Grateful thanks

Hands off Glebe, publishers of the Glebe Grapevine, are really grateful to three tenants in Mitchell Street. They heard we needed money to get this issue printed. To say thanks for the help we gave them with maintenance problems, they clubbed together and donated $60. We are really touched by their gesture. Many thanks.

Thanks for community action on Cowper Street

The Glebe Grapevine has circulated a protest letter about the selloff of public land at the Cowper Street development. In a great response about 200 letters have been signed and sent to the Minister and no doubt more were sent in without our knowledge. Contact us if you would like some copies to sign and send in.

We have also had a good response to a protest letter about traffic flows on the Glebe Estate. The danger is that traffic from Bay Street and the new development on Cowper will greatly increase traffic within the Glebe estate. We are contacting nearby residents to gauge opinion about this. Sign our petition when we call if you are concerned.

Time to Rethink Housing

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Once a large enough stock of rental only housing of this type is created it would be largely self funding with governments co-ordinating the raising of finance with guarantees to lenders and providing administration directly or through co-operatives and making sure social housing supply kept up with demand. We’ll post more detail on our website about our model soon.

Glebe Grapevine Appeal

The Glebe Grapevine reports on development in Glebe, advocates for public housing, supports the heritage and village character of Glebe … and much more. It is your local newsletter and it needs your help. It costs us $500 to print 5,000 copies every second month.

We need your donations to make sure we can pay the printing costs. Please send your cheque or money order to P.O. Box 145, Glebe NSW 2037 or make a direct transfer to Bank: G & C Mutual Bank. BSB: 659-000. Account number: 755116. Account name: Hands off Glebe - Grapevine

THANKYOU

Authorised by Denis Doherty P.O. Box 145, Glebe NSW 2037

Privatising Public Housing

Around 460 Ivanhoe public housing residents at Macquarie Park are devastated at the news that they will be moved out to make way for 2,500 apartments in blocks up to 120 metres high on the site.

The plan for a new high rise, high density estate is very similar to the plans we have been fighting for the Cowper Street estate. Ivanhoe Estate Tenant Group Secretary Marie Sillars said it is unlikely the residents will return and the “community will be finished. It is a beautiful community here and we’re all very sad.”

Social Housing Minister Brad Hazzard says the private sector will be engaged to develop the site into a mix of social, affordable and private housing. This is effectively privatising public housing.

This is the State Government’s policy for social housing: sell off more public assets, demolish public housing and hand estates over for redevelopment to the private sector. Communities will be destroyed but private developers will make large profits.

The Glebe Grapevine is a publication of Hands Off Glebe Inc.
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Unelected Bureaucrats
Given Sydney Planning Power

A bunch of unelected technocrats whose jobs don’t depend on your vote could soon decide alter the face of Glebe and other Sydney suburbs. Planning rules for could be radically changed by people who just don’t care what you think.

NSW Planning Minister Rob Stokes has announced a new planning body that will carve metropolitan Sydney into six districts. Called the Greater Sydney Commission (GSC), its 13 appointees, including the heads of Treasury, Transport and Planning, will “streamline” the delivery of major government infrastructure, particularly projects such as the WestConnex which extends across multiple council areas. "Our model seeks to depoliticise planning decisions by having a board that does not need to seek re-election," Mr Stokes said. So much for democracy! Each of the six districts will be represented by a commissioner chosen by local councils but elected mayors, councillors and MPs will not be eligible. The other seven will be appointed by the State government.

There is a need to co-ordinate future growth but not by 13 people totally unaccountable to the millions of residents whose suburbs will be in the GSC’s sights. These unelected members of the GSC can make major decisions that override the wishes of elected local councils.

Not surprisingly, the big end of town, represented by the Property Council and the Sydney Business Chamber, has welcomed the new commission.

Time to Rethink Housing

We all know about the shortage of affordable housing. A wealthy society like ours must provide adequate housing for all. Renters are mainly on average incomes and from younger and lower incomes groups andrenting in the private sector is both unaffordable and insecure. The tax system and government incentives hugely favour home ownership. These measures are inequitable and have not resulted in adequate housing supply.

We propose a new model for housing. Governments must increase the stock of rental housing with security of tenure for renters.

With a large enough stock of rental properties administered by housing cooperatives or government, revenue from those who can afford market rent can help subsidise renters on lower incomes.

Hands off Glebe chalks up successes

Hands off Glebe and Glebe Estate tenants have combined to act on long standing maintenance issues. We have had good results for tenants in Phillips, Mitchell and Catherine Streets and Wentworth Park Road.

We sometimes expand our reach. For example, with a water leak we write to Sydney Water and the relevant Minister. We even contacted the Ombudsman once!

Usually, a tenant approaches us and Denis Doherty from HoG then visits the house in question to list of the repairs needed. This is then sent with a letter to the Minister, local MP Jamie Parker, and the Land and Housing Assets Manager.

In early August, Hands off Glebe met the Regional Asset Director - South East Region from the NSW Land & Housing Corporation (LAHC). At that time we agreed that we would send any complaints directly to him and that he had two weeks for some action. If nothing had been done by that deadline, Hands off Glebe would send the complaint to the Minister and the MP again.

Following our maintenance complaints, the following steps have been taken (A fuller report is on our website):

- 2 Derwent Street – a sewer choke caused by tree roots has been cleared.
- A longstanding stormwater leak at 105 Glebe Street/ 67 Mitchell Street. Currently Housing and Council are consulting to resolve the issue. We will stay on the case until it’s fixed.
- Franklyn Street, Units 25-28 common area – Peter Wright from Hands off Glebe sent photos to Housing of damage including wall and pavement damage, and water damage in common areas. Repair work is proceeding and the target date for completion is 30 September.
- Derwent Street – work initiated by resident Adam Bower to respond to vegetation management continuing; to be completed by 30 November 2015.
- Joanna O’Dea complex in Camperdown – paint peeling in a common area laundry and exhaust fan broken. Resident Michael Reeves reports these as now fixed. Michael has been an advocate for his fellow tenants at Joanna O’Dea.

We believe that no Glebe tenants should be driven out of their homes by poor maintenance.

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