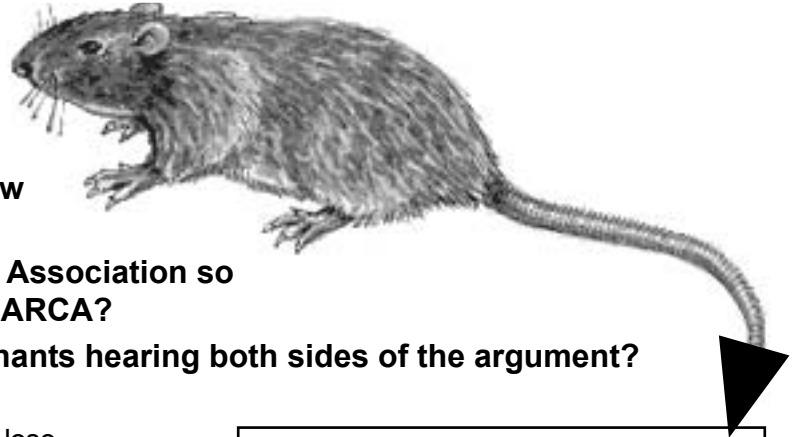


# NO sell offs Hands Off Our Homes



## Can you smell a rat?



We need all the facts and both sides of the argument before we vote on transfer to a new landlord.

- Why are the Council and Leopold Tenants Association so determined to push through the sell-off to HARCA?
- Why are they so determined to prevent tenants hearing both sides of the argument?

Tenants in the 166 flats to be demolished have a lot to lose.  
**What exactly has your household been promised?**

There are no guarantees of who will get moved into new houses on the estate - or if you will have to move out altogether. Families will be split up, and moved to smaller flats if kids have left home. You lose your secure and accountable council rights - and anyone needing a transfer or new tenancy can be offered an assured shorthold tenancy - a six month let like in private bedsits.

It is outrageous that some parts of the estate have been neglected and treated so badly. **The Council has a legal duty to do repairs**, and they have the money to do it - we need to make them get on with it. There is an alternative: **use the £20 million Tower Hamlets council can spend from right to buy receipts to sort out Ackroyd and Shelmardine.**

For the rest of the estate tenants need repairs and improvements - but why should we give up our security and accountable landlord to get our rights?

HARCA need to bring in more money by taking over more estates. They get money from tenants, leaseholders or by taking our land to build luxury private houses for sale.

They promise the moon, but they will break promises to suit their balance sheets - because they are a private-sector landlord.

Joining other tenants across Britain to vote NO and demand direct investment in council housing is a better deal. 3 million council tenants around the country are fighting for direct investment in council housing as an alternative to privatisation.

Our campaign is putting the government under increasing pressure to concede direct investment in council housing. Deputy prime minister John Prescott said in September: 'Public financing of housing doesn't treat local authorities on a level playing field and I want to see that changed'.

Now tenants reps, councillors, trade union leaders and MPs are joining together to demand the Deputy Prime Minister keeps his promise.

It's a better bet than privatisation. Don't be bullied into letting Tower Hamlets Council and HARCA privatise more homes.

### Meeting

#### **HOUSING CHOICE - SMELL A RAT 7pm Wednesday 24th November**

The council and HARCA are trying to stop tenants discussing all the issues.

They won't let us hold a meeting in the Tenants Hall or St Pauls Way School. Ask yourself why?

They want tenants to vote by mobile phone on the doorstep - in front of Steering Group members.

This isn't democracy - it's an outrage!

We will get another venue - watch out for posters and come along to have a proper discussion and hear what you have got to lose.

## **Stop the blackmail Stop the bullying Suspend the ballot**

**Dadaka gurayaha degani waxay  
doonay doorasha dhaba ah  
Faraha ha nalooga qaado  
gurayahayaga**

টেনেন্টদের দাবী

বন্ধ করো বাড়ি বিক্রি

# What privatisation means to YOU



**VOTE NO -  
IT'S A BAD DEAL**

**The council DOES have enough money to improve Leopold and Burdett.**

**There is a £13 million surplus in the Council Housing Revenue Account, £18.7 million surplus for major repairs, and £20 million from leaseholders' right to buy receipts this year alone.**

**All this could be used now.**

## **Empty Promies - read the small print**

The offer is a disgrace. They want to demolish blocks but they don't say how many new homes they will build - or when. How many private luxury flats will they build for sale? They don't tell us.

On improvements the small print is full of get-out clauses about work done 'where possible', 'where appropriate', 'if/where necessary'. These are empty promises.

Plans 'are subject to any changes which may be necessary' (p23). Will people from Ackroyd and Shelmerdine be crammed into more Tower Blocks?

They don't even guarantee new homes will be built before your existing one is demolished (see 4.2 p26).

## **Breaking up families**

HARCA are already dictating they will not re-house families to include grandchildren, parents, brothers and sisters. How dare they dictate who we live with and care for?

## **1 Loss of security**

Council tenants have a 'security of tenure' - HARCA enforce an 'assured' tenancy. This takes away your rights and security. HARAC claim they will not use their legal right to automatic court order for possession without a court hearing, but this is a flimsy paper promise they can go back on. New tenants will get assured shorthold tenancies - which makes it easier to evict.

**FACT: Evictions by RSLs have risen by 36 percent. 16.5% of RSL evictions involved use of automatic powers under controversial 'Ground 8' (which cannot be used against council tenants).**

## **2 Banks & business in control**

HARCA is legally a private-sector landlord. They will depend directly on banks (the council gets money through the Public Works Loan Board). They will run as a business and pay higher interest rates and other costs.

**FACT: Tenants are a powerless minority on the HARCA board, appointed not elected, and legally bound to represent the company's interests, not other tenants.**

## **3 Higher rents and charges**

Rent guarantees are for 5 years only - with no guarantees for new or rehouses tenants. Service charges are on top. And improvements mean they can push up rents and charges further. Leaseholders face huge bills, according to housing charity Shelter.

**FACT: RSL rents are 17 percent higher than council rents - and the gap is growing.**

## **4 Promises, promises**

Nothing is guaranteed. Many promises are broken: After transfer most tenants are not satisfied, and say repairs are worse (House of Commons Public Account Committee report on Stock Transfer).