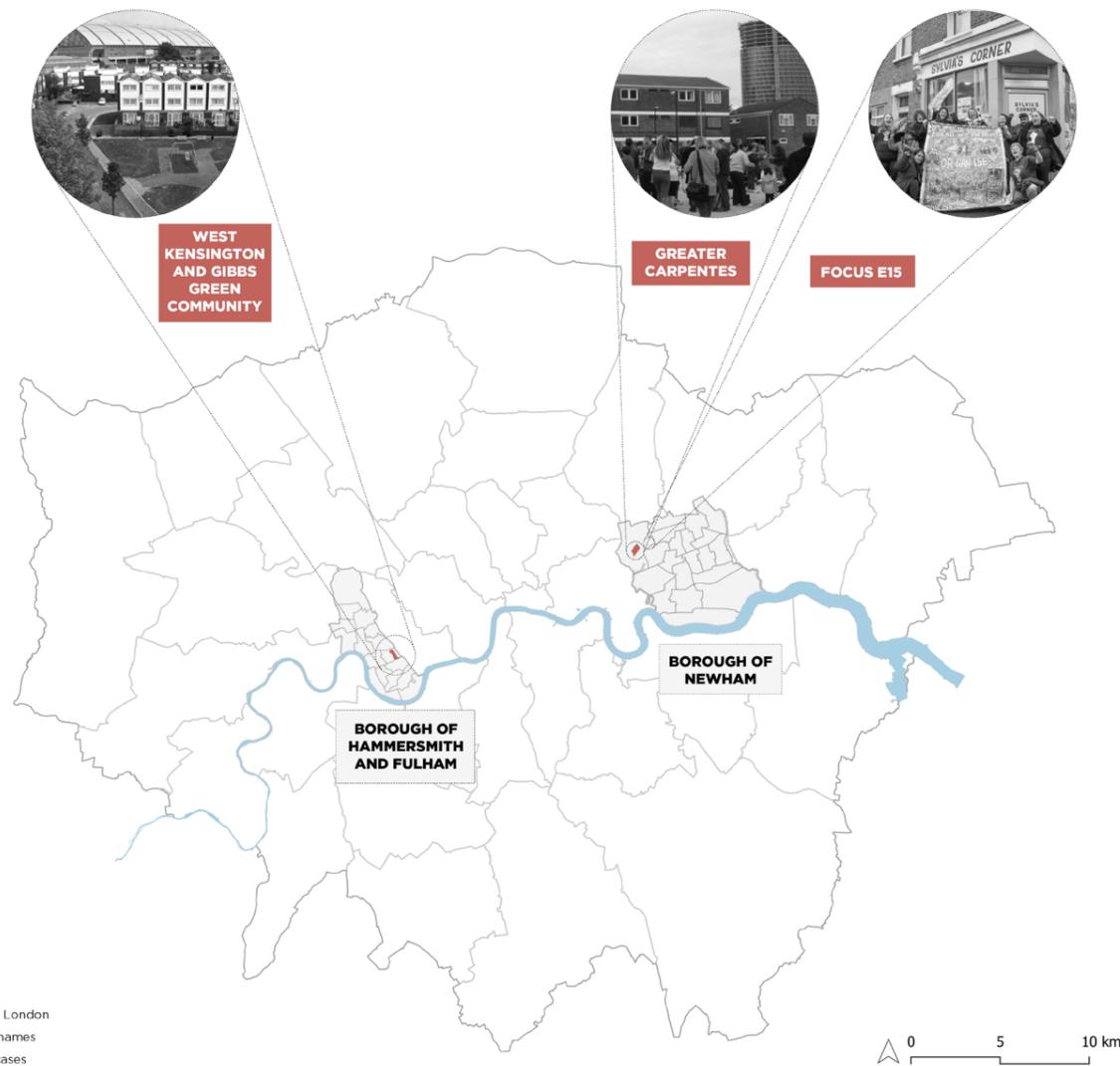


Figure 17: Case Studies’ Location Map. Author’s processing, based on information provided on london.gov.uk and accessed in May 2024.

#### 4.4.1. The Case of Greater Carpenters

As demonstrated above (Figure 17), the borough of Newham presents two emblematic cases of community initiatives to respond against demolition and top-down regeneration processes. The first one is the case of the Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum (Figure 19), in which the residents of this council estate are organized through campaigns against demolition and proposing a community-led regeneration plan.

The Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Area (Figure 18) is located near Queen Elisabeth Park in Stratford, the London Borough of Newham (LBN). As already introduced, the borough of Newham is one of the most affected areas by flagship regeneration. Thanks to the presence of docks and its past industrial activities, a series of regeneration processes in that area were promoted aiming to tackle its degradation caused by the voids left by the abandonment of industrial activities.

The most relevant catalysator of top-down urban regeneration in Newham was the 2012 Summer Olympics. This mega event had a great impact on the urban shape and its social structure due to the development of the Queen Elisabeth Olympic Park, reverberating on the imposed displacement of low-income residents and demolitions of council estates to be replaced by the Olympic infrastructures.

Then, in this context, the case of Greater Carpenters is relevant

due to their role in facing flagship regeneration combining methods such as campaigns and Neighborhood Plan. Even though the estate is physically separated from the park due to the Stratford railway line, the Greater Carpenters Council is located in a strategic position, since it is adjacent to green areas, waterways as well as Stratford town center.

The Carpenters Estate is composed of a strong and supportive community, comprising residents from different ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. The area has a mix of housing, including older local authority homes placed on the council estate but it is also surrounded by the newer housing associations and private market homes.

Since 2004, the estate has been considered to be demolished, which generated an alliance between residents, local businesses, students, and academics to build a stronger participation of residents in decision-making. Additionally, the case of Carpenters Estate has a particular situation, in which the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) - responsible for delivering the legacy of 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games - became its planning authority in October 2012, while the landlord is the Newham Council, affecting the real implementation of residents' strategies.

In this case, the LBN cannot make decisions on the designation of the neighborhood forum and its neighborhood area. Due to its situation, the idea of proposing a Neighborhood Plan co-designed by residents



Figure 18: Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Area. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's image. Available on: <https://greatercarpenterscouk.wordpress.com/our-work/image-gallery/> and accessed in March 2024.



Figure 19: Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Hall for gathering. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's image. Available on: <https://greatercarpenterscouk.wordpress.com/our-work/image-gallery/> and accessed in March 2024.

appeared as a possible strategy to avoid estate demolition.

In 2011, the LBN announced the proposal of redeveloping the Carpenters Estate to construct the University College London (UCL) East campus at that location. For this reason, a group of residents organized a campaign called Carpenters Against Regeneration Plans (CARP) to request a deal with the borough of Newham. In May 2013, the UCL gave up on building its new campus on the Carpenters site and as a result, the community decided to continue their work on the community-led planning proposal.

In September 2013, the community plan was published as a bottom-up alternative to Newham Council's plans for demolishing and rebuilding Carpenter's Estate. The GCNF members engaged positively with the participatory planning methods and processes. The Carpenters Community Plan involved residents, surrounding businesses, and stakeholders through informed walkabouts, meetings, week-long exhibitions, and door-to-door surveys to develop its plan.

In July 2015, the Neighborhood Forum and Area were designated by the LLDC in order to turn their People's Plan into a Neighborhood

Plan (NP). The process of making decisions for engaging residents with the planning process for a non-statutory community plan worked as a way of experiencing how to put together a plan before going through the Neighborhood Plan. Additionally, the methods and processes used by the GCNF to transform their resident-led plan into NP worked as an example for other community associations in London.

Since being designated as a Neighborhood Forum, a monthly meeting, three open-day events, and a door-to-door survey were carried out, aiming to gather the views of people in this neighborhood area. In addition, discussions with local stakeholders and businesses adjacent to the area as well as regular meetings with LLDC planning officers and Newham's council officers were organized.

The methods used to transform the bottom-up community-led plan into the Neighborhood Plan involved defining a vision and the objectives of the community regarding the regeneration of their site (Figure 20). The vision established by the community covers seven main points including: 1) regenerating the community in a resident-led and sustainable way, 2) improving the community by implementing green areas and spaces, 3) using the Olympic Legacy to benefit the residents, 4) better-integrating connections between the estate and the neighbor-



Figure 20: GCNF's co-design for the community-led regeneration plan. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's image. Available on: <https://greatercarpenterscouk.wordpress.com/our-work/image-gallery/> and accessed in March 2024.

hood, and 5) engaging residents to be involved on decision-making.

Then, coming back to the research question of this work, the translation of the People's Plan into a Neighborhood Plan drafted by the Carpenter's Neighborhood Forum can be seen as an alternative to state-led regeneration once it combines resident-led with state-led regeneration through a more inclusive and participatory method of decision-making for that area. In this way, the Neighborhood Plan of the Carpenters community will be demonstrated, aiming to investigate and indicate other methods of urban regeneration, as opposed to the top-down conventional practices.

So, throughout the definition of a vision for their Neighborhood Plan, six objects to guide the plan were set out, comprising:

- 1) Economy and employment:** promote a successful local economy, supporting the growth of local business and providing low-cost workspace for small businesses;
- 2) Green space biodiversity and community garden:** protect and enhance green spaces to increase their quality and biodiversity;
- 3) Housing refurbishment and sensitive infill:** protect existing homes and ensure they are kept in good condition, provide homes for older and disabled people as well as promote energy efficiency and carbon reduction;
- 4) Transport connections and movement:** improve walking, cycling, and public transport connections;
- 5) Community ownership and empowerment:** provide genuine bottom-up regeneration, considering the community voice in decision-making;
- 6) Health and well-being:** support a healthy community by improving the environment and ensuring that local people gain the benefits of the Olympic Legacy, increasing participation in sport;

Afterward, a master plan (Figure 21) was designed with early proposals in order to sum up the main objectives identified by the GCNF for the community needs related to the site's regeneration. Then, for every objective defined, the community established policies and strategies (Table 18) using meetings and participatory discussions to designate them collectively.

Neighborhood Plan's policies				
Economy and Employment	Green space biodiversity and community garden	Housing refurbishment and sensitive infill	Transport connections and movement	Community ownership and empowerment
E1 Education and training	G1 Green space	H1 Refurbishment and sensitive infill	T1 Improving connectivity and accessibility	C1 Community empowerment
E2 Encouraging local business and local employment	G2 Enhancing the social qualities of green spaces	H2 New homes	T2 Sustainable transport	C2 Community facilities
E3 Diversity of retail provision	G3 Biodiversity	-	T3 Walking and cycling routes	-
-	G4 Trees	-	-	-
-	G5 Local food growing and community gardening	-	-	-

Table 18: Policies proposed by the community for the design of NP strategies. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's data translated into author's processing.

As shown, the policies were divided into five main fields to propose actions in the design of the NP. Founded on residents' surveys and collective meetings those policies were transformed into designed strategies developed in a participatory approach which merged techniques applied by experts, such as planners and architects, with the identified wishes of the community.

Then, the strategies were transformed into sketches applied to masterplans developed by experts and residents, containing the needs indicated by the residents and data collected during the surveys. In this way, actions related to the economy, biodiversity, housing, transportation, and community services were designed as illustrated below (Figures 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30).

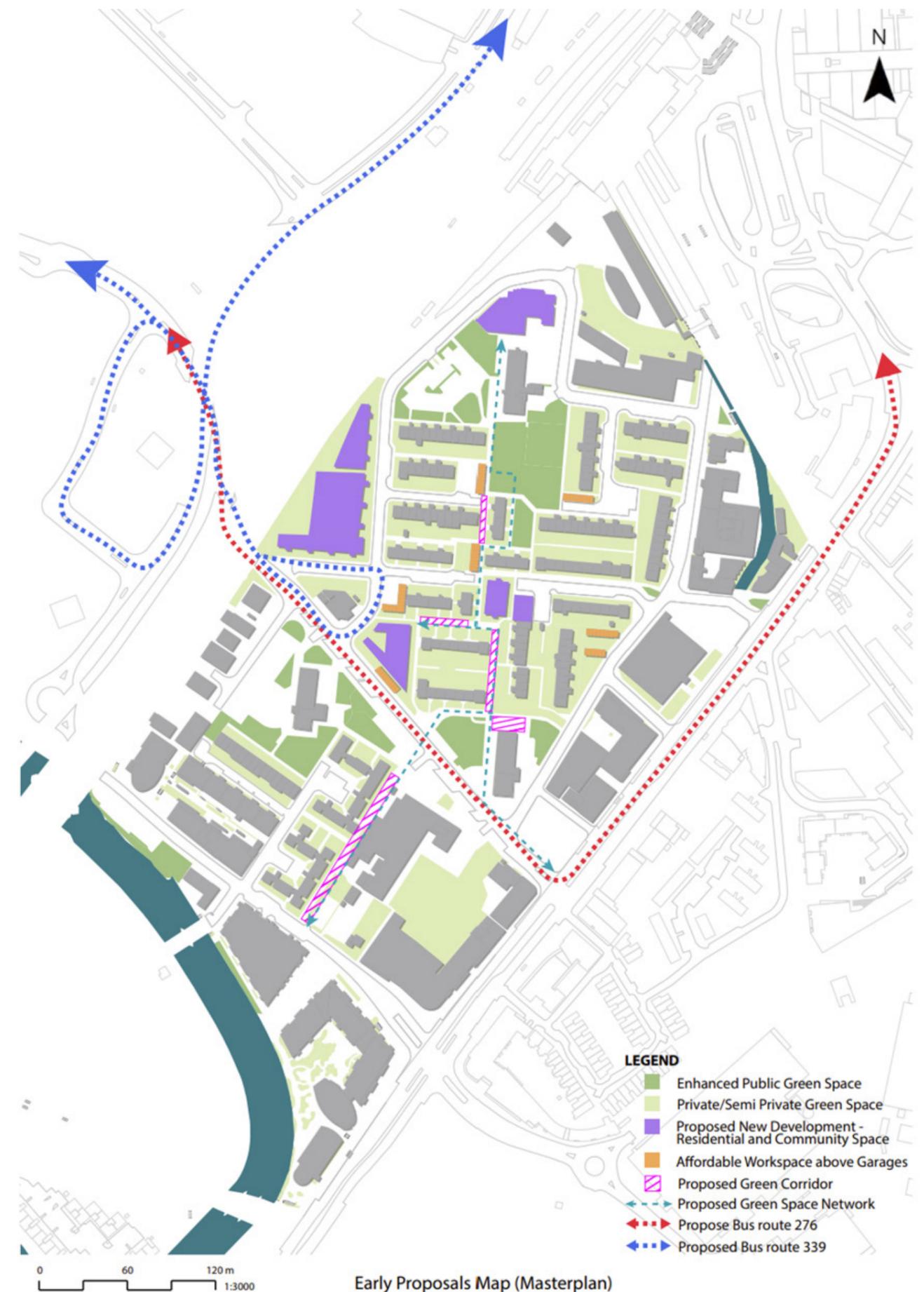


Figure 21: Early Proposals Masterplan. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.

Throughout policies E1 and E2, spots to host affordable workspaces were mapped (see e.g. Fig. 22 below), such as existing garages under residential units, intending to provide affordable places to start-ups and temporary uses for micro and social enterprises in the Carpenters area as a way to capacitate and up-skill residents by giving educational opportunities. The idea of this solution is to answer the problem of London, where commercial areas above residential units commonly remain empty plus the necessity to address the economic strategy of supporting small-scale industry and social enterprises, as pointed out by the Neighborhood Forum.

Under the policies outlined in Table 18, the plan also recognized the necessity of enhancing the biodiversity of green spaces and planted areas. It defined that all new buildings and existing ones should have green/brown roofs and walls for wildlife, retention, and insulation. The proposed solution of establishing a community garden is intended to provide residents with access to fresh and healthy food, improving their health and quality of life.

Therefore, during the meetings, the community organization designed the masterplan below, seeking to map the availability of public and private green space in the Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Area, to register available land for food production not only in the Carpenters' site but also in the surrounding area. Additionally, data already collected by the GCNF was transformed into the chart below (Figure 24), which indicates the current proportion of the existing types of uses on the public green space in Carpenter Estate, and its possible solutions to improve green spaces in the area.

Regarding transportation, aiming to benefit the community from the Olympic Legacy, a clear and accessible pedestrian and cycling route at the Greenway that avoids crossing Stratford High Street and improves its access was proposed. In addition, in the public transportation field, the community-led plan identifies that although many bus lines pass adjacent to the Greater Carpenters, the community is not well served by buses. Thus, to reduce the need to walk towards the High Street, the community proposed new and extended bus routes that can go along Carpenters Road and connect the estate directly with other destinations, such as the surrounding hospitals and the town center.

According to the Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Plan, although there are many bus services adjacent to the Greater Carpenters, inside and across the neighborhood, the community is not well served



Figure 4.2 Map of existing garages (Total units: 60).

Figure 22: Map of existing garages (total units:60). Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.

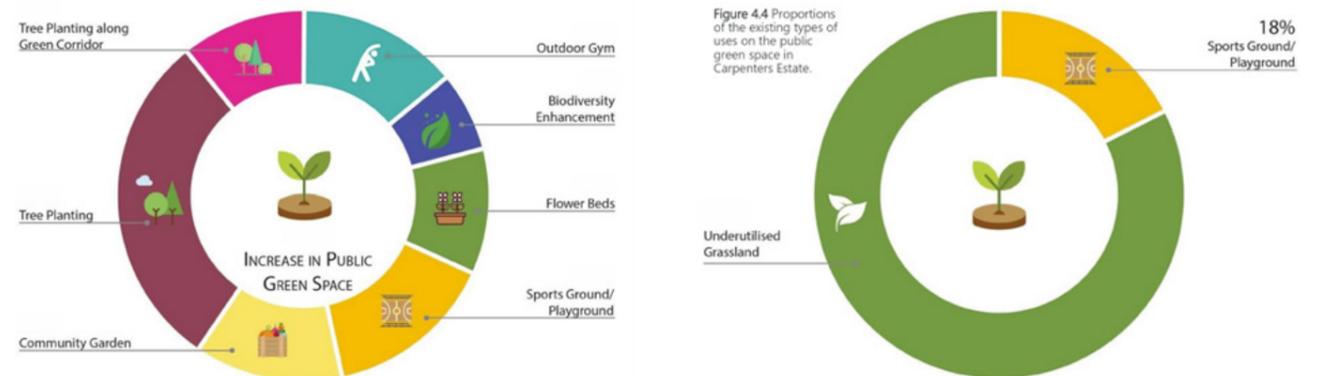


Figure 23: Proportions of the existing types of uses on the public green space in Carpenters Estate and proposed solutions. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.

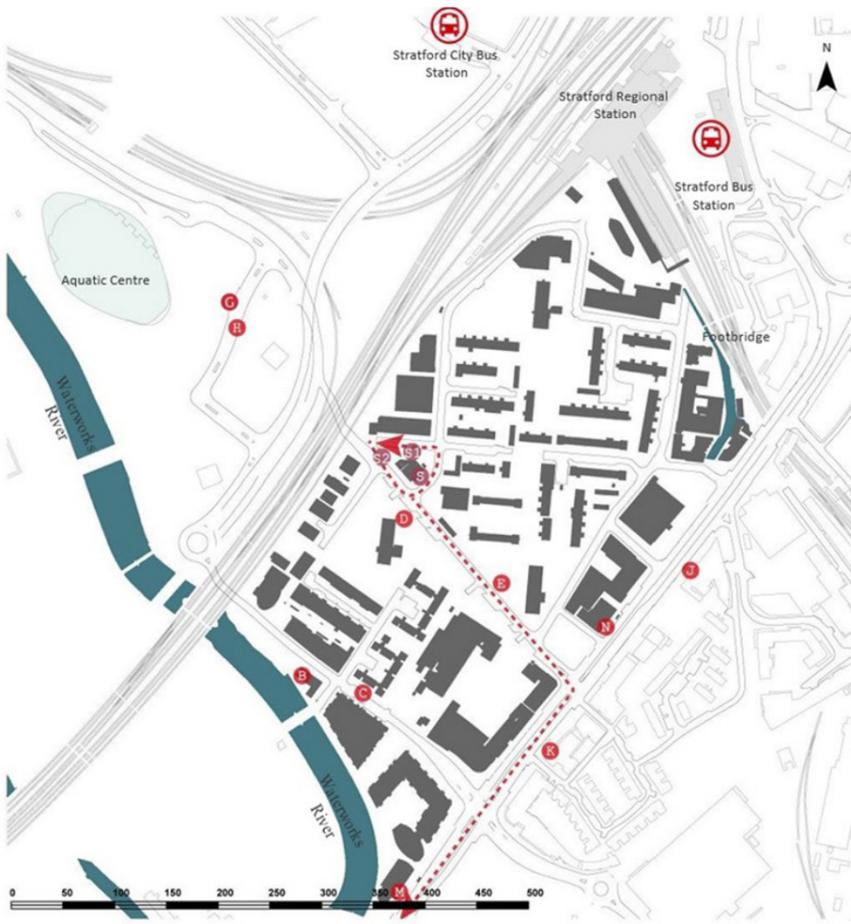


by buses. Therefore, to reduce the need to walk toward the High Street and aim to provide more accessible transportation, the community plan proposed new and extended bus routes (eg. line 205), as well as reverting to the pre-Olympic routing (line 276) in a way that this line can pass along Carpenters Road and link the estate directly with important destinations such as Newham Hospital, Homerton Hospital, Sir Ludwig Guttman Health Centre and Stratford (Figures 25, 26 and 27).

Another important community initiative is policy T3, which proposes converting parking lots into areas designated for walking and cycling. The objective is to include not only new pedestrian crossings, enhancement of footbridge, and new access to the estate's site but also improvements on pavements, landscaping, and lighting on specific areas such as Lett Road, Jupp Road, Carpenters Road, and Warton Road, as can be seen on the masterplan and the schema below (Figure 28 and 29).

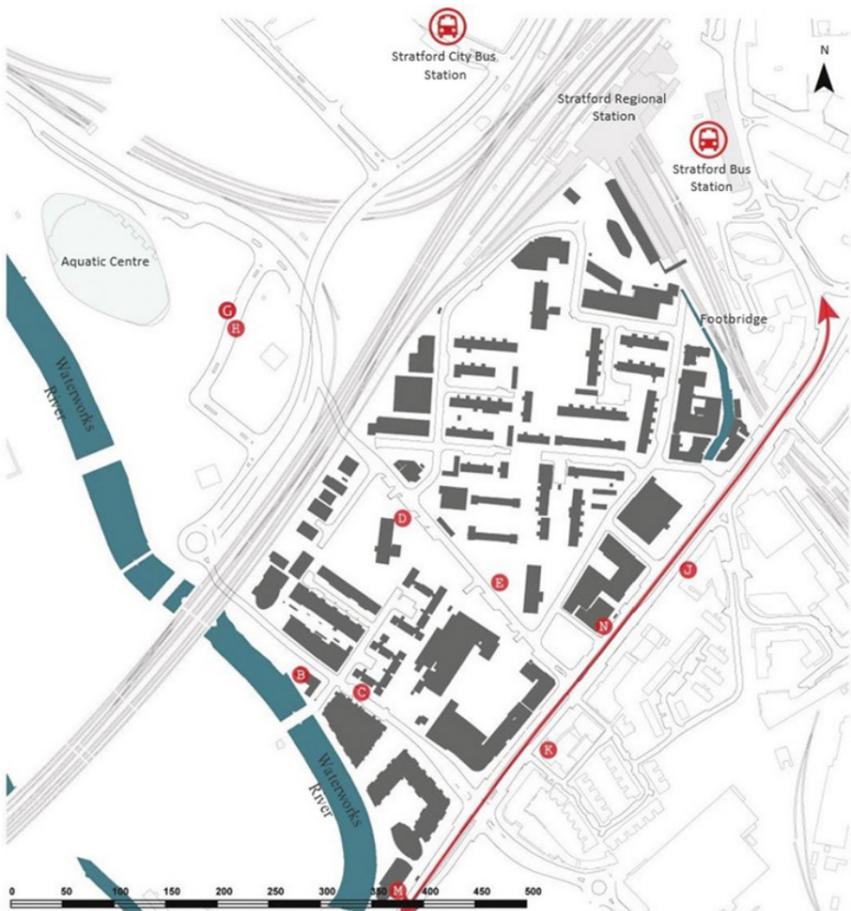
Additionally, to address the issue of Newham's low level of cycling as well as to connect the neighborhood with the existing cycle paths, the community plan indicated new cycling routes to improve the estate's mobility and its connections with the other areas of Stratford. Based on a previous analysis, there is a clear need to connect the estate to key areas of the neighborhood such as the Carpenters Primary school, green areas, the community center as well as the Carpenter's and Dockland's centers, so a connection in between the existing cycle path located on the High Street and Carpenters Road, linking them with Stratford Railway station was designed (Figure 30).

Figure 24: Existing public and private green spaces. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.



- Key**
- Stratford City Bus Station
    - 97, 108, 241, 308, 339, 388, 508, N205
  - Stratford Bus Station
    - 25, 69, 86, 104, 158, 238, 241, 257, 262, 276, 308, 425, 473, 508, 678, D8, N8, N86
  - Proposed Bus Route 205
- |                                   |                           |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Existing Bus Stops</b>         | <b>Proposed Bus Stops</b> |
| B N205                            | SZ 205, 276, 108          |
| C N205                            | ST                        |
| D 108                             | S Stand for 205           |
| E 108                             |                           |
| N 276, 25, 425, D8, N8            |                           |
| J 276, 25, 425, D8, N8            |                           |
| K 276, 25, 108, 425, D8, N8       | G 108, 339                |
| M 276, 25, 108, 425, D8, N8, N205 | H 108, 339                |

Figure 25: Proposed bus route (Line 205). Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.



- Key**
- Stratford City Bus Station 97, 108, 241, 308, 339, 388, 508, N205
  - Stratford Bus Station 25, 69, 86, 104, 158, 238, 241, 257, 262, 276, 308, 425, 473, 508, 678, D8, N8, N86
  - Existing Bus Route 276
- |                                   |            |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Existing Bus Stops</b>         |            |
| B N205                            |            |
| C N205                            |            |
| D 108                             |            |
| E 108                             |            |
| N 276, 25, 425, D8, N8            |            |
| J 276, 25, 425, D8, N8            |            |
| K 276, 25, 108, 425, D8, N8       | G 108, 339 |
| M 276, 25, 108, 425, D8, N8, N205 | H 108, 339 |

79 Figure 26: Existing bus route (Line 276). Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.

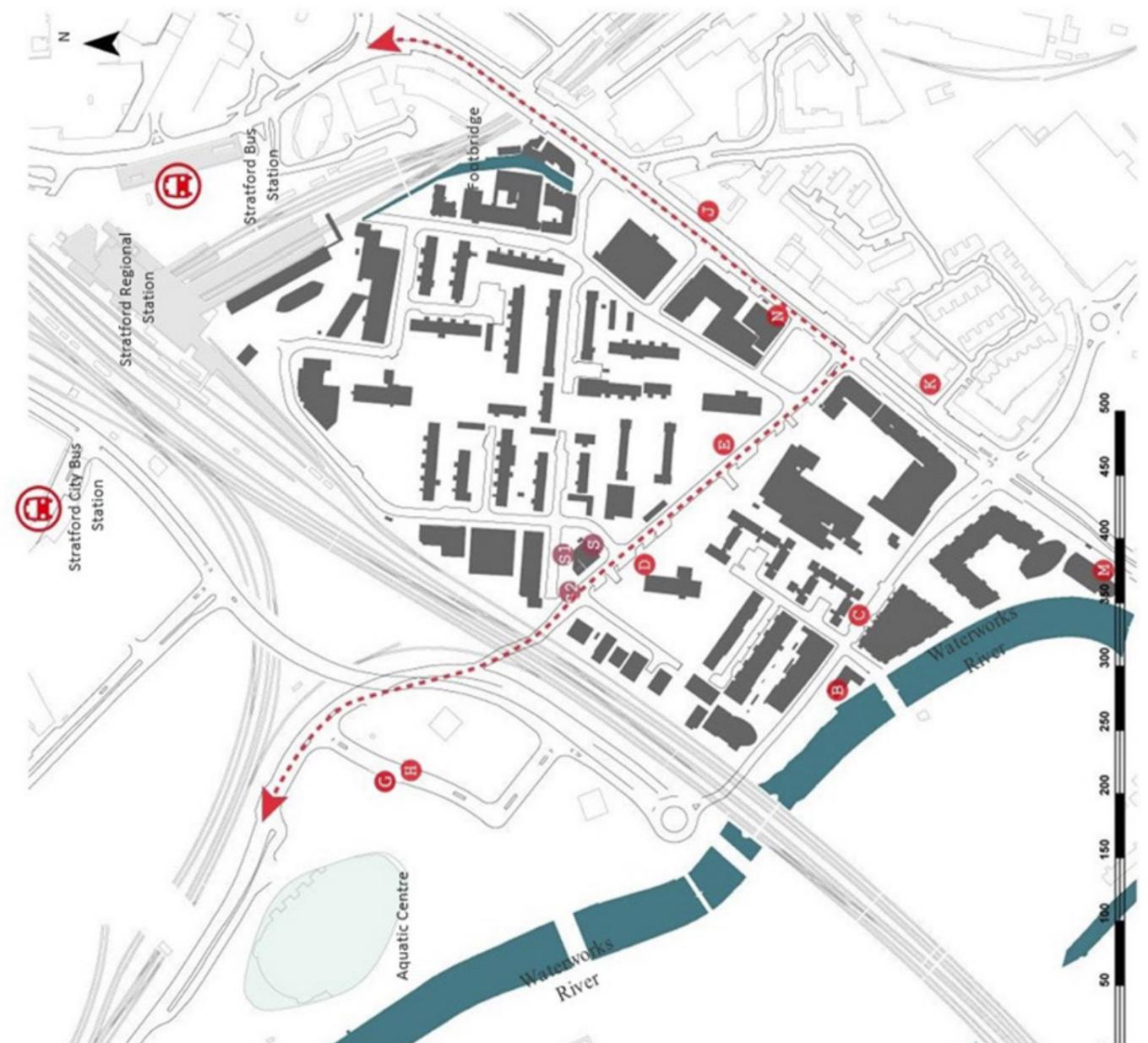


Figure 27: Proposed bus route (Line 276). Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.

- Key**
- Stratford City Bus Station 97, 108, 241, 308, 339, 388, 508, N205
  - Stratford Bus Station 25, 69, 86, 104, 158, 238, 241, 257, 262, 276, 308, 425, 473, 508, 678, D8, N8, N86
- |                                   |                           |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Existing Bus Stops</b>         | <b>Proposed Bus Stops</b> |
| B N205                            | SZ 205, 276, 108          |
| C N205                            | ST                        |
| D 108                             | S Stand for 205           |
| E 108                             |                           |
| N 276, 25, 425, D8, N8            |                           |
| J 276, 25, 425, D8, N8            |                           |
| K 276, 25, 108, 425, D8, N8       | G 108, 339                |
| M 276, 25, 108, 425, D8, N8, N205 | H 108, 339                |

Finally, concerning police C1 the idea is to empower the community not only through activities but also by providing spaces for community actions such as implementing a new multi-purpose community hub at the former TMO building, creating spaces for the GCNF and other community organizations in that area as well as creating spaces for community events and a youth zone. Based on residents' discussions, those places will provide new activities for young people, older residents, and women as well as a variety activity for all, including leisure and indoor sports, strengthening community connections.

Nevertheless, the GCNF desires to have ownership of the Neigh-



Figure 28: Proposed pedestrian network. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.

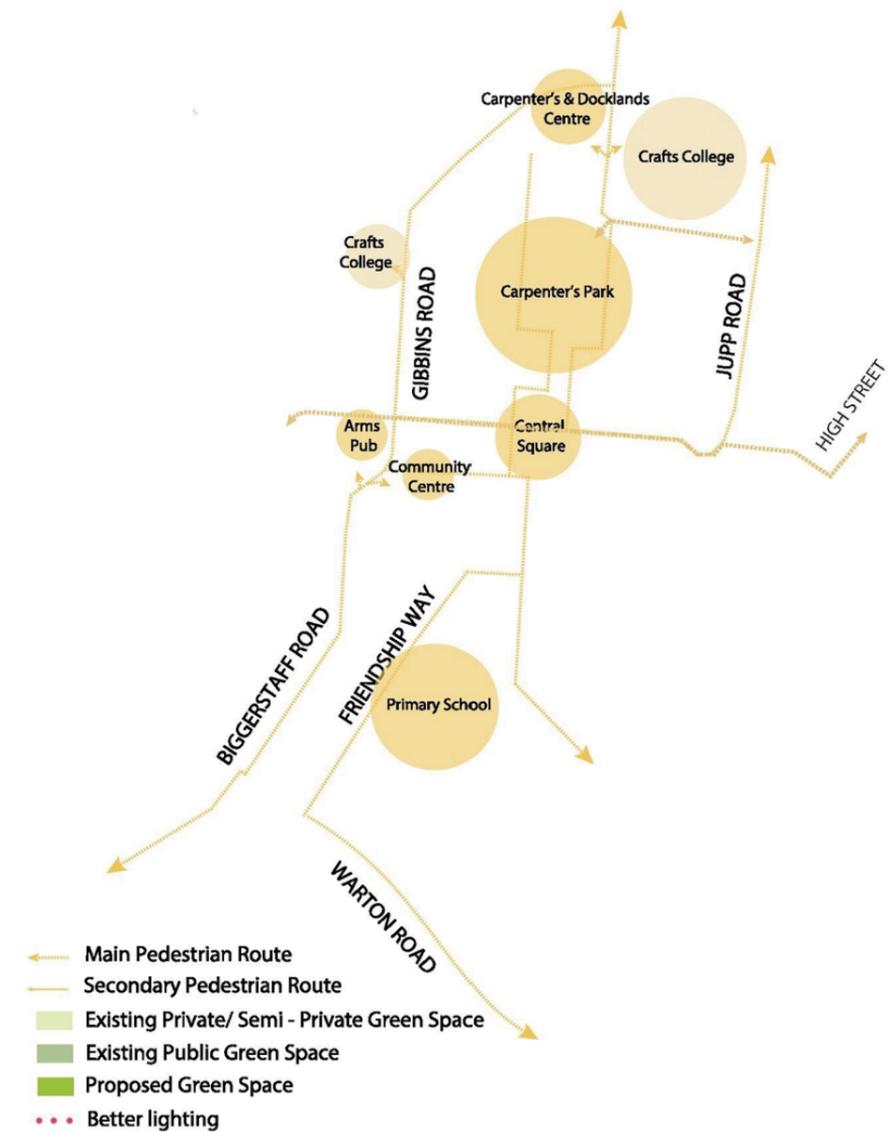


Figure 29: Pedestrian routes diagram. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.

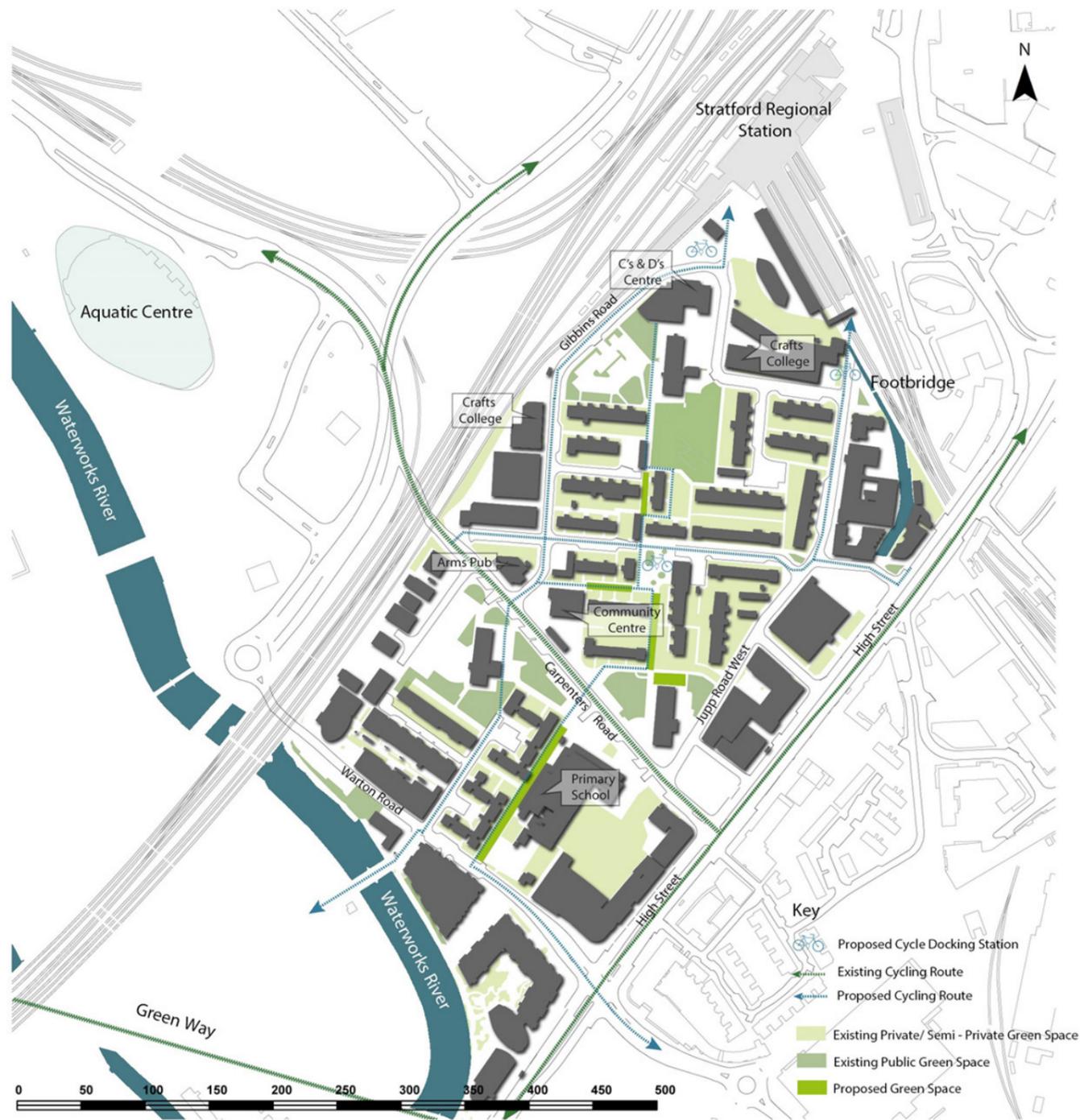


Figure 30: Proposed Cycling Network. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.

neighborhood Plan in its delivery, implementation, and influence over developer applications in the neighborhood plan area. In this way, the implementation of the Neighborhood Plan will need commitment and participation from developers, authorities, local businesses, service deliverers, and GCNF itself.

According to the submitted version of the Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Plan in 2019, the estimated period for the realization of the plan is 10 years, and the NP sets out a time for the delivery of the plan's goals and policies based on the approval of the Plan. Further, projects identified for delivery during the plan period are indicated as demonstrated in Table 19, which shows time scale priorities and planning support.

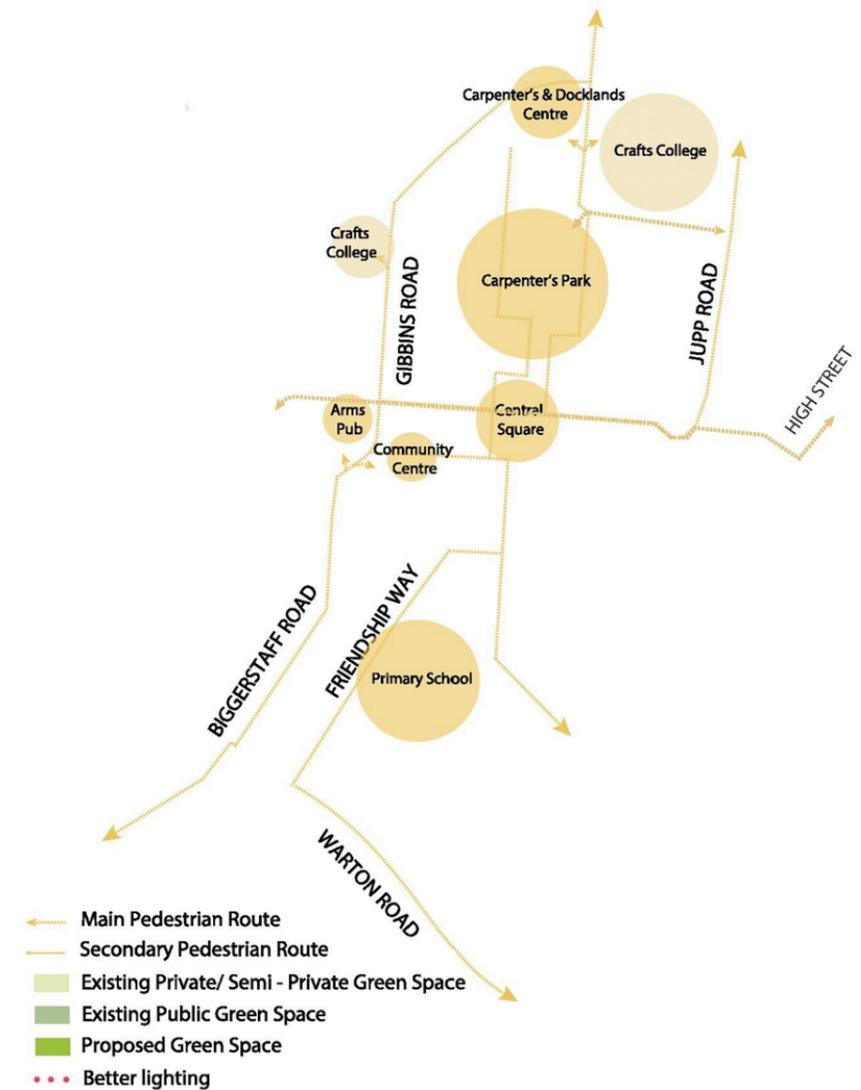


Figure 31: Cycling Routes Diagram. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.

References	Objectives / Policies	Action by	Timescale
	<b>Economy and Employment</b>		
O1, O5, E1	Support a wide-ranging programme of education and training for Greater Carpenters residents.	GCNF, CCLS, NEP, developers	3
O1, E2	Encourage local businesses and local employment	LLDC, SBID <sup>3</sup> , existing business, developers	5
O1, O6, E3	Diverse retail provision	LLDC, SBID	5
	<b>Green space, biodiversity</b>		
O2, O5, O6, G1	Protect and enhance green spaces and increase their quality and biodiversity	LBN <sup>4</sup> , HAs <sup>5</sup> developers, residents	3/4
O2, O5, O6, G2, C1, C2	Enhance social facilities of green space.	LBN, HAs, residents developers, GCNF	2/3
O2, O5, O6, G3	Enhance biodiversity	LBN, HAs, residents developers,	1,5
O2, O6, G4	Support tree planting and maintenance as part of re-greening	LBN, HAs, GCNF, developers	2/3
O2, O5, O6, G5	Support food growing and community gardening	LBN, HAs, GNNF, residents	1,2,3
	<b>Homes, refurbishment and sensitive infill</b>		
O3, O6, H1	Refurbishment of existing homes	LBN, HAs	3/4
O3, H2	Sensitive infill development of new homes	Developers, LBN, HAs, other land-owners.	3
O3, O6, H3, H2, H1	Support energy efficiency and low carbon	Developers, LLDC, LBN, HAs	3/4
	<b>Transport, Connections and Movement</b>		
O4, T1	Improve connectivity and accessibility	LBN, TFL, police	2-4
O4, O6, T2	Improve sustainable transport	Developers, LBN, HAs, TFL	2,5
O2, O4, O6, T3	Provision of clear and accessible pedestrian and cycling routes.	Developers, LBN, TFL	2
	<b>Community facilities, ownership and empowerment</b>		
O5, O6, C1	Provide genuine bottom up regeneration	Developers, GCNF, LLDC, LBN	5
O5, O6, C1	Provide appropriate community facilities	Developers, LLDC, LBN, HAs, existing providers	3/4

Table 19: Projected timescales for the Plan's objectives and policy delivery. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.

Objectives / policies	Project	CIL / other support	Timescale & CIL priority
All objectives & policies	Development of a masterplan to support the delivery of Neighbourhood Plan policies.	Locality	1
	<b>Economy and employment</b>		
O1, E1, E2	Creation of GCNF Education partnership.	SBID	1
O1	Create a local business association to provide mutual support.	SBID	2
O1, E2	Convert empty garage spaces for start-up micro-businesses.	CIL	2/3 (CIL priority 3)
	<b>Green space, biodiversity and community gardening</b>		
O2, O6, G1	Plan improved landscaping of green spaces - within the masterplan..	Locality	1
O2, O6, G2	Provide outdoor gym equipment to support health and well-being objective and social interaction between residents of all ages.	CIL	2/3 (CIL priority 1)
O2, O5, O6, G2	Create a children's park on the large open space adjacent to Denison Point'. A previously proposed scheme should be revisited and realised as part of a GCNF masterplan.	Grant funding, Mayor London, CIL	2/3 (CIL priority 4)
O2, O5, O6, G4	Work with LLDC and volunteers to plant more trees and develop green space.	LLDC, Mayor of London, LBN, CIL	2/3 (CIL priority 5)
Objective 2,6 Policy G5	Support a community gardening and 'incredible edible group'. A GCNF gardening group is established and needs additional support.	GCNF/grant funding	1
	<b>Homes, refurbishment and sensitive infill</b>		
O3, H1, H2	Commission a full and up-to-date survey of the condition of blocks on the Carpenters Estate and develop a refurbishment plan for Carpenters Estate – identifying what needs to be done immediately and what in the future.	In kind support LBN Mayor of London	1 (CIL priority 1)
O3, O5, O6, H1	Develop a community owned solar power project - to support this policy theme, policy 4.3 and assist in addressing fuel poverty.	LBN Mayor of London	2/3
	<b>Transport, Connections and Movement</b>		
O4, O6, T2	Support provision of cycles and bike racks.	LBN green storage hangers Duncan House development	1/2
O4, O6, T2	Improve signage in the GCNF area - to support legibility, accessibility and links with surrounding areas and communities.	TfL LBN	2
	<b>Community facilities, ownership and empowerment</b>		
O1, O5, O6, E1, C1	Support the creation of a new community hub on the site of the former TMO building with a variety of sport and creative activities and events accessible for people of different ages.	CIL	3/4 (priority 2)
O5	Create a local history trail celebrating the local area and its communities.	Grant funding	2

Table 20: Objective and Policy Delivery timescales. Greater Carpenters Neighborhood Forum's processing.

**Place:** Borough of Newham

**Council Estate:** Greater Carpenters

**Date:** February/March 2017

Neighbourhood Plan has its roots in the Carpenter's Community Plan, produced in 2013 as a bottom-up alternative to Newham Council's plans for the Carpenters Estate. The vision for the NP was based on meetings, walkabouts, and an extensive door-to-door survey with more than half the estate's households.

Since being defined as a Neighbourhood Forum Greater Carpenter has held monthly meetings, open day events and carried out surveys to find out the views of local people across the Neighbourhood area. Thus, the main goal was to establish a plan to improve the neighborhood and residents' lives without displacing people or demolishing any part of the council estate.

For that reason, the GCNF set out a vision for the plan, which includes:

- **a revitalized community** that benefit community-led and sustainable enhancement of existing homes
- **a vibrant and inclusive community** supported by community assets and local business
- **a resilient community** that gained benefits from the Legacy of the Olympic Games
- **a healthy and physically active community** achieved through improvements to community, green and play spaces
- **community members that are empowered** through community-ownership, provision of lifelong learning opportunities in the neighborhood and improved links with the surrounding areas
- **a community better integrated socially and physically with the surrounding area** through better connections, community assets, infrastructure and business collaboration/partnership
- **a engaged community** with residents and small businesses motivated to take part in decision-making to create a place that will support and sustain the positive value of their neighborhood and create a model for others



Greater Carpenters Estate's site



Transformation of the garages into affordable workspaces



Transformation of green spaces into areas of sports facilities



Provision of a community garden to make food accessible

SOURCES: <https://greatercarpenterscouk.wordpress.com/news/newsletters/>

**Place:** Borough of Newham

**Council Estate:** Greater Carpenters

**Date:** 22nd March 2024

For over 10 years community organizations have been campaigning for the opening of empty homes on the Carpenters Estate, seeking to minimize the rates of homelessness in the borough compared to the number of empty public homes available in the surrounding area.

Carpenters Estate has a history of resisting gentrification and displacement as a consequence of urban redevelopments accentuated due to the Olympics. However, on 27th February 2024, the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), which is the planning authority with oversight for the estate, approved redevelopment plans from Populo Living Development Company in that area.

#### And what are the plans?

- **An "outline planning application"**, also known as Masterplan which will give rights to redevelop the estate, including demolish all existing structures apart from Lund Point, Biggerstaff Terrace and James Riley Point that will be refurbish.
- **This Masterplan sets out new parameters** including number of homes across the sites, what tenures, number of buildings and types of buildings (residential, commercial, etc) and also plans for greenspace/ play areas.
- **Plans are for the Masterplan to be built in 8 phases over 18 "development parcels"** with anticipated construction over a ten-year period between 2024 to 2034.
- **The masterplan defines 2,022 new, refurbished and replacement homes, a minimum of 50.2% as affordable homes.** However, social rented accommodation is offered as an Assured Shorthold Tenancy or Starter Tenancy, opposed to secure life-time tenancy.
- **The masterplan includes to build a cinema and a hotel on the estate land**, which are not included in the plans of the residents' ballot and there are a variety of cinemas and hotels on that location.

Therefore, the estate residents' understand it as a way to making the new estate attractive to new private buyers, which is the opposite the NP proposed.



Campaign for opening empty homes on Carpenters estate.



Residents' campaign against Carpenters estate demolition.



Phases of Populo Living redevelopment plan over 10 years.

SOURCES: <https://focuse15.org/2024/03/22/refurbish-dont-demolish-the-carpenters-estate-london-legacy-development-corporation-gives-the-greenlight-to-redevelopment-plans/> and <https://focuse15.org/2021/11/19/life-on-carpenters-estate-a-life-worth-fighting-for/>

As illustrated, Greater Carpenters has a decade of history combating gentrification and being resilient against mega-events and social impacts in their neighborhood. The community organization had to self-organize to present alternatives to the authorities other than demolition and displacement of low-income families that are living on the estate for their entire lives. However, even though the community has been well organized in campaigning and designing their urban regeneration plan — putting their voices in the centrality of the urban changes —, the authorities keep ignoring their needs and placing private stakeholders at the center of the decision-making.

To elucidate other methods that have been used to combat top-down regeneration, two other study cases will be presented in this work. The intention is to investigate and understand a variety of processes and practices that have been used rather than imposed urban regeneration plans developed by local authorities, which uplift and displace entire communities.

#### 4.4.2. The Case of Focus E15

Moving on to the second case of a community initiative to respond against top-down regeneration in Newham, this case study is regarding Focus E15. Differently from the first case of Greater Carpenters, Focus E15 is a campaign in which the residents are organized to prevent displacement and social housing demolition.

Focus E15 campaign was born in September 2013 when a group of young mothers (Figure 32) received an eviction notice from the East Thames Housing Association after the Newham Labor Council cut its funding to the Mother and Baby Unit in the Focus E15 Foyer hostel for young homeless people. To avoid rehousing and displacement, the mothers organized a campaign demanding social housing, based on a weekly stall located in Stratford on Broadway E15.

Rather than fighting against the demolition of their housing estate, Focus E15 is a group of women who fight against their eviction from a temporary accommodation in Newham. It has become one of the strongest housing campaigns in the UK and it is a good example of the effectiveness of direct action and informal strategies of housing campaigns.

Furthermore, the group relates to a wider history of campaigning,

for instance, according to Fitzpatrick and Sendra (2020), one of the activists reported that as the campaign grew and they read more history, they saw that what they were doing was exactly what Sylvia Pankhurst<sup>23</sup> and East London Federation of Suffragettes had done a century earlier in East London (Figure 33).

Although this campaign is located in the London Borough of Newham (LBN) as the Greater Carpenters' group, the case of focus E15 goes beyond fighting for a particular place and has become a broader campaign against social cleansing. Another difference is the fact that Focus15 is a group of young mothers who are living in a hostel for young people in a condition of homelessness. As previously introduced, in 2013, this hostel suffered a £40.000 cut in funding, resulting in the closure of the “mother and baby unit”.

Therefore, the tenants of this unit received an eviction notice, and when one of them asked for the council's help to find accommodation within the borough she was told that she should find private accommodation outside of London, as it was impossible to rehouse those tenants in Newham. Based on this episode and through communication with the other tenants, a group of 29 mothers organized themselves to get together and challenge this problem by creating a petition to be rehoused in the same borough where they live.

<sup>23</sup> Sylvia Pankhurst was a suffragette and socialist organizer in the East End of London. She organized with working-class women, speaking to thousands of people in mass meetings about women's rights. During her life, she was an outspoken critic of the British Empire, and she formed links with the struggle for a free and independent Ireland. In addition, she was an early communist, inspired by the Russian Revolution and later became an anti-fascist organizer. In the East End of London, she was known amongst working class women as 'our Sylvia'. Available on: <https://focuse15.org/sylvias-corner/>. Accessed: 23rd March 2024.



Figure 32: Focus E15 activists in their 1st public action in January 2014. Focus E15 photo, available on: [focuse15.org](https://focuse15.org) and accessed in March 2024.

Throughout this circumstance, the group of mothers found a way to develop political confidence to act by themselves as well as to support others. As a result, the group started occupying council offices and attending council events to gain public support. Thus, the group decided to keep fighting with the slogan “Social housing, not social cleansing!” and hold their weekly stall in Stratford every Saturday at noon.

In September 2014, which was the 1st anniversary of their campaign, the activists organized a political occupation of an empty housing block at the Carpenters Estate (Figures 34 and 35). This gesture focused on getting the attention that people are being forced to move outside of London due to the lack of affordable housing, while there are a great number of empty social housing units in that borough.



91 Figure 33: Focus E15 activists. Focus E15 photo, available on: [focuse15.org](http://focuse15.org) and accessed in March 2024.



Figure 34: On September 21st, 2014, the Focus E15 campaign celebrated its first birthday by occupying a disused block of flats on the nearly empty Carpenters Estate in Stratford, East London. Focus E15 photo, available on: [focuse15.org/e15-open-house-occupation/](http://focuse15.org/e15-open-house-occupation/) and accessed in March 2024.



Figure 35: On September 21st, 2014, the Focus E15 occupation in Carpenters Estate disused block. Available in the book “Community-led Regeneration: A Toolkit for Residents and Planners”, Fitzpatrick and Sendra 2020.



Figure 36: Public meeting for focus E15 campaign on the Carpenters estate 20 October 2014. Focus E15 photo, available on: [focuse15.org/events](https://focuse15.org/events) and accessed in March 2024.

The occupation had an impact on the media, which contributed to the council's decision to repopulate 40 empty homes at the Carpenters estate. Afterward, the campaign continued to hold weekly stalls and also included space for events and self-organization at Sylvia's Corner, seeking to support people experiencing housing struggles.

Then, since the victory that kept the 29 mothers rehoused in Ne-wham, a variety of families affected by housing difficulties and social cleansing in that borough got involved in the campaign (Figure 36). Thus, the campaign became a dynamic and flexible group of people, looking to adapt to uncertain conditions of housing struggles.

According to Fitzpatrick and Sendra (2020), three combinations of actions and alliances have made this campaign stronger than in other cases. Those actions included the political occupation of the Carpenters estate, the political stall, and Sylvia's Corner space for activist gatherings.

The political occupation of the Carpenter Estate attracted so much attention from the media, highlighting the fact that homes were being left empty by the council although there is a great demand for social housing in the borough. This action worked in pressuring the council for re-occupation and boosted the campaign by showing that ordinary actions can work very well.



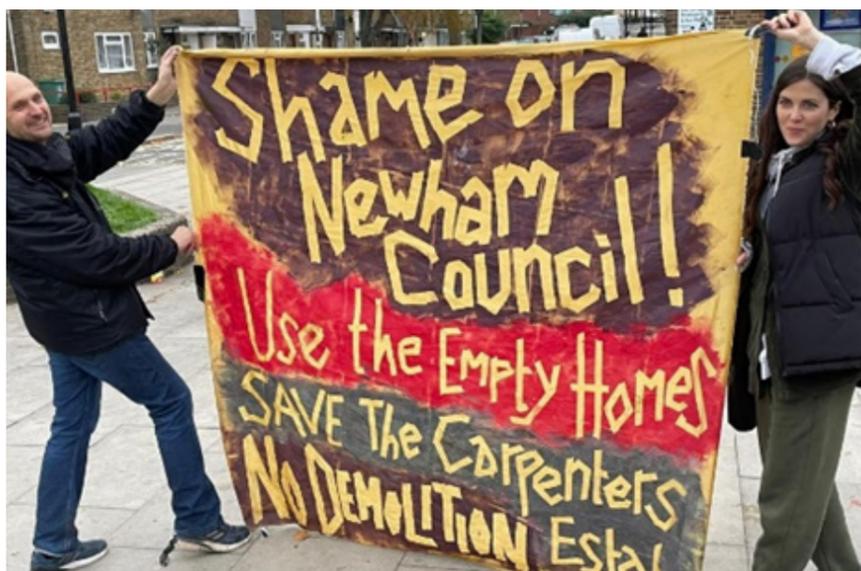
Figure 37: Sylvia's corner meeting point. Focus E15 photo, available on: <https://focuse15.org/sylvias-corner/> and accessed in March 2024.

Thence, the weekly stall has been adding a great contribution to the campaign, once it is holding petitions, fundraising, and reinforcing its presence on the streets, helping to keep the campaign alive in the long term. Additionally, Sylvia's Corner not only contributed to hosting community events but also to storing campaigning materials, offering space for monthly meetings open to the public, and holding sessions to help people facing housing difficulties.

Through fundraising and donations, Focus E15 managed to rent Sylvia's Corner (Figure 37), transforming it into a meeting point where they can organize themselves to discuss and tackle social housing and gentrification issues. In addition, this place hosts other groups' events, helping them to network with other social movements and campaigns. Therefore, Focus E15 became a great reference as an example of a housing campaign due to its action with strong media impact, a constant presence on the streets, and establishing a meeting point in a corner shop.

According to Fitzpatrick and Sendra (2020), in their 5th anniversary, Focus E15 discussed and pointed out lessons learned from campaigning. Consequently, they produced a wide-ranging list of lessons, which in their words, express a reflection of their key lessons for other campaigners. As it follows:

- **Take a direct action:** it is empowering and provocative, but also informative since it communicates critical issues to the wider community. Direct actions can manifest in various forms, including protesting at council meetings, occupying public spaces, staging marches from sidewalks onto streets, and chanting outside council offices.



- **Together we are stronger, and solidarity is vital:** more participants mean more voices heard and greater support, easing the campaign's progress.



Figure 42: Focus E15 campaign against demolition. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2019/07/26/stranded-in-southend-expectant-mother-told-by-newham-council-that-she-hasnt-been-moved-far-enough-away-yet/> and accessed in March 2024.

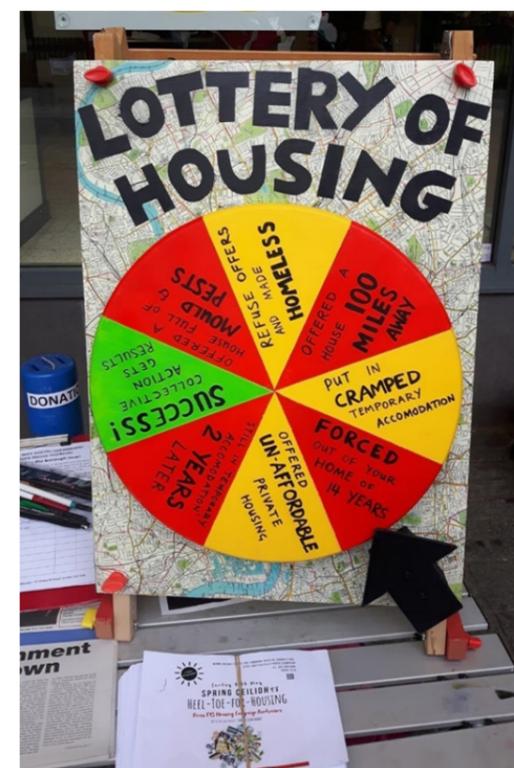


Figure 43: Focus E15 campaign against social cleansing. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2019/05/23/one-year-in-office-for-labour-mayor-rokhsana-fiaz-what-next/> and accessed in March 2024.

Figures 38, 39, 40 and 41: Focus E15 campaign against demolition. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2021/12/16/press-release-carpenters-estate-under-threat/> and <https://focuse15.org/photos/> and accessed in March 2024.

- **Speaking truth to power is key for any alliance that Focus E15 makes:** The group maintains a left-leaning position but operates independently, not aligned with any political party. The central goal of the campaign is to establish alliances with individuals, groups, or organizations actively challenging authorities to enhance housing conditions.



Figure 44: Focus E15 activists protesting against the corruption of the borough's housing stock. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2018/01/12/newham-council-we-are-watching-you/> and accessed in March 2024.

- **“One struggle! One fight!”:** It is essential to create connections with housing struggles worldwide and learn insights from others regarding the political dimensions of these struggles and the practical methods used.

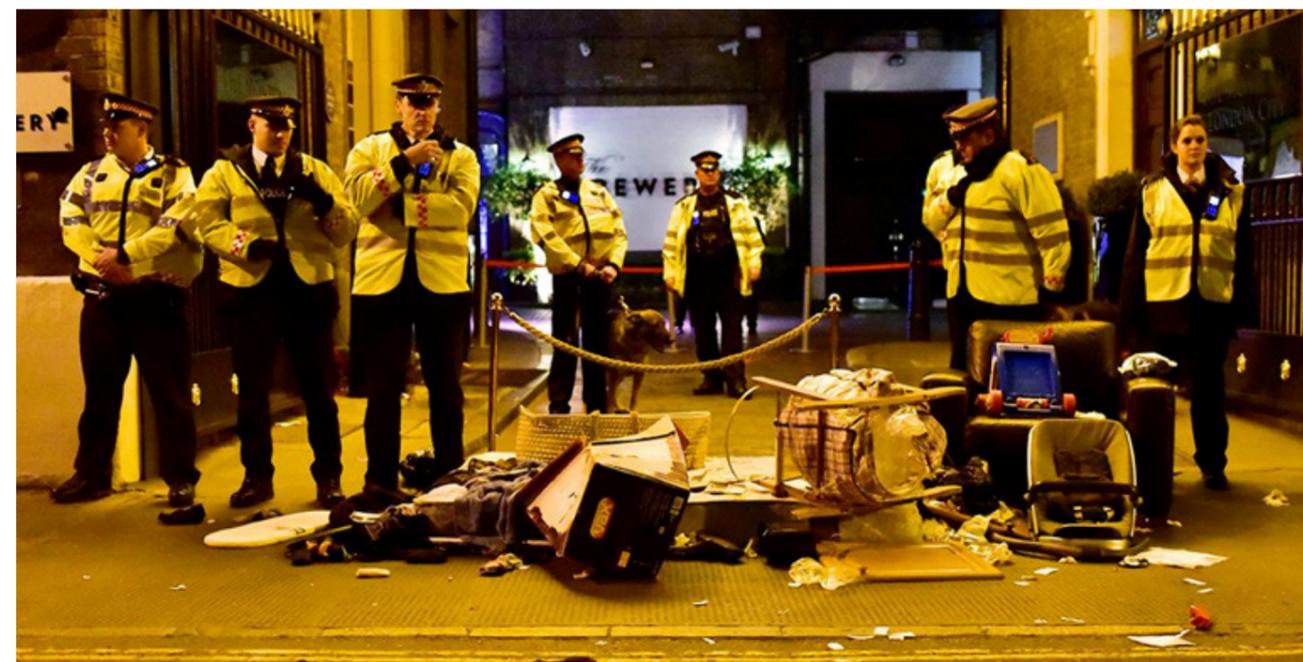


Figure 47: Mock eviction at the British Credit Awards protesting against the credit industry which profits on people who are struggling through the housing crisis. 12th February 2015. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2015/02/12/etb-wrap/> and accessed in March 2024.

- **Art is a political tool:** campaigners can employ it creatively through various methods such as banners, slogans, songs, podcasts, and films focused on housing campaigns.



Figures 45 and 46: Focus E15 activists' resistance against displacement and housing conditions. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2020/12/31/our-lives-and-our-future-resistance-has-not-gone-away/> and <https://focuse15.org/category/housingcrisis/>, and accessed in March 2024.

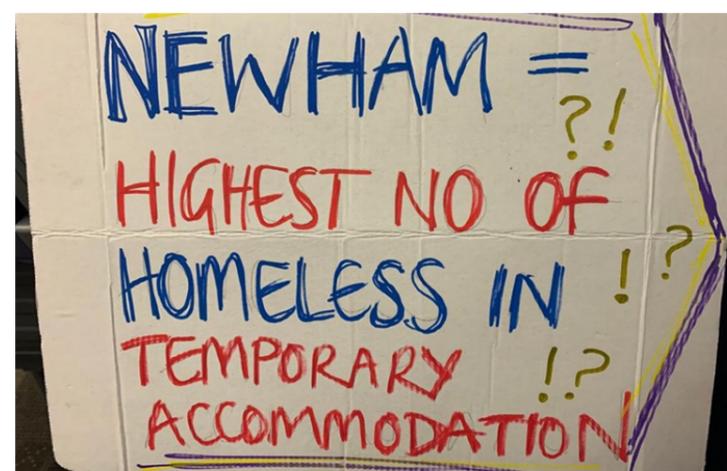


Figure 48: Brimstone House's residents protesting against temporary accommodation and its anti-social and prison environment. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2020/08/18/newham-legal-team-drag-their-feet/> and accessed in March 2024.



Figure 49: Residents protesting over living conditions at overcrowded hostels and the Council's unsuitable housing offers. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2023/01/20/victory-council-forced-to-reinstate-housing-duty/> and accessed in March 2024.



Figure 50: Street campaign against overcrowded living and poor-quality housing. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2020/08/17/abandoned-by-newham/> and accessed in March 2024.

- **Keep your spirits up as campaigners and individuals** confronting political and housing struggles. To sustain engagement, it is important to incorporate enjoyable elements into campaigning, making it a social event with activities such as music, theatre, dance, vibrant decorations, food sharing, and face painting.

- **Be a housing expert or know one!** It is crucial to gain a comprehensive understanding of the housing system, not only to discover it but also to understand its structure and the role played by the state.



Figure 52: Brimstone house residents having fun with Focus E15 campaigners. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2018/07/31/a-victory-in-court-but-the-fight-against-intentional-homelessness-goes-on/> and accessed in March 2024.



Figure 53: On August 17th 2017, the campaign organized a march to expose residents' concerns about social cleansing and housing issues. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2017/08/15/march-of-the-towers-takes-off-in-the-east-end/> and accessed in March 2024.



Figure 51: The campaign hosted a public meeting to mark 10 years of housing campaign in East London. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2023/10/06/calling-friends-comrades-and-supporters-join-us-to-mark-10-years-of-existence-and-resistance/> and accessed in March 2024.

- **Networking and building with other groups** have been crucial over the last five years – not only to increase the support for Focus E15 but also to facilitate mutual learning. It is essential to maintain an open and democratic structure for meetings while also establishing spaces for interaction, such as the stall, which serves as a venue for building connections with other local organizations.



Figure 54: On February 10th, 2018, a public meeting hosted by the Focus E15 Campaign was held in the hall of Carpenters and Dockland Centre to discuss the rising homeless population in the borough while hundreds lie empty in the Carpenters Estate. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2018/02/10/positive-community-housing-meeting-held-in-east-london/> and accessed in March 2024.

- There is room for everyone – but no room for racism!

Inclusiveness in campaigning is essential, but racism cannot be tolerated. In housing campaigns, there are instances where people attribute problems to immigration. However, Focus E15 consistently opposes this viewpoint, extending its issue to broader social struggles as well.

- **Learning from history** has added a temporal dimension to the campaign, drawing inspiration from the stories of Sylvia Pankhurst and the suffrage movement, as well as Mrs. Barbour and the Glasgow Rent Strikes in 1915.

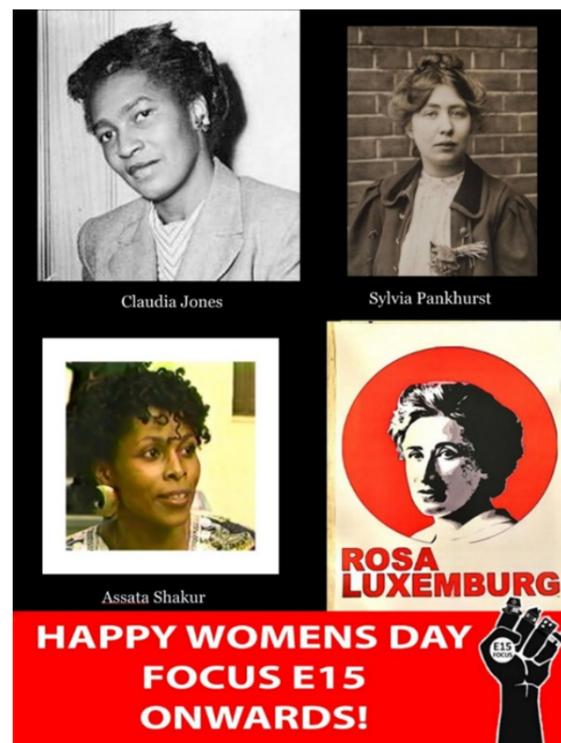


Figure 55: Focus E15 campaign salutes revolutionary women on International Women's Day. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2023/03/08/focus-e15-campaign-salutes-revolutionary-women/> and accessed in March 2024.



Figure 56: Focus E15 campaign. Focus E15 photos, available on: <https://focuse15.org/2020/04/13/reclaim-homes-from-the-usa-to-the-uk-online-public-meeting-register-now/> and accessed in March 2024.

**Place:** Borough of Newham

**Council Estate:** Brimstone House

**Date:** February 7th 2021

On February 7th, 2021, a mother of two in Brimstone House, shared photos of her home to demonstrate Newham council disrespect regarding families overcrowded in damp, moldy, and tiny rooms. Throughout two years she has been put up in those living conditions with inadequate and expensive heating appliances plus the fact that she had to share a bed with her children due to the lack of space.

To sum up, Newham’s council rehoused a family of three in a tiny room without enough beds for all of them, any place to study for the children of school age, and no privacy for the mum. In addition, during bad weather conditions, rain entered the room and now some furniture and children’s books are destroyed. Therefore, she had to pack up the room into boxes and bags to protect what was left after the rain, and the successive nights she accommodated her family on the kitchen floor to sleep.

As an activist of Focus E15, this mother communicated with other activists to expose her conditions and campaign about Newham’s negligence of council estate residents’ living conditions, requesting the council to move people into decent homes in order to preserve adult’s and children’s mental and physical health. The campaign demonstrated that there are 400 empty council homes on the Carpenters Estate – already known by the Mayor of Newham –, which are abandoned over a decade and could be transformed into homes with better conditions for those families facing housing struggles.

“Moving again with my child...we have been living in a hotel, then a friend’s house and then various shared houses. It’s been a physically exhausting year living in London, we have been moved five times already.”



Campaign to voice residents issues regarding living situation in council houses.



Street campaign to express resident’s concerns through banners and to call attention to the media.



Left: Mould growing inside a bedroom in Brimstone House.

Right: Where the TV is meant to go, no space for children to grow inside the flats in Brimstone House.

**SOURCE:** <https://focus15.org/2021/02/09/move-families-out-of-brimstone-house-now/>

**Place:** Borough of Greenwich

**Council Estate:** located at Woolwich

**Date:** February 20th 2019

On February 20th, 2019, a 30-year-old single mother with her 6-year-old daughter, who has been living in a temporary accommodation at Brimstone House during one year, was contacted by Housing Options. The social service offered a house in Woolwich, which is located in a different borough that she was living.

At that moment, she was informed that this would be the last time she would be offered to be rehoused as well as she might visit and accept the property at that day. However, even if the mum and the daughter were enrolling education in the borough of Newham the council offered them to be rehoused in a different borough.

The single mother was desperate for a place in Newham because her kid and her own commitments in that borough. In addition, due to her threat of being displaced again her mental health deteriorated and she had to request for mental health support.

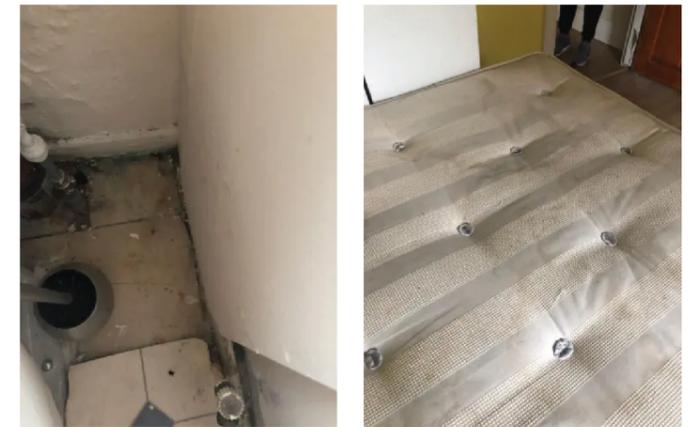
Later on, the mum accepted to take a look on the private-rented flat in Woolwich offered by the council of Newham. According to the images on the left side of this box, we could see the conditions that the council was trying to rehouse this family. Although the flat was in unlivable conditions, she was told that if she didn’t accept that flat, she would be out on the streets and considered intentionally homelessness.

“I feel like the council is just trying to use tactics to force me into a situation...I feel like I’m being punished. I’m trying to get my voice heard and I’m speaking to people and I’m raising issues. I feel like it’s a tactical to make me go away – like they are thinking, “let’s get social services to call around”

**SOURCES:** <https://focus15.org/2019/02/20/newham-council-offers-single-mother-slum-housing-or-the-street/>



Marsha and her daughter in their one-room temporary homelessness hostel accommodation



Mattress and toilet in the flat Marsha was shown.



Infiltration and oven conditions at the offered flat.



Broken walls and doors in the flat.

As described, the Focus E15 campaign is a crucial movement in London demanding housing rights in order to avoid social cleansing caused by gentrification. It has an important role once it takes not only their case of eviction notice to fight, but it also supports others' community organization struggles.

This case answers the research question by showing that a strong campaign works as a method to combat top-down regeneration since it calls attention to the media and collaborates to keep the community in their land, giving visibility to their cause and voices. Focus E15 has shown that campaigning could work as a tool to avoid displacement but also could be a combined strategy to request the design of a People's Plan that later on will be transformed into a Neighborhood Plan, favoring maintaining the low-income tenants at their housing estate.

In the next subsection, the case of West Ken Gibbs Green Community will be explained, which is a relevant example of a co-design process, combining the regulations imposed by the state with the needs presented by the residents who will be affected by the regeneration. Other than the previous methods, this case involves more practical experience in designing solutions matching the expertise of planners and architects with the visions of the tenants, answering their issues, and together proposing solutions to their demands.

#### 4.4.3. The Case of West Kensington and Gibbs Green (WKGG)

The third study case of this research intends to present a different approach to responding to a top-down regeneration process and preventing demolition. In this case, the aim is to demonstrate methods of co-design and participatory methods of regeneration.

Differently from the other two cases, this case is composed of two housing estates – West Kensington and Gibbs Green (WKGG) – located in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. However, similarly to the previous cases, this object of study is presented in Sendra and Fitzpatrick's book *Community-led Regeneration: A Toolkit for Residents and Planners*, 2020.

Even though this case is not located in the borough of Newham, as the other cases, it was selected as a research object due to its good practices regarding co-design and bottom-up approach. The two council estates are located next to the area which before its demolition used



Figure 57: Campaign against demolition on 17th March 2015. Available on: <https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/images/> and accessed in March 2024.

to be the Earl's Court Exhibition Centre, and the estates are part of the Earl's Court and West Kensington Opportunity Area.

According to Sendra and Fitzpatrick (2020), the plans for redeveloping both estates are part of a large private development led by Capital & Counties Properties PLC (Capco), which includes the area located over two local authorities: the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham as well as the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Therefore, in 2009, the neighbors started a campaign to prevent the council's plan to sell the land for redevelopment (Figure 57).

To stop the council from selling the land, the residents approached Jonathan Rosenberg, an activist known for preventing Westminster Council from selling Walerton and Elgin council estates in the late 1980s (Sendra and Fitzpatrick, 2020, p. 19). From the time Jonathan joined the WKGG campaign as a community organizer, the activists started to use a variety of approaches to stop the sale of the land and take the estate's control. After ten years of campaigning, the council declared they gave up selling the area to private developers.

In addition, after Jonathan Rosenberg joined the campaign, one of his first actions was to define the Community Land Trust, seeking to apply the Right to Transfer tool, which allowed the residents to have collective ownership and control of their homes in order to propose their community-led regeneration plan. Afterward, the WKGGCH hired the Architects for Social Housing (ASH) to carry out a feasibility study, looking to translate the residents' vision for the new homes and their



Figure 58: View of the estates from one of the flats, January 2017. Available in the book "Community-led Regeneration: a Toolkit for Residents and Planners", Fitzpatrick and Sendra 2020.

redevelopment into a community-led regeneration plan.

The People's Plan proposed building around 200-300 new homes without demolishing any part of the existing estates, which was approved by the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government, contributing to interrupting the land transfer and its regeneration plan to the private market.

Although the transfer of stock from the local authority to the community-owned company was not completed yet, the activists succeeded in stopping the threat of privatization and demolition, such as in the case of Cressingham Gardens in the borough of Lambeth and their People's Plan. Following Sendra and Fitzpatrick (2020), the case of WKGCH applied a combination of formal and informal tools for opposing demolition and proposing community-led regeneration that contributed to their victory.

Throughout those combinations of strategies, the residents developed several skills such as: the ability to run a long-term campaign; the capacity to maintain close relations with households over time and build up trust; the skill to bring the community together to set up their vision and to keep the long-lasting campaign; the expertise to raise funds and to hire consultants to draft their People's Plan; which helped them to achieve their goal and work as an example to other similar campaigns.



Figure 59: Residents voting for the Right to Transfer on 17th March 2015. Available on: <https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/images/> and accessed in March 2024.

Therefore, the purpose of the feasibility study was to identify an alternative instead of the demolition of the 760 existing homes, contributing to the provision of housing services in the area, comprising: homes for market sale, social rent, and shared ownership. Moreover, the People's Plan intends to collaborate with the regeneration of the wider area in a locally-led way, demonstrating the best practices to regenerate it, by meeting the needs and aspirations of the existing community composed of 2.000 residents (West Kensington and Gibbs Green Community's People's Plan, 2015, p. 1).

According to the WKGCH People's Plan, the methods involved in developing the community-led plan included: reporting information; gathering and consulting local people involved; offering public consultation and co-design workshops with the locals and stakeholders involved; presenting ideas as well as setting up together a proposal. The plan has identified space to build new 253 homes on the estates, which provided a combination of infill developments and roof extensions at the existing blocks: 70 of them are destined for social rent, and the other 30 are made available for shared ownership (West Kensington and Gibbs Green Community's People's Plan, 2015, p. 1).

The existing council estates were divided into different types of styles, while the West Kensington estate contained 633 homes including

four-story maisonettes and five taller blocks of flats composed of 152 houses, the Gibbs Green estate was originally composed of 127 homes, in which 28 of them were family-sized houses and the remaining ones were maisonettes distributed into five blocks. Based on the following maps (Figure 60 and 61) it is possible to understand the distribution of the existing buildings and their landscape on the original estates before understanding the community proposals.

After analyzing the existing areas of the council estates, about 100 residents joined the resident-led design process for the regeneration plan, aiming to work on possible ideas for the feasibility proposals. The design process was divided into three parts:

- 1) Gathering information and opinion
- 2) Drawing and testing ideas

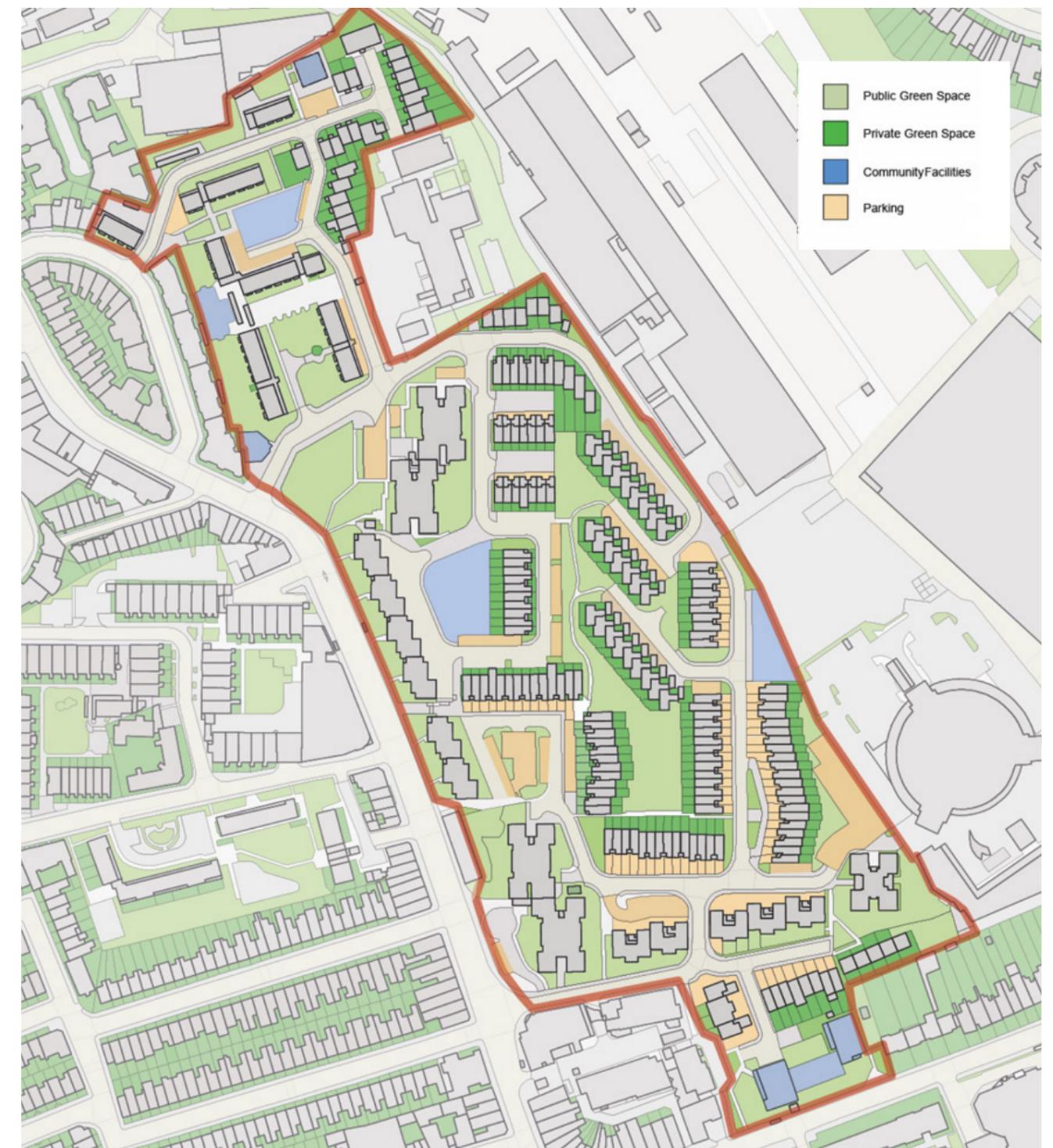
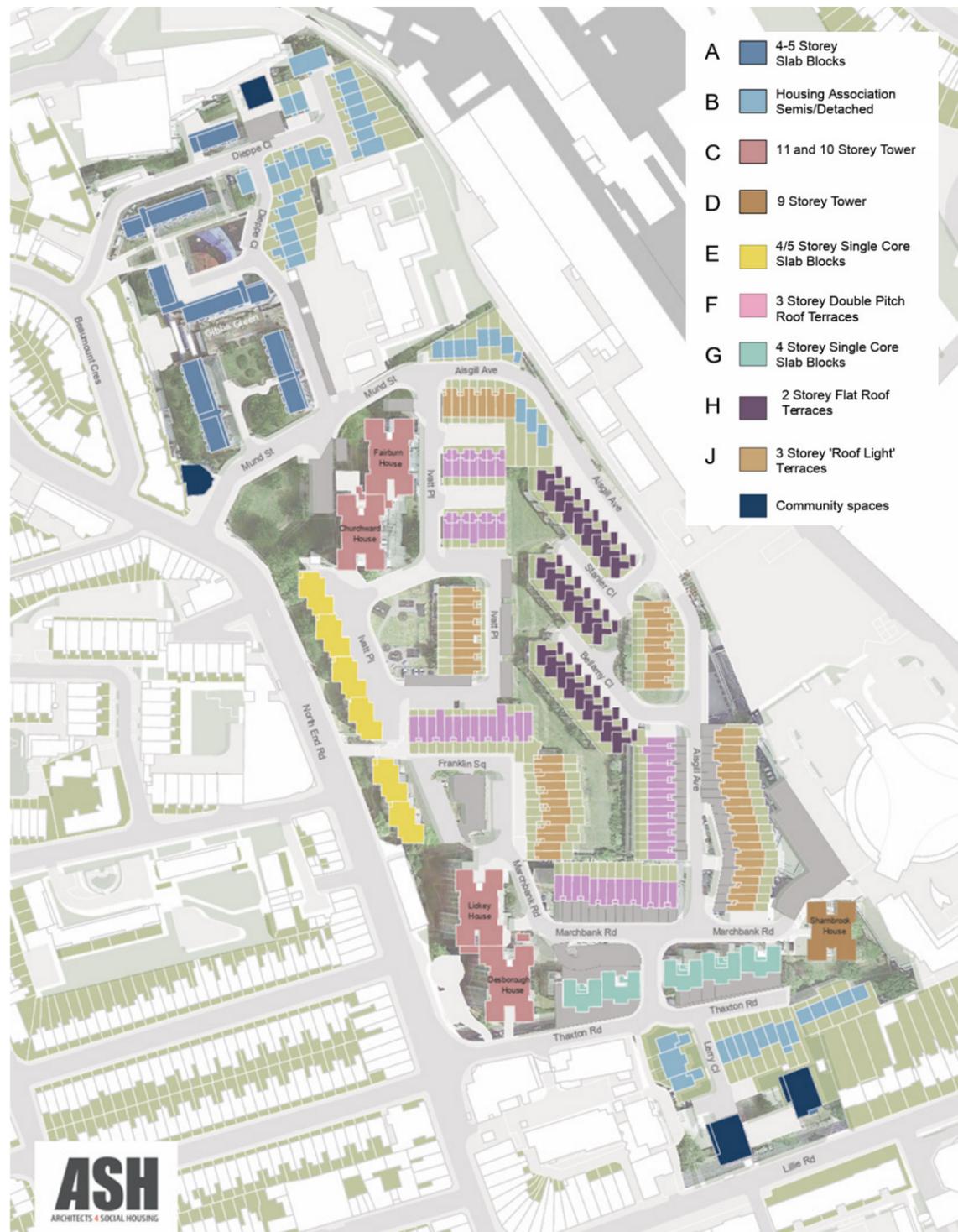


Figure 60: Existing buildings map. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green.

Figure 61: Existing Landscapes and Community Facilities map. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green.

### 3) Consultation on the emerging proposals

The 1st part, related to gathering information and opinion happened at a launch event (see e.g. on Box 1) and two subsequent walking tours led by residents, which identified: refurbishment needs for the existing properties; what people liked and disliked at their own homes and at the estate environment and why; opportunities for building additional homes.

The 2nd part regarding drawing and testing ideas happened at two different workshops, firstly focused on improvements to existing homes and their environment and secondly focused on additional housing. In this phase, the most popular and feasible ideas designed with residents during the workshops were transformed into an emerging vision for new homes and improvements on the estates.

The last part: the consultation on the emerging proposals, took place at an exhibition with volunteer residents, who were helping architects (Figure 62), to explain the starting proposals to the other neighbors, aiming to receive some feedback.

Therefore, every household of both estates received an invitation to participate in drawing up “The People’s Plan”. The Launch event took place on 12th November 2016, while on 15th December of the same year, they hosted a second event to present early proposals.



Figure 62: The Resident-Led Design Process: 1st workshop to set up information collected and test ideas. Available on: <https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/images/> and accessed in March 2024.

At the 1st event, residents were stimulated by the architects and volunteer residents to indicate on maps their knowledge and opinion about the object area. Thus, the residents pointed out what does and does not work well about the existing homes and landscapes of the estates to identify initial solutions.

Later on, fifty-four residents joined the follow-up walks to the locally-led design process after the launch event. Throughout the walks and even after it, residents opened up their homes to allow the architects to catalog the layouts of each building type (Figure 63). Moreover, residents of every building contributed to detailed surveys of their homes to identify problems, desired improvements, and any needed transformations (Figures 64 and 65). The information provided by the residents was essential to start an analysis of the estates’ area before drawing up initial proposals.

The walking tours were a crucial tool for understanding the residents’ most common paths inside the estates as well as their needs and the most important areas to be addressed in the regeneration plan. In addition, the walking tours contributed to getting households’ confidence to open their houses, allowing the technical team — such as the architectural professionals — to map the building’s typologies as well as areas of refurbishment and improvement.

Throughout the walking tours, it was also possible to receive resi-



Figure 63: Walking tour inside resident's home. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green.

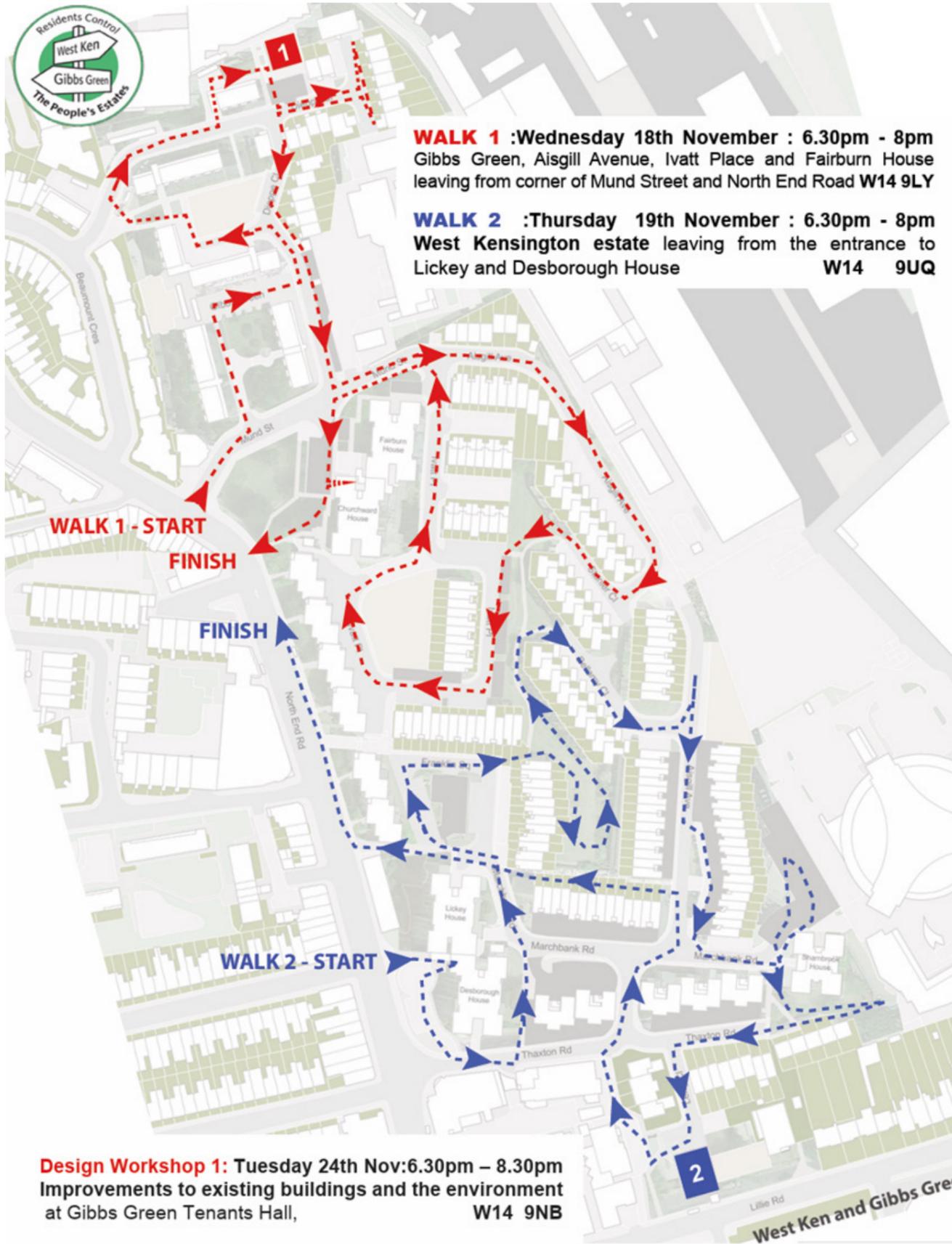


Figure 64: The walking tours to gather information and opinions. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green. 113

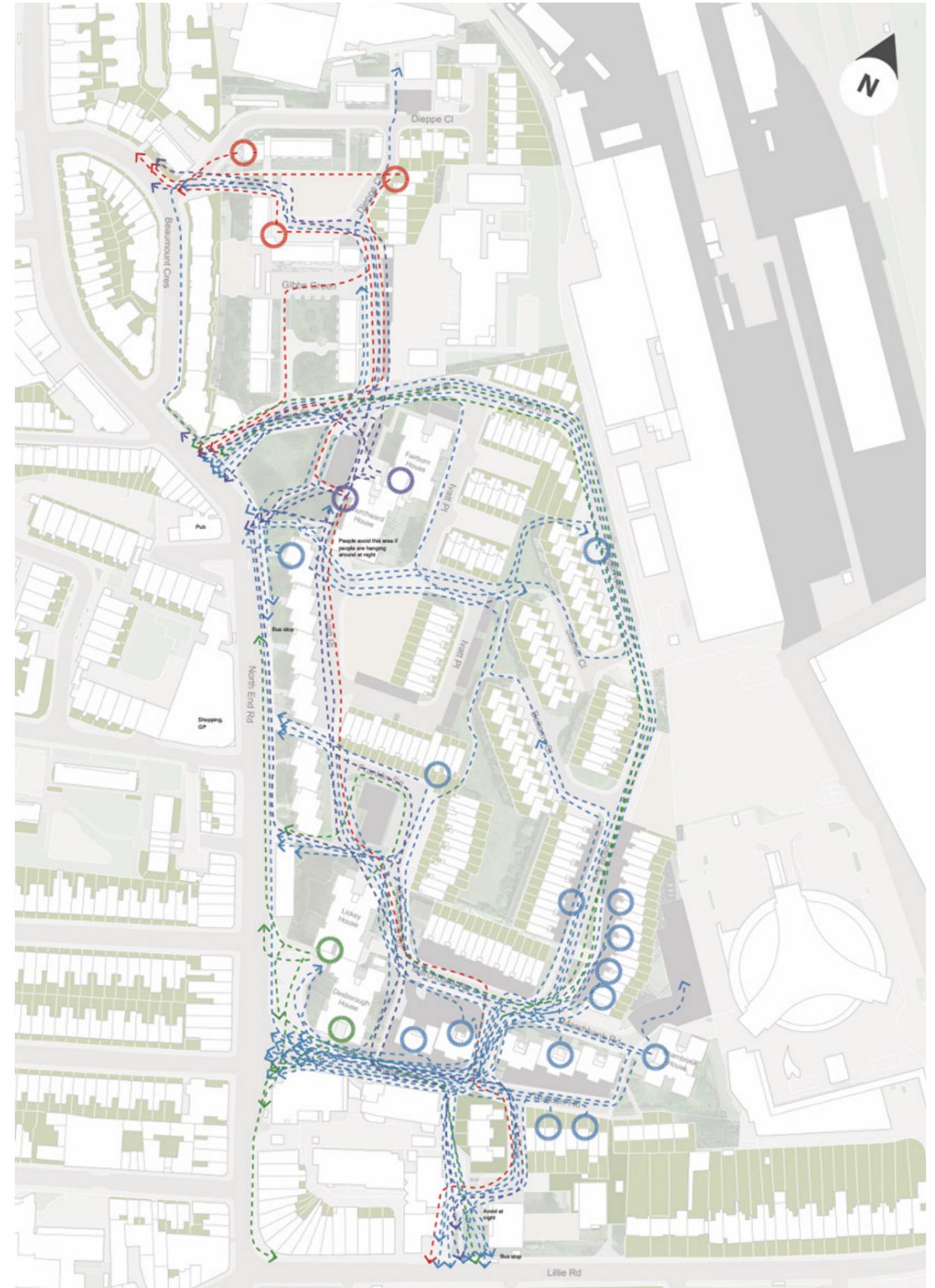


Figure 65: The walking routes mapped during the walking tours, representing residents' typical daily or weekly routes through the estate. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green. 114

dent's feedback on every part of the estate. Later on, it was transformed into a map of the positive and negative aspects of each corner of the estates (Figure 66). Thus, it worked not only as an activity to map what residents like or dislike but also as an opportunity to write down together some solutions for every problematic area (Figure 67).

As a result of walking tours and the further activities of mapping what was found there, it was identified a combination of opportunity areas for new buildings and areas for improvement in the landscape. Afterward, the technical team started to organize workshops with the residents and all stakeholders involved, seeking to provide some alternative solutions to the problems pointed out and the needs identified during the previous sections (Figure 68).

Later on, two workshops were organized to design some ideas and discuss a variety of options together with all residents involved. At the 1st workshop, residents were asked to visit different tables to discuss and draw up ideas for improvements and re-use of different communities and green spaces around the estates (Figure 69). However, the second workshop was focused more on reviewing the initial sketches for the new building and community facilities, seeking to go further in detail with those options.

On the 15th of December 2015, sixty residents gathered in the Gibbs Green Hall to analyze the emerging proposals for the future of their council estates, and they gave their opinions on it. Therefore, the proposals were distributed on twelve panels containing sketches, aerial views, pictures, and photocollages for each area of the estates. A dozen residents volunteered to assist and present it to the other neighbors, which led to discussions and feedback.

To give their feedback, the residents used colored "Post-it" to highlight things that they liked in green, things that they disliked in red and suggestions in yellow. This was an important stage of the project because these comments were used to inform which were the priorities of the final proposals later presented on the 15th of March 2016.

To summarize, the feasibility study was divided into six events to gather information, map problems, design ideas, draw up proposals, and finally present it all transformed into a participatory project (Figures 70,71, 72 and 73). During all those phases, the number of residents involved was over 112 locals who actively took part in collaborating and achieving the final proposal to be done (West Kensington and Gibbs Green Community's People's Plan, 2015, p. 15).



Figure 66: A Feedback Map containing things said by the residents about their homes and the estate throughout the previous consultation sessions. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green.



Figure 67: Areas identified for improvement based on the walking tours. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green.

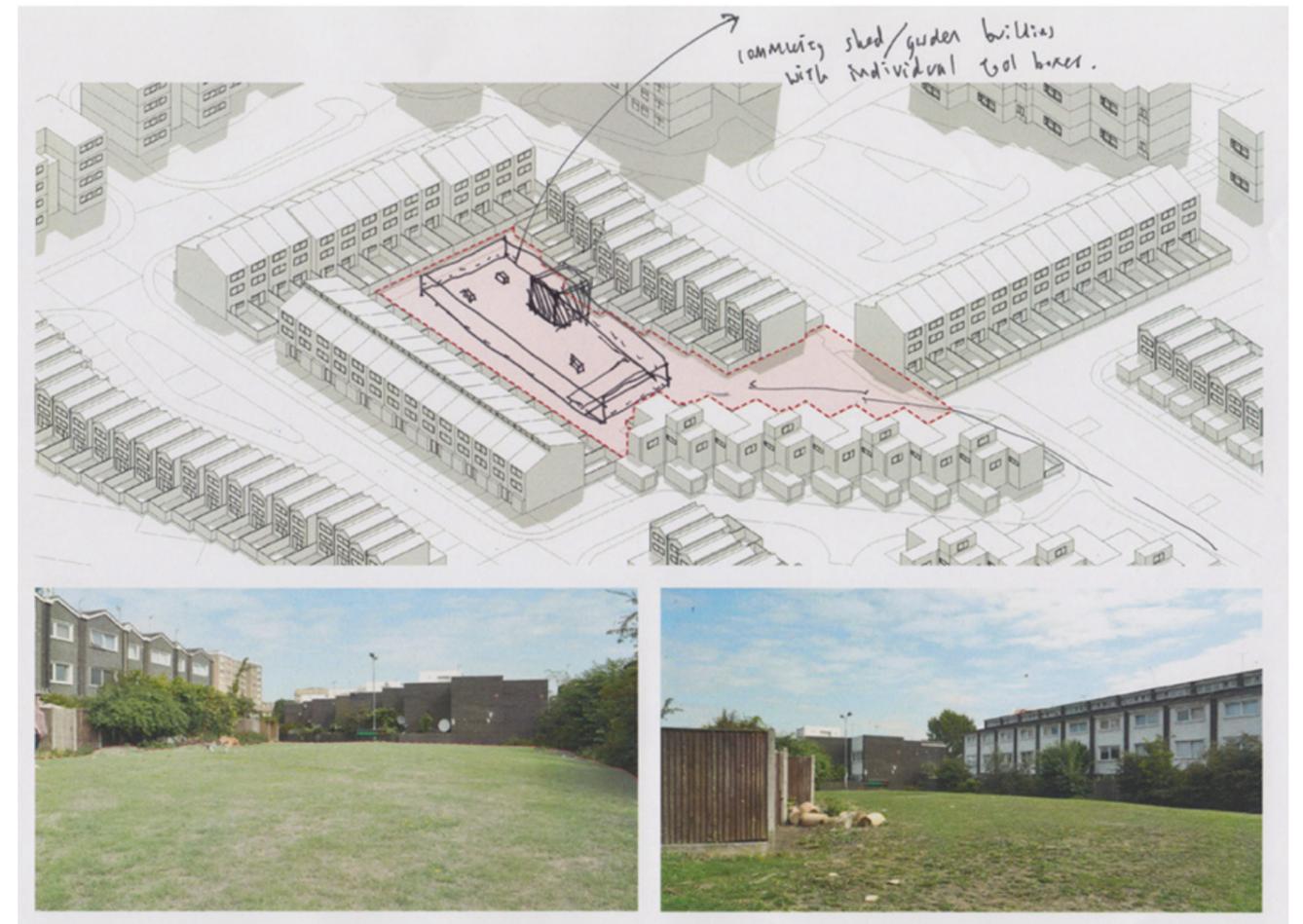


Figure 68: Resident's participation in two workshops to draw up ideas and discuss alternative options to the estates. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green.

Looking at the strategies developed by the community, some of them address the public spaces such as the provision of community gardens, new pedestrian access, new sheds, bins, and cycle storage, paths to access the new gardens designed, outdoor furniture for social gatherings, and playgrounds (Figure 74 and 75). However, other solutions are more concerned with the architectural and refurbishment strategies, like the implementation of external insulation, an extension lift availability - mainly in the case of the towers -, conversion of some garages into residential use and the design of new homes combining materials with the existing ones.

Additionally, some solutions provided addressed renewable energy strategies such as the installation of solar panels on the new roofs, thermal insulation, and electrical ventilation to prevent mold and condensation on the towers, as the residents pointed out during the drawing workshops. Regarding the landscape strategies, since the estates are located in a wildlife corridor, it was a key argument for keeping their

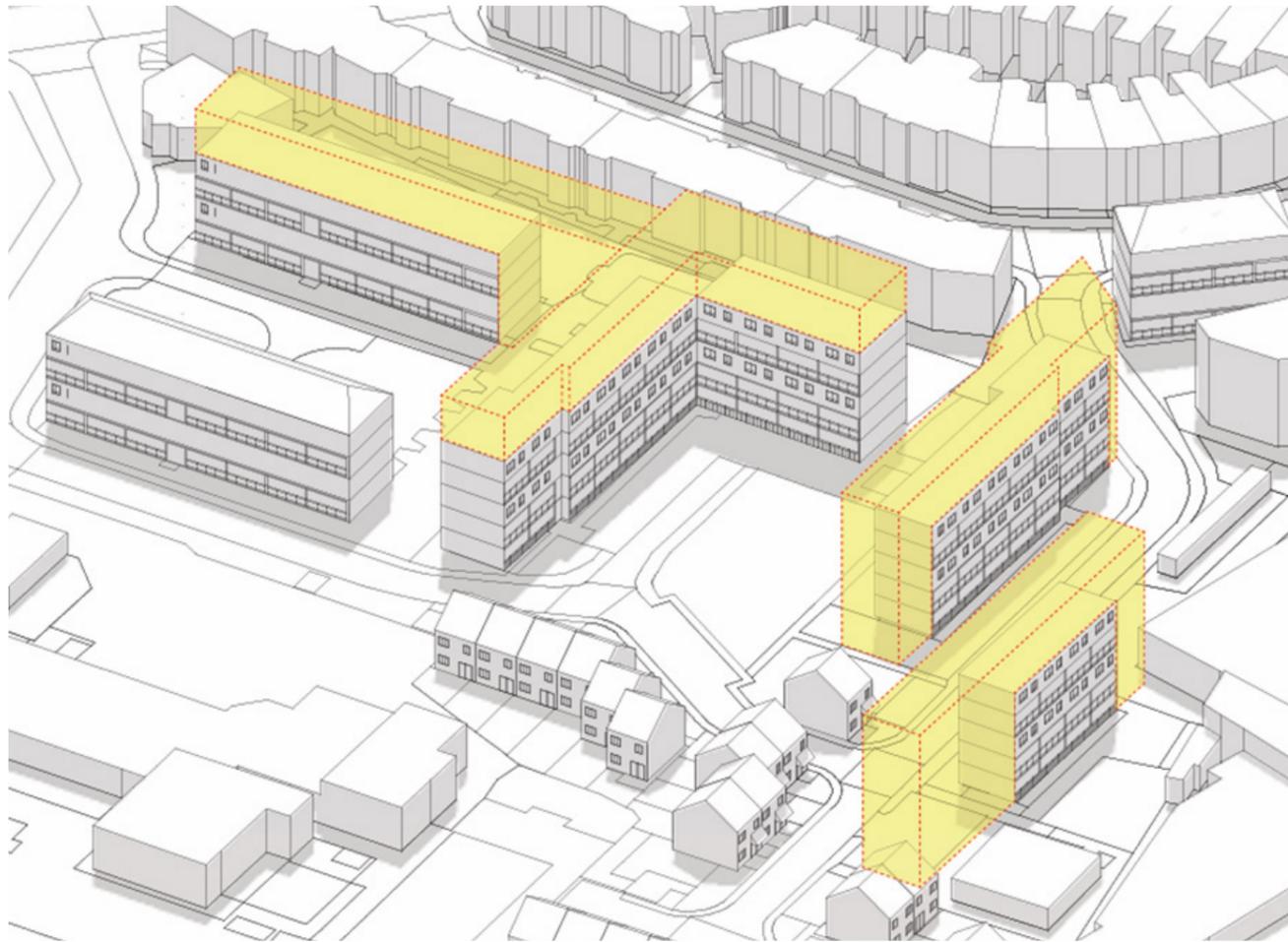


Figure 69: Aerial images designed by the residents together with architects during the 1st workshop to test some ideas. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green.

openness and enhancing the biodiversity of the landscape.

The landscape improvements involved communal gardens, market gardens, and areas on the ground floor in front of the blocks which are occupied by single-storey flats that would benefit from additional planting. It also proposed the transformation of underused parking areas into allotments as well as the reallocation of children's play areas, which initially were dispersed through the estate, to the central areas, ensuring better children oversee.

In summary, the People's Plan emphasizes sustainability, and it seeks to maintain the good quality of the existing housing through improvements as well as maximizing housing on the site by adding new homes without the loss of the existing ones. Therefore, the community-led plan achieved the target of 40% of social housing - as defined by the Local Plan - once 100 of the 253 new homes proposed are defined as social housing units. This amount is composed of 70 social rent and 30 shared ownership units, including 18 large family houses at the social



Figure 70: Consultation event with feedback on the emerging proposals. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green



Figure 71: A volunteered resident presenting one of the proposals to the other neighbors and leading a discussion to receive feedback during a consultation event. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green.



rented units and some elderly housing units on the ground floor (West Kensington and Gibbs Green Community's People's Plan, 2015, p. 37).



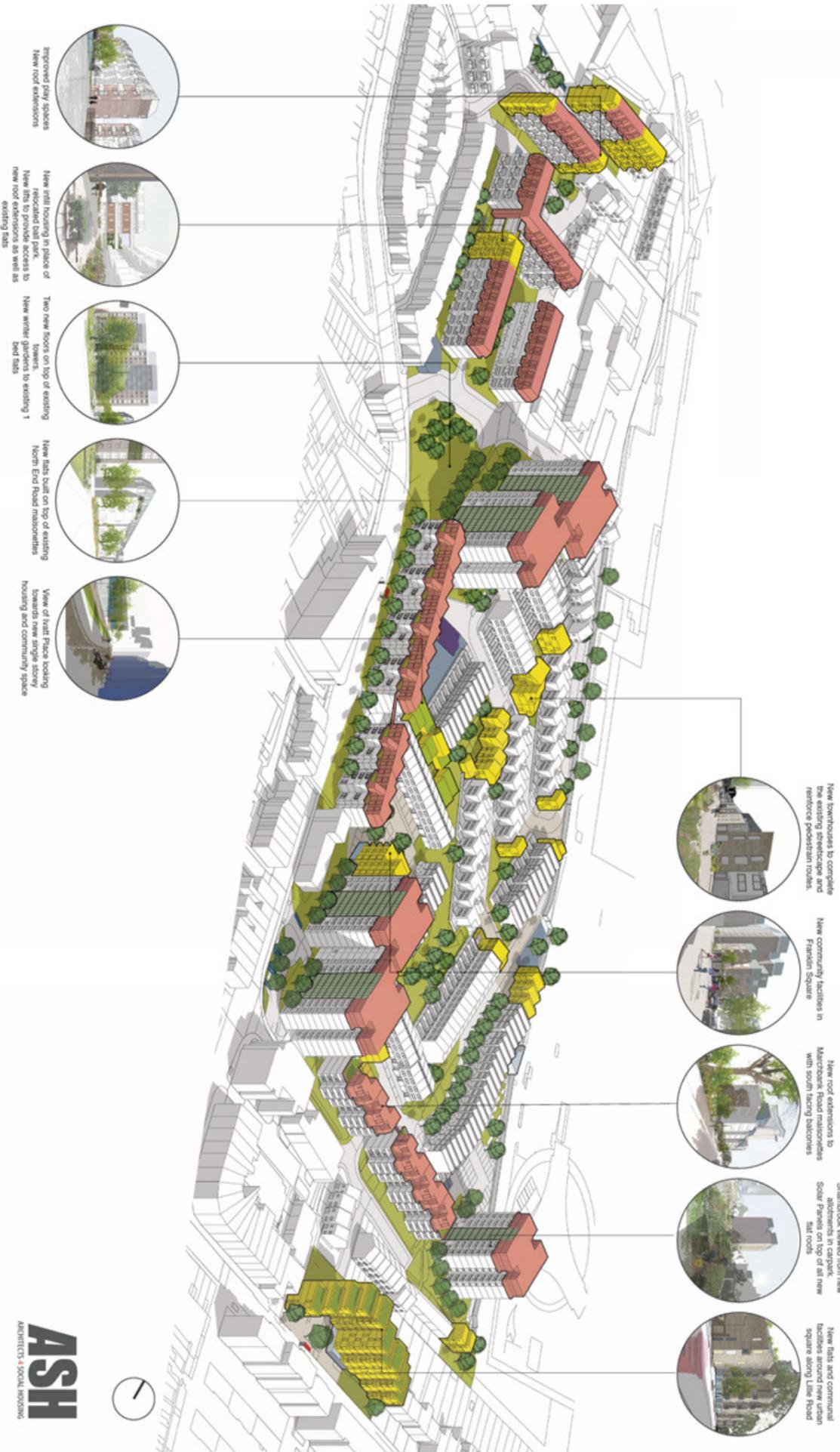
model showing the possible improvements new homes to the two estates.

Figure 76: Physical 3D model showing the proposed improvements and additional homes at both estates. Available on the People's Plan of West Kensington & Gibbs Green.

As an overall view of WKGG People's Plan, it shows the importance of launching a bottom-up project giving voice to the residents, which generated enthusiasm among the households for giving proposals that could be transformed into new homes and improvements without eviction, displacement, or any loss of their homes.

In this way, some residents took the front of the organization of workshops and presentations because they got motivated to be part of the decision-making process of their place. Therefore, even if the People's Plan needs to be further detailed to be built, the final report was considered deliverable with a prevision of achievement within 5 years to start its implementation, as indicated on the WKGG People's Plan document.

Thus, this case study shows the benefit of combining formal and



- Improved play spaces  
New roof extensions
- New retail housing in place of  
New flats to provide access to  
new roof extensions as well as  
existing flats
- Two new floors on top of existing  
New winter gardens to existing 1  
bed flats
- New flats built on top of existing  
North End Road maisonettes
- View of flat facing looking  
towards new single storey  
housing and community space

- New townhouses to complete  
the new development and  
improve pedestrian routes.
- New community facilities in  
Frasin Square
- New roof extensions to  
Marston Street maisonettes  
with south facing balconies
- Subterranean walkway from new  
access to car park, and  
access to all new  
flat roofs
- New flats and communal  
square along Linn Road

informal tools to prevent council tenants' displacement, proposing a resident-led project following the requirements imposed by the state. When analyzing the proposals presented in WKGG People's Plan, it is possible to state that this is a great example of an alternative to a top-down regeneration, once the impacts of the land's revitalization on the locals' life are minimized due to their participation in the discussion of the plan.

To conclude, the three case studies are relevant to answer the research question that is investigated in this thesis. However, each case study demonstrates a particular way to face the issue of housing struggles and the council's estate threat of demolition presented, which will be better explored in the following subsection.

**Place:** Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

**Council Estate:** West Kensington and Gibbs Green (WKKG)

**Date:** 12th November 2016

To elaborate the People's Plan three main stages are needed, including: **1)** gathering information through site visits and door-to-door surveys, **2)** testing ideas in a co-design process, and **3)** presenting a draft of strategies to set up a proposal in a public consultation.

Therefore, to start the elaboration of the community-led regeneration plan, after getting information and data, the WKKGC launched an invitation for their 1st co-design workshop in order to sketch initial ideas in a participatory approach.

The invitation was sent by mail, social media, or over the phone, containing the information regarding the event to define the People's Plan in a collective approach. The 1st meeting intended to draw up and test ideas presented by the residents based on the walking tour observations and all information collected during the initial phase of the Plan.

In this way, the analysis of the existing areas combined with the community's discussion generated proposals that later were transformed into the main goals of the People's Plan and its further policies. To sum up, after different phases of the project, the People's Plan proposed:

- **Improvements and refurbishments at the existing homes and communal areas;**
- **New and improved community facilities;**
- **A new housing office on the estates;**
- **Environmental and landscape improvements;**

SOURCES: <https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/images/>  
<https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/the-peoples-plan/>  
<https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/about/>  
<https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/peoples-plan-architects-report-revised-final.pdf>



West Ken Gibbs Green Community Homes (WKKGC) is inviting you to help create The People's Plan, made by and for the residents. Join us for this series of design workshops and events, launching on Thursday 12th November at the Gibbs Green Tenants Hall.

## Launch Event

Thursday 12th November:  
**The People's Plan**  
 6.45pm – 8.30pm  
 Gibbs Green Tenants Hall



**The People's Plan**  
 Save your home  
 Improvements  
 Better  
 Additional  
 New  
 Improved  
 Have your say  
 to your homes  
 communal areas  
 homes for overcrowded families  
 communal facilities  
 play spaces and green areas

Wednesday 18th November: Walking Tour  
 Gibbs Green, Aisgill Avenue, Ivatt Place and Fairburn House  
 6.30pm-8pm, leaving from the corner of Mund Street and North End Road

Thursday 19th November: Walking Tour  
 West Kensington estate  
 6.30pm-8pm, leaving from the entrance to Lidkey and Desborough House

Tuesday 24th November: Design Workshop  
 Improvements to existing buildings and the environment  
 6.30pm – 8.30pm at Gibbs Green Tenants Hall

Tuesday 1st December: Design Workshop  
 Building additional homes on the estates  
 6.30pm – 8.30pm at West Kensington Community Hall

Tuesday 15th December: Update on Progress  
 7pm – 9pm - Mince pies and mulled wine at Gibbs Green Tenants Hall



To find out more, or share your ideas if you are unable to attend, please contact our Housing Organiser Zoe on 07754701036 or on [zoe.wkkgch@gmail.com](mailto:zoe.wkkgch@gmail.com). You can also read about the campaign on our webpage: [www.westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com](http://www.westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com)



**No to Demolition! Yes to Community Control!**

Community's invitation to elaborate the People's Plan.



The 1st community gathering to discuss the People's Plan.



The resident-led design process on 12 November 2015.

**Place:** Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

**Council Estate:** West Kensington and Gibbs Green (WKKG)

**Date:** August 2016

After a dedicated period working on the People's Plan, in August 2016 the community organization for the 1st time launched the People's Plan as a paper-based document. As a result, the residents reacted positively, expressing their opinion in favor of taking the resident-led regeneration plan rather than the state-led alternative.

However, the community's fight didn't stop on preventing demolition and making proposals via the People's Plan. **So, what comes after the People's Plan?**

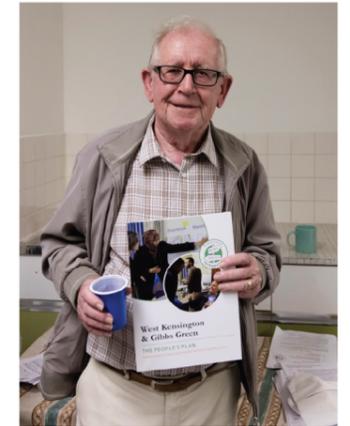
The residents kept campaigning to receive support and spread their plan other than the top-down solution. Further, the community asked for support from the UCL Bartlett School of Planning to prevent the Earl's Court demolition, by developing a masterplan designed by students.

Later on, the WKKG organization received a letter from the Hammersmith and Fulham Councillor declaring that the estate could return to council control, which changed everything. Then, the community started discussing the elaboration of a draft of the Neighborhood Plan.

The Neighborhood Plan draft was delivered in June 2021 and it proposes policies and priorities to improve the quality of neighborhood life. Therefore, the policy recommendations were defined via a wide consultation and engagement process respecting the vision set out in the Hammersmith and Fulham Plan and the National Planning and Policy Framework.

To sum up, after 11 years facing the threat of demolition, the WKKG community finally achieved control of their area. Their NP draft demonstrates a great solution for the issue, combining the resident-led and state-led regeneration strategies.

SOURCES: <https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/images/>  
<https://westkengibbsgreen.wordpress.com/neighborhood-plan-2021/>



4 October 2016: Residents' reaction to the People's Plan.



29 April 2017: Residents at the North End Road Market.



17 June 2017: People's Plan which presented by UCL.



18 May 2017: UCL exhibition of students' alternative plan.

## 5. Final remarks

### 5.1. Discussion

As indicated in the introduction, this work emerged based on previous research in which I investigated the Olympics' flagship regeneration in Rio de Janeiro and its impacts on displacing entire communities as well as the alternative of converting abandoned real estate in the city center, as a mitigation to consequences of top-down regeneration practices. Then, in this current work I decided to continue in the same field of research but, at this time, focusing on the origins of gentrification practices caused by state-led regeneration strategies.

In this way, a variety of definitions for urban regeneration were presented in the introduction, which led this work to concentrate on the definition of urban regeneration applied as a strategy, combined with liberal urban policies, such as claimed by Smith (2002), Jonas, McCann, and Thomas (2015), as well as Coletta and Acierno (2017). In addition, previously, it was also mentioned that even though UN-Habitat pointed out that urban regeneration could address the issue of urban decay through the improvement of underutilized areas, it could also enforce the problem of gentrification and privatization of public spaces, excluding and displacing residents.

For that reason, the British case was selected to answer the research question of this work, once the planning tools at a Local Level aim to include local communities in the decision-making process of regeneration. However, London is facing a huge pressure of rental prices caused by flagship regeneration practices. Therefore, the three case studies selected to be analyzed in this research are placed in London, seeking to answer the research question: which are the alternatives to state-led regeneration?

In the first case, the Greater Carpenters (subsection 3.4.1), a campaign against the demolition of the Carpenters estate combined with resident-led Neighborhood Plan policies — developed via an analysis of the existing areas plus the recognition of tenants' needs — are investigated.

The Greater Carpenters case highlights the problems associated with the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) acting as their planning authority, rather than the borough of Newham. As the LLDC managed the land instead of the local community, residents were threat-

source: focus E15 website



ened with eviction and the demolition of their estate to be replaced by a new University College London campus (Sendra and Fitzpatrick, 2020).

Furthermore, the LLDC's role as the planning authority inhibited the London Borough of Newham from establishing its own Neighborhood Forum and Neighborhood Area. This arrangement favored private market interests over the needs of the community. Nevertheless, the threat of demolition pushed residents to self-organize, leading to the development of a co-designed community plan (Parker, 2017 & Bragaglia 2022) and a campaign (Sendra and Fitzpatrick, 2020) opposing the regeneration plans imposed by local authorities

Thus, the community-led plan evolved into a bottom-up alternative to the Newham Council's proposal for demolishing and redeveloping Carpenters Estate (Bragaglia, 2022). This case study exemplifies effective resident engagement in decision-making and self-organization, showcasing the potential of developing an informal plan before a formal Neighborhood Plan. This case study works as a model for other community associations, seeking to influence urban regeneration processes.

The second case, Focus E15 (subsection 3.4.2), illustrates a group of women actively opposing their eviction from temporary accommodation in Newham. This case highlights their organized efforts to prevent residents from being displaced to private accommodations outside London and to resist the demolition of social housing units. This campaign is distinctive because it represents a case where activists advocate not only for their cause, but also support other causes and community organizations (Sendra and Fitzpatrick, 2020).

The Focus E15 campaign has emerged as a powerful and effective example of activism. Their efforts against social cleansing included setting up community stalls and staging political occupations to expose the abandonment of council homes (Jacobs, 1992 & Rolnik, 2009), denouncing a rising demand for social housing in the borough at the same time.

Therefore, it proves that a strong campaign (Sendra and Fitzpatrick, 2020) to face the issue of housing struggles not only regarding one single council estate but also asking for support and defending the case of many other council houses could call the attention of the media and win the imposed regeneration strategies of local authorities. Then this case shows that a well-organized campaign is a good example of addressing the same problem also in other contexts.

In the third case, the West Kensington and Gibbs Green Community Homes (subsection 3.4.3) demonstrate two council estates located in the

boroughs of Hammersmith and Fulham, and Kensington and Chelsea. This study case highlights a situation where both estates are part of a large private development project led by Capital and Counties Properties (Capco).

In that case, the threat of residents' displacement or council demolition contributed to the tenant's campaign against the council's plan to sell the land for urban redevelopment. After years of campaigning, the council gave up selling the land and taking the estate's control.

The collective ownership of the land worked as an opportunity to give control of the homes to their residents, allowing them to propose a resident-led regeneration plan. In this case, the People's Plan proposed to build new homes without demolishing any part of the existing estates, succeeding in stopping the land transfer to the private market and its demolition (Rolnik, 2009).

The combination of formal and informal tools worked the best to keep the community on their land and to request estate refurbishment other than demolition (Lees, 2014). The third case shows that these alternatives benefit their residents and improve their quality of life through integration between following formal planning requirements to the council estate refurbishment plus responding to the resident's wishes by including them in making decisions on the regeneration project via participatory methods (Parker, 2017 & Bragaglia, 2022).

A comparative analysis of the case studies reveals that in each example demonstrated, the threat of displacement and eviction catalyzes tenant mobilization and organization against the impacts of top-down regeneration. According to Sendra and Fitzpatrick (2020), mobilization typically starts with informal actions, such as grassroots campaigns, which later result in achieving formal responses from local authorities through planning tools.

Therefore, the selected case studies address the research question in diverse ways, illustrating that multiple alternatives to top-down urban regeneration can be used. These alternatives provide viable solutions that avoid the eviction and displacement of tenants to suburban areas, ensuring they remain in central places.

The case studies demonstrate that various methods can be applied either individually or in combination to regenerate areas experiencing urban decay. This approach effectively mitigates the risk of gentrification and preserves the social structure of entire communities, once it combines campaigns with a co-production process (Parker, 2017 & Bragaglia, 2022).

## 5.2. Conclusion

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Studying the impacts of urban regeneration caused by mega-events, revealed a multifaceted concept according to the literature. This research has shown that urban regeneration could be defined differently based on which actors and power levels are involved in their negotiation context.

As indicated in the introduction, urban regeneration could be defined as: a strategy (Coletta and Acierno, 2017; and World Bank Definition), a policy (Raco, 2009; and European Union Definition) as well as a discourse (Watt and Smets, 2017). Lees (2014) claims that community organizations see urban regeneration as a strategy sold by the government to justify gentrification, displacement, and demolitions.

In the British case, urban regeneration normally happens as state-led planning (Brenner, 2002; Smith, 2002; Shaw 2008; Parker, Street, and Wargent, 2018; and Lindner and Sandoval, 2021). To understand the thesis phenomena of this research, the urban regeneration definition adopted in this work was the one stated by Jonas, McCan, and Thomas (2015), which affirms that it is a state-led strategy to redevelop established neighborhoods considered unhealthy by the government, transforming them into attractive places for investment.

Interpreting the literature, Jacobs (1992) claims that urban renewal contributes to increasing social issues, once old buildings are replaced by new dwellings with lower densities. Then, when urban regeneration is defined as a policy consensus, Smet and Watt (2017) state that it is being transformed into an international discourse in the US, the UK, and Australia, associating neighborhood decline with public housing devaluation and proposing demolition and social cleansing as a solution; defined by Colomb (2007) as an Urban Renaissance phenomenon.

Therefore, urban regeneration normally has been used as a top-down strategy, in which local governments via new policy agendas practice gentrification in the context of neoliberalism. Despite being framed within a policy agenda, Harvey (2003) characterizes urban regeneration as a state-led strategy that can have negative spatial effects on landscapes and the social structures of neighborhoods. This view aligns with recent trends where urban regeneration has been associated with gentrification, combining public-private partnerships (Smith, 2002) and es-

tate regeneration to enhance the value of a place and attract investments (Zukin, 1991).

The inclusion of public-private partnerships related to urban planning (Smith, 2002) contributed to increased gentrification-induced displacement (Marcuse, 1986) and symptoms of gentrification anxiety (Marcuse 1986) in local communities, raising the constant feeling of eviction threat. For that reason, state-led regeneration is becoming an important topic to be addressed by planners and policymakers (Harvey, 2003).

Thus, this work was centrally focused on the research question “what are the alternatives to state-led regeneration?”. It aims to demonstrate the positive aspects of combining state-led and community-led planning to respond to top-down regeneration processes.

The UN-Habitat enforced the importance of public participation in decision-making planning practices in the context of urban policy agendas, since population displacement is becoming a massive global problem. As demonstrated before, Rolnik (2009) highlighted the impacts of mega-events on vulnerable populations during the preparation of the games’ infrastructure.

Additionally, it is possible to affirm that mega-events have been used as a development strategy combining Flagship Regeneration (Raco, 2014) with real estate investment. In the London case, the UK was the first country to include citizen participation in spatial governance decision-making, giving legislative powers to local citizens (Bragaglia, 2022) via a co-production process (Parker, 2017).

However, even in a community-led process, most of the groups need the support of a consultant (Bragaglia, 2022). In the case of the 2012 London Olympics, the construction of Queen Elisabeth Park reinforced the council estate demolition and social cleansing practices in the host city (Rolnik, 2009) due to the great demand for space to construct sports facilities. The case of QEOP had a great impact not only on the surrounding area but also on the whole city of London, once planning regulations changed to accommodate the games’ infrastructures.

Therefore, the analysis of the three study cases (Greater

Carpenters, Focus E15, and West Kensington and Gibbs Green Communities) selected for this research demonstrates that there is not a unique alternative other than state-led regeneration, but a combination of a variety of strategies that perform better than a top-down regeneration practice. Answering the research question, the three study cases proved that combining state-led and community-led alternatives contributes to improving local life through citizens' participation in decision-making rather than displacing entire communities.

To sum up, this research revealed that a balance between involved actors' powers brings more effective results since it could attend to the demands of mega-events — by regenerating decadent areas through opening spaces to games' facilities — but also achieving benefits to local communities. In conclusion, as a future overview to provide possible trajectories to continue to investigate this topic, as policymakers and planners we have an essential role in supporting local communities and citizens during co-production processes in contexts of flagship regeneration. Instead of imposing projects together with the authorities, we might defend the interests of the users of the place, working as a pivotal actor for a bottom-up approach.



source: focus E15 website

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