



**Friends of Queen's Market** started out over 5 years ago after Newham Council and their "preferred" developers St. Modwen Properties decided to introduce Asda- Walmart into the 110 year old, covered traditional street market, Queens Market (on Green Street, next to the Upton Park underground). The plan was to cut down the market to less than half its size and give the Asda pride of place and to surround the market with tower blocks full of luxury apartments and chain stores.

Despite the feeling from Council representatives and the developers that Asda-Walmart would be beneficial to the area, the Friends of Queen's Market were able to prove this was not the case.

The local outrage was immense and the development was seen to have serious negative implications to what has been called "London's most ethnically diverse" street markets (NEF Report, 2006). So Asda pulled out in summer 2006 after a record 12,000 signed petition was handed to the Greater London Authority- a victory for the local community!

But Newham Council then leased the public market land to St. Modwen, washing their hands of what they saw as a troublesome, non-gentrified place. Now a detailed planning application has been submitted by St. Modwen Properties to the local planning department, despite over 2500 individual objection letters against the proposals.

We have found local people to be most worried about their access to variety of cheap, affordable, culturally appropriate food and clothes in a borough which

experiences high levels of poverty, in a time of financial hardship. The lack of affordable social housing on the scheme (only 27 out of 350) and high-rise flats of 18 storey and 31 storey high is also unsuitable in an area of predominately 2 and 3 floor Victorian and Georgian family homes.

**The loss of street character and community-interaction space will seriously affect the local community's confidence and would turn "the successful Queens Market into a developer- sponsored corporate shell"**

(Andrew Gilligan, Evening Standard, 23.10.2008)

Recently the developers plans have been criticised by the Commission of Architecture and Built Environment as having an "undesirable fortress like appearance" and say the market itself "has not been celebrated enough in the form of architectural expression". The Commission's expert panel have found the tower blocks were "bulky and overbearing" and expected "more ambitious sustainable targets" (CABE Report, 15.09.2008).

Locally we have managed to add pressure most effectively by keeping our ear to the ground through listening to the thousands of people who will be adversely affected by the plans and who have simply been ignored, be it because of a language barrier or for being left out of the future of the historic street market.

Friends of Queen's Market have found this to be a serious failing in the Council and developers approach by not bringing people into the decision-making process, through consultation and active participation.

This democratic injustice has brought with it a strong national media presence as people from around the country are similarly seeing how developers, under a guise of regeneration are able to snatch local land with contempt for local people and incompetence at their local authority level.

Below is a list of things you can do to help the Friends of Queen's Market and ensure the survival of Queen's Market.

## One of the below should take you 1 MINUTE:

- Keep friends and neighbours updated on the Queen's Market issue.
- Look at our website and tell your friends about it: [www.friendsofqueensmarket.org.uk](http://www.friendsofqueensmarket.org.uk). You can make a written objection to the developer's plans through it.
- Find out about local people affected by the plans and ask for their details.
- Maybe you know someone who wants to set up a stall at the market?
- Shop more regularly at the market.
- Speak with the traders to find out how they are doing. They would appreciate it.
- Make a donation towards printing or materials costs for leaflets, banners etc.
- Put up a poster on your window or public notice board.

## One of the below should take you 1 HOUR:

- Join us at a campaign stall at the market. We will let you know on the dates.
- Attend our supports' meetings with friends (monthly)
- Distribute leaflets to homes and businesses.
- Write letters to people you think might be interested like a national newspaper, Member of Parliament, your favourite TV/ radio station, a community group or celebrity.
- Under Freedom of Information Act you can also ask the Council and public bodies to send you information on any issue concerning the market.
- Translate in a different language. You can translate leaflets or person-to-person at a stall.
- Draw or design a leaflet or poster.
- Do interviews. If you're a confident person you might want to speak with the local and national media.

**Friends of Queen's Market are a non- political community group and rely on volunteers help. We welcome input from all sections of London's communities our aim is for Queen's Market to remain under local community control and to ensure it's long-term future.**

For further information see our website:  
[www.friendsofqueensmarket.org.uk](http://www.friendsofqueensmarket.org.uk)

Thanks for reading and keep in touch,

Saif Osmani

On behalf of Friends of Queen's Market

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## Need more than advice?

LONDON COALITION AGAINST POVERTY is a coalition of local community activists and individuals working in advice.

We believe that by coming together to combine advice work with direct action within our communities, we can access the rights that we are often denied. These rights are not enough, but at least they're a start.

If you want to get involved or think we can help you access your rights, contact us on

tel: 020 7247 6101

[londoncoalitionagainstopoverty@gmail.com](mailto:londoncoalitionagainstopoverty@gmail.com)

## Letters Column

Just to say I do support your cause. However, your leaflet was delivered to me at home in Mile End the very day of 25 September so by the time I got in, I had missed the deadline, and then had to go away.

I am a real East Ender - an educated one, dare I say, born in St Andrews which has just got knocked down, educated at St Agnes in Bow and St Victoire's Convent Grammar School! Sounds very snobbish but there is a perception about East Enders. I used to use that library a lot when I was at school, and more so Mayfield House as I am a professional singer. They chopped that one to pieces as well in a philistine way and sent the music scores and God knows what all over the Borough. They also lost a recital room for concerts.

If this were in any other part of London, ie Kensington and Chelsea, there would be an uproar by middle class people, rather than something that came through my door on the deadline date. I appreciate you must be hard pushed to get these out to people but at least if you can get this now, it's probably better late than never.

I agree with all you say but remember East London is not Working Class any more. There are many professional people who live around the place in Bow, Mile End and Stepney who would rather not be associated with any kind of class or tribe! Alas this will come out in the byelection in November. Labour will get in again, but I won't be voting for them as local government.

Good luck with your endeavours.  
'U'

### Editors Response

We don't see the working class in a tribal manner. We think that anyone who has to get up on Monday morning to pay the bills is working class. It's just that some workers are richer than others and use their money to displace less advantaged workers in places like the Docklands, Shoredich and now Stratford. A good example is my sister who grew up on a housing estate but now lives in an area where council estate tenants are being displaced by young professionals like her. She struggles to pay her mortgage so I still see her as working class.

## Campaigners Save Library, A Working Class Victory

East London's working class has moved one step closer to taking control of their community after defeating Tower Hamlets council's opportunistic bid to flog Bancroft Library.

The historic record and archive library, open to all, was saved by a coalition of no fewer than 35 east London local groups, including the Ocean Estate Tenants and Leaseholders Association and East of London Family History Society.

The Library was due to be sold to Queen Mary University of London. If the sale proceeded as planned, the historic working class library would have been converted in to a post-graduate research centre. Queen Mary University would have had the 'choice cut' of the archive, with the rest being reunited at some arbitrary point in the future in an undetermined venue; in other words, not gonna happen!

Bancroft Library has played a pivotal role in recording the extraordinary history of east London. The local history library holds over 20,000 printed books and pamphlets dating from the 17th century to the present day. Recording the resistance of working people against feudal lords and even royalty, the library holds records on the peasant revolt 'lead' by Wat Tyler in 1381 ending at east London's Mile End, accounts of the birth of the industrial working class and events leading to the 1936 battle of Cable Street, when local working class folk defeated Oswald Mosley's attempt to lead fascists in a march through what was then a largely Jewish working class Whitechapel.

**The campaign is now pushing to establish the Tower Hamlets Local History Centre, which must be planned in partnership with the borough's local history librarian and the borough's archivist, the borough's primary and secondary schools and Tower Hamlets College, historians and geographers, local residents and others.**

**To find out more please visit the campaigns website:**

**[www.savebancroftlibrary.org.uk](http://www.savebancroftlibrary.org.uk)**

## Penthouse Suites for the Rich

Barratt's Homes is currently promoting a major development on the site of St. Andrews Hospital by Bromley-by-Bow station. The glossy brochure that came through local residents letter boxes, made it seem that all the housing would be within the reach of locals and would provide a number of community services. A closer look reveals that the developer is hoping to build two large tower blocks, one which is 27 stories. What is advertised as an affordable development is highly suspect.

The result of the worry over falling house prices as well as the general motivation to make as much money as possible has led to the proliferation of tower blocks. It is clear by looking at the adverts on property developers' websites that the target buyer for these is not your average wage-earner in the local community. The Olympics has made the East End a magnet for developers and is likely to remain so despite the fall in house prices. According to the Daily Telegraph (Sept 2007): **'The countdown has begun for the 2012 Olympic games and with less than five years to go, London's East End is already feeling the buzz, with investors flocking to locations around the Olympic Park and its huge regeneration area.'** They highlighted all of the new developments in the boroughs around the Olympic site and 'who is buying, who is renting'. In the section on Tower Hamlets, the St. Andrews development gets a mention. 'Buyers' and renters', according to the Daily Telegraph, will be: **'The highly-paid, transient workforce of Canary Wharf on the doorstep provides a ready rental market for both seasoned investors and newcomers in search of a bargain'**.



**The future of Stratford?**

Local residents have nothing to gain from such developments. The council is allowing these projects to go ahead. It seems that it is not regeneration but gentrification that is the goal of the council, maybe hoping to get a 'higher class' of resident that can pay more council tax! Register your objection to the tower blocks at St. Andrew's and express your demands for truly affordable housing, including social housing, that is in keeping with the character of the area.



We at **Action East End** want to see an alternative, one based on a genuine sense of community and solidarity.

Action East End is a local group based in East London that wants to contribute to the resistance, both defending ourselves in our communities and workplaces, but ultimately helping co-ordinate activities to improve our quality of life. This we believe can only be done through our own initiatives, outside the agenda of the local authorities or political groups, and by taking collective action for ourselves.

This is no flight of fancy but the basis from which radical change springs, and we would urge others to join us or get in touch at:

**Send an email to: [actioneastend@googlemail.com](mailto:actioneastend@googlemail.com)**

**Or call: 07961296737**