

Assemblages for community-led social housing regeneration: Activism, Big Society and localism

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Abstract

This paper connects two debates previously featured in *City*: “Assemblage and Critical Urban Praxis” and “London’s Housing Crisis and its Activism”. The paper uses assemblage thinking to explore how community organisations and campaigns use a combination of different tools, which engage with the planning system and other actions or strategies outside planning, to resist council estate demolition and propose alternative community-led plans incorporating the needs and wishes of the residents. The paper first looks at the planning tools available in the Localism Act 2011 for involving residents in decision-making processes, examining their limitations when being used to oppose council estate demolition while proposing alternative plans. Four case studies of campaigns and community organisations—Greater Carpenters Neighbourhood Forum, Focus E15, Save Cressingham, and West Ken and Gibbs Green Community Homes— are then used to explore how they have generated three kinds of assemblages which create capabilities for self-organisation, resisting demolition, and influencing decision-making processes. The first kind of assemblage combines formal and informal strategies—some engaging with the planning system and some not—; the second uses both formal and informal organisations based on the desired objectives and the nature of their actions, and finally, the third builds support networks with professionals and other initiatives.

Keywords

council estate; community-led; regeneration; social housing; Localism Act; assemblage; Big Society

Introduction

In the context of London's housing crisis and the politics of austerity, local authorities trying to demolish and redevelop their council estates are experiencing strong opposition from residents, who fear they may be displaced from their homes and start campaigning to oppose demolition and propose alternatives. This community activism is hindering the councils' plans for selling or 'sweating' their assets. These campaigns have managed to dissuade potential partners or buyers of the land from taking part in redevelopment. Residents have shown they are capable of putting together community-led plans which take their views into account, while also offering alternatives to demolition. Other groups have engaged with the existing planning tools, taking part in the process to create a statutory Neighbourhood Plan (NP) or starting proceedings to gain ownership of the land. In addition, other campaigns have found that taking direct action and using strategies such as occupation of empty council-owned homes are more effective for denouncing the bad practices of local authorities, gaining media attention and forcing these local authorities to provide responses. These varied approaches to community activism, opposition to demolition and displacement, and community-led planning use different sorts of strategies and different levels of engagement with existing policies and planning tools. Some of these approaches use *informal* tactics—outside planning—based on direct action, which may secure extensive media attention and short-term achievements, while others use *formal* planning tools and laws to influence decision-making, propose alternative plans, or quash unlawful redevelopment plans.

The politics of austerity in the UK cannot be separated from the Big Society agenda, introduced by the Coalition Government (Conservatives and Liberal Democrats) in 2010, which advocates a 'state enabling' (Bailey and Pill 2015) approach with less state

intervention and stronger civic engagement in the delivery of public services. In terms of planning policy, the Big Society equates with the implementation of the Localism Act 2011 (LA 2011), which incorporates new planning frameworks and tools that allow greater participation of communities in decision-making. While the LA 2011 supposedly aims to empower communities and increase their influence in decision-making, some local authorities are failing to engage with communities proposing alternative plans to estate demolition, who see how their complaints are being disregarded.

Activist movements in the context of London's housing crisis were discussed in the special feature of *CITY 20* (2) (see Watt and Minton 2016) and the associated debate at the conference for the launch of this special feature on 23rd April 2016 at the University of East London, which brought together academics and activists involved in housing campaigns. This paper engages with one of the topics which dominated the debate in both the special feature and the conference: the regeneration of council estates, the associated displacement of their residents, and the challenges that communities face when attempting to participate in the planning and design of the future of their neighbourhood. This paper aims to contribute to this debate by exploring planning tools, actions and strategies employed by communities to oppose demolition, and specifically, how these formal tools and informal tactics interact; work together; adapt to different circumstances; and interrelate with existing policies, the context of austerity, material assets, and other agents to bring about different levels of capability for opposing social housing demolition; for seeking greater involvement from residents in regeneration schemes; and for proposing alternative plans led by the community. This also contributes to the debate on how the Big Society and localism agenda interact with communities opposing demolition and proposing alternative plans, and to the discussion on how this political agenda affects communities with less capacity for self-organisation.

Building on the previous discussion in *CITY* on ‘assemblage and critical urbanism’ initiated by McFarlane (2011) and followed by others (Simone 2011; Sendra 2015; Watt 2016), this paper uses assemblage thinking as a methodological framework to understand how the diverse actors and strategies interact and generate capabilities for resistance and empowerment. Some of the definitions of assemblage previously discussed in *CITY* can be useful in examining community activism. Assemblage is a ‘symbiosis’ where different elements work together in association rather than individually (McFarlane, 2011; building on Deleuze and Parnet 2007). McFarlane (2011) uses assemblage thinking to describe the existing power relations and to explore the capacity of these associations to challenge them. He also describes these relationships as socio-material, where both human and material actors interact and become political (see also Amin and Thrift 2016). Using assemblage to understand how the different strategies, policies, people’s homes and other human and material actors interact can help community groups to visualise existing power relations, while challenging imposed redevelopment plans and increasing capability to influence decision-making.

Assemblage has often been criticised for being an opaque and slippery term (see Wachsmuth et al 2011). In order to avoid falling into an obscure reflection on assemblage theory, this paper uses diagrams to graphically represent the relationship between diverse strategies and actors involved in a campaign. Graphic representation of assemblages and other Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts has been used previously to map social movements (Perez de Lama 2009) and to understand urban informality (Nunez Ferrera 2014). The diagrams featured here show how community groups have responded to local authority redevelopment plans through time; they represent an accumulation of relationships between strategies (hexagons) and

actors (triangles) through time. Since assemblages are fluid and have a transformative nature (McFarlane 2011, referencing Savage 2009), the diagrams here are photographs of what has happened up till the time of writing. However, these diagrams are continuously rearranging and adapting to a changing situation.

The paper analyses and illustrates in diagrams the assemblages of four case studies of community organisations and campaigns: Greater Carpenters Neighbourhood Forum, Focus E15, Save Cressingham, and West Ken and Gibbs Green Community Homes. These case studies use numerous strategies, ranging from those more focused on direct action to those with a higher level of engagement with the planning process. The methods for analysing the case studies and drawing the assemblage diagrams include semi-structured interviews with active members of community groups, campaigners, volunteers, community organisers and consultants working for the community groups¹. The research also looks at community group websites, published reports, community-led plans, NPs, Local Plans and other planning documents or strategies developed by local authorities.

Before going on to analyse the case studies, the paper contextualises the localism and Big Society agenda and reflects on the tools offered by the LA 2011, government agencies, and other organisations and support networks for community groups for engaging with the planning process.

The Localism Act: austerity or opportunity?

The Big Society was one of the main flagships of the Conservative Party's campaign for the 2010 UK general election, which at the time had great impact on the political agenda of the Coalition Government. The concept of the Big Society builds mainly on two intertwined

ideas (McKee 2015): the promotion of localism by giving local communities more decision-making powers, and a critique of the welfare state, arguing that it creates dependency on the state and proposing a “state-enabling” (Bailey and Pill 2015) approach, where communities are more involved in the delivery of services. However, the Big Society and localism agenda went hand in hand with severe austerity measures. The existing programmes for housing renewal were cancelled (Lupton and Fitzgerald 2015) and the government halted the time-limited regeneration scheme model, including the Area Based Initiatives first promoted by the 1993 Conservative Government—Single Regeneration Budget— and later by the 1997 New Labour Government—New Deal for Communities (Bailey and Pill 2015).

The LA 2011, which builds on this Big Society and localism agenda to empower communities to have a more active role in the planning and decision-making of neighbourhoods, has a double and conflicting effect. Although it brings more opportunities for empowerment and community-led initiatives (Bailey and Pill 2015), it considerably reduces state support, which has a negative effect on vulnerable communities with less ability to self-organise and to make use of the opportunities brought about by the LA 2011. Uitermark (2015) discusses how uneven economic capital affects the capacity to self-organise, leading to unequal access to services in the absence of state support. Jacobs and Manzi (2013) argue that disadvantaged groups are more likely to be left out of decision-making processes. In its audit of Big Society, Civil Exchange (2015) concludes that currently communities feel less empowered to influence decisions and that the Big Society has failed to ‘target those in society who benefit least from society’ (Civil Exchange 2015, 8, original in italics).

One of the main novelties of the LA 2011 is Neighbourhood Planning, which came into force in April 2012 (TCPE 2012). NP is a “community-led planning framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area” (Locality 2016). Authorised local community organisations propose the area of the plan to the local authority, prepare the NP themselves following certain requirements, submit it to the local authority for review and, once it has been checked by the council and gone through independent examination, it can go to referendum. If it is approved by referendum, it comes into force as a statutory planning framework (Locality 2016).

Since the start of Neighbourhood Planning, different kinds of organisations have provided support to communities and have produced material to make Neighbourhood Planning more accessible. Locality, a network of community-led organisations promoting “community asset ownership, community enterprise and social action” (<http://locality.org.uk/about/>, accessed February 21, 2017) has created a wide variety of resources and tools to help communities to set up NPs and “locally owned and led organisations” (<http://locality.org.uk/about/>, accessed February 21, 2017). Locality has created the website MyCommunity, funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (<https://mycommunity.org.uk/about-us/>, accessed December 4, 2017), which provides case studies, support documents, information about grants, a help line and different kinds of resources for supporting communities starting an NP and other kinds of community-led initiatives. In addition to this, other grassroots organisations are producing resources to support communities to develop NPs. NeighbourhoodPlanners.London is a network of neighbourhood planners, whose objective is to share experiences of Neighbourhood Planning in London. Furthermore, community groups are creating networks to support each other in the development of NPs and other community-led initiatives. This is the case of Just Space,

“a network of local and London-wide metropolitan groups campaigning on planning issues” (<https://justspace.org.uk/about/>, accessed February 21, 2017), which works on influencing formal plans and policies at different scales—from London-wide to local—and has supported community groups in developing their NPs and other initiatives. In some cases, Just Space has put communities in contact with academics and students who provide support to community organisations through a Just Space-University College London (UCL) collaboration².

Despite the support of organisations like Locality or other grassroots networks, bringing into force an NP presents some difficulties, particularly in the cases under consideration in this paper: communities in social housing estates trying to put together an alternative plan to demolition. These difficulties stem both from the fact that they are in London and that their main objective is to implement an alternative plan to the demolition of social housing.

Figures show that bringing an NP into force is more difficult in London than in other parts of England: while over 300 NPs have reached the referendum stage all across England, only 5 have reached this stage in London (NeighbourhoodPlanners.London 2017, 3). One reason is the fact that many local authorities in London are still failing to engage with Neighbourhood Planning. According to a study developed by NeighbourhoodPlanners.London (2017, 1), 19 out of 35 local authorities in London are still operating with pre-2012 Core Strategies rather than with post-2012 Local Plans. This means that pre-2012 Core Strategies cannot be used to define a framework for Neighbourhood Planning. The coordinator of Just Space also explains³ that while the LA 2011 and the central government are encouraging communities to make their own plan, the response of local authorities to Neighbourhood Planning has been mixed.

The LA 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DCLG 2012)—the planning framework for England since 2012—have produced a ‘hierarchy of scales’ (Smith 2008, 230) where decisions are supposed to be taken at neighbourhood and municipal level under the aegis of the NPPF. However, although in theory the LA 2011 devolves power to communities, NPs need to conform to the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Forums, and Areas must be designated by the planning authority. This is why Neighbourhood Planning becomes particularly difficult when it aims to avoid the demolition of social housing and propose alternative plans based on in-fill densification, improvement of dwellings, community facilities and public spaces. If a Local Plan proposes to redevelop an area or proposes a very high density of homes on the site of a housing estate, the NP cannot lower this density. In some cases, local authorities refuse to designate a Neighbourhood Area or to request modification of its boundaries, if it includes a housing estate for which they already have a regeneration plan⁴. Sagoe (2016) has studied the potential of Neighbourhood Planning for communities proposing alternative plans by examining the case study of the Carpenters Estate, also analysed in this article. He concludes that Neighbourhood Planning works better when carried out in conjunction with other actions. This is precisely the aim of this article, to define how different formal and informal strategies work together to counter demolition and propose alternatives that do not involve the displacement of residents. As the case studies show, Neighbourhood Planning is not the only formal planning framework or tool that communities can use to propose community-led initiatives. The LA 2011 provided other tools such as the “assets of community value” (LA 2011, 87-108)⁵. In addition to this, there are planning tools outside the LA 2011, such as the Right to Manage (DCLG 2013a) or the Right to Transfer (DCLG 2013b), which communities can use to take control of their

neighbourhood. These sets of tools along with other formal planning tools, legal processes and informal actions, will be explored here through the case studies.

Greater Carpenters Neighbourhood Forum

Carpenters Estate is a neighbourhood located near the Olympic Park, in East London. The estate has been under consideration for demolition and redevelopment for some years and this has generated an assemblage of campaigners, residents, businesses and organisations of students and academics working towards securing stronger participation of residents in decision-making. The neighbourhood is located in the London Borough of Newham (LBN), although the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC)—a Mayoral Development Corporation responsible for delivering the legacy of the Olympic Games—became its planning authority in October 2012 (LLDC, 2014). This led to a particular situation where the planning authority is the LLDC while the landlord is Newham Council. LBN's intention to redevelop Carpenters Estate first made public in 2004, when the council announced plans to demolish one of the towers and started relocating the residents (Frediani, Butcher and Watt 2013; Watt 2013). The recent history of organised community opposition to redevelopment started in 2011, when LBN announced a memorandum of understanding with UCL for the construction of the UCL East campus on the site of the Carpenters Estate (Frediani, Butcher and Watt 2013; Watt 2013). A group of residents set up a campaign called Carpenters Against Regeneration Plans (CARP) to demand a “fair deal with Newham Council” (<https://savecarpenters.wordpress.com/about/>, accessed February 28, 2017). The residents joined forces with businesses to form a community planning group, with the support of Just Space, the London Tenants Federation (LTF) and UCL academics and students, and developed a community plan that empowered residents and businesses to have a say in the future of their area (JSEP, 2015). After UCL decided not to build its east campus on the

Carpenters site in May 2013, the community planning group continued to work together, publishing a community plan in September 2013, and eventually decided to create a neighbourhood forum to turn their community plan into an NP (JSEP, 2015).

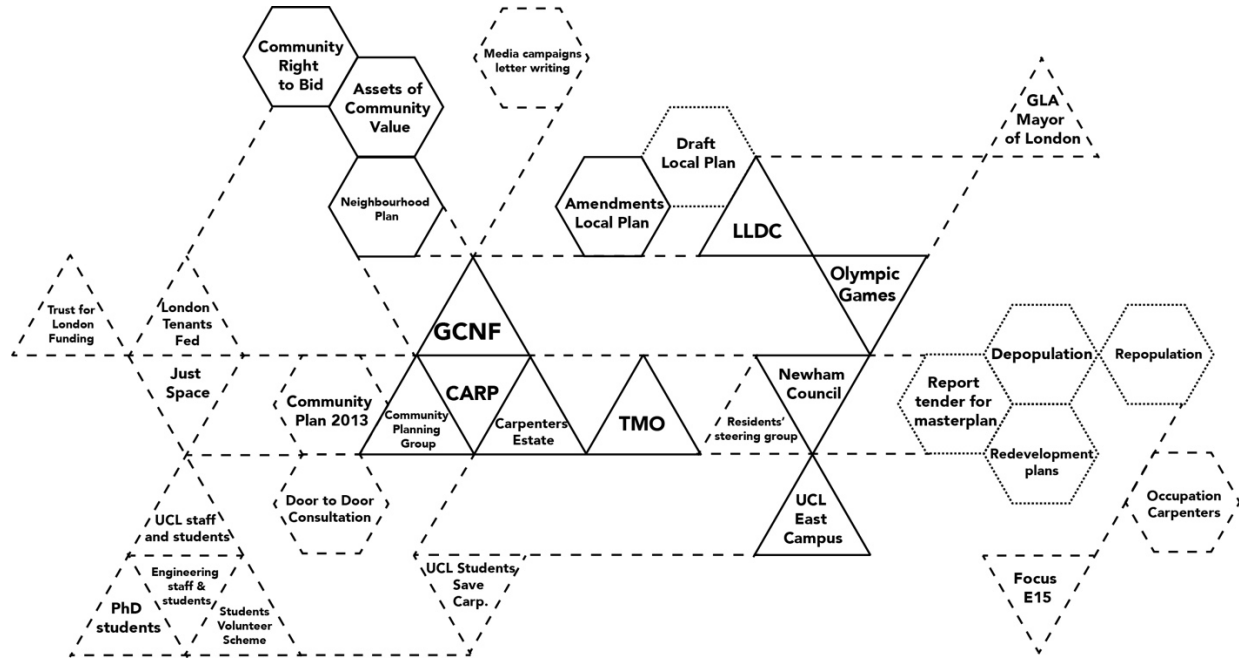


Figure 1: Assemblage of actors, actions, strategies, formal planning framework and policies in the context of Carpenters Estate. Key to diagram in the endnotes⁶.

Assemblages:

The assemblages at the Carpenters Estate show two kinds of capabilities: firstly, the fluidity and adaptive nature (see McFarlane 2011, referencing Savage 2009) of a community-based campaign that evolves to become an organisation that engages with planning; and secondly, a strong support network that allows this community-based campaign to have access to planning expertise.

The first capability of this assemblage is its capacity to adapt to different threats and evolve from a campaign to an organisation engaging with diverse planning mechanisms. A residents’ campaign, CARP (Carpenters Against Regeneration Plans), came together with a group of

businesses to form a community planning group and put together a Community Plan in 2013 (JSEP, 2015). Since this group thought that Newham had not carried out an appropriate consultation process for the regeneration of the housing estate, it organised workshops and carried out a door-to-door survey that included “186 individual responses” from “157 households (more than half the remaining households on the estate) and 15 businesses / stakeholders” (Carpenters Community Plan 2013). The plan included proposals on housing, environmental issues, community facilities, transport, accessibility, security, local economy and community ownership (Carpenters Community Plan 2013). The formulation of this community plan led the neighbours to present it to the LLDC, which was developing its Local Plan at the time, and to continue working together in order to develop an NP to translate their proposals into statutory planning policy. This group of residents and businesses set up a Neighbourhood Forum, which was “formally designated by the LLDC in July 2015” (<https://greater-carpenters.co.uk/our-work/achievements/>, accessed December 4 2017). The area included not only the council housing estate, but also surrounding businesses and new housing association developments. In 2016, GCNF applied to LBN to list five assets of community value and, at the time of writing, three of them have been listed while the other two are awaiting response. In February 2017, GCNF published the fourth draft of its NP, which proposes a vision, a series of objectives, a masterplan and policies (GCNF 2017). One of its objectives is “housing refurbishment and sensitive infill”, which aim to protect the existing homes and introduce new ones. This draft of the NP was published just after the Mayor of Newham “gave the go ahead to begin the process of selecting one or more partners to bring forward the redevelopment of the estate” (LBN 2017) in December 2016. These two competing initiatives from GCNF and from LBN, display opposing approaches to regeneration, with the former viewing it as “sensitive infill” while the latter describes it as “redevelopment”.

As Figure 1 shows, the strategy does not merely consist in elaborating an NP, but is rather an assemblage of formal planning tools—NP, involvement in Local Plan consultation—and informal strategies—outside formal planning framework: Community Plan, letter writing, media campaigns working together seeking to secure a community-led plan. One of the key strategies has been to participate in the consultation of the LLDC Local Plan. NPs cannot go against the Local Plan, and this means that the power of neighbourhood forums is very limited if councils intend to redevelop an area. However, in this case, the planning authority in charge of the Local Plan in the Carpenters Estate area is the LLDC, not LBN. Although the LLDC Local Plan describes the Greater Carpenters District as an “(e)xisting mixed-use area with potential for extensive mixed-use redevelopment” (LLDC, 2014, 200), the neighbours, through the consultation process, managed to introduce some amendments (Sagoe, 2016, 12) in Section 5 “Providing housing and neighbourhoods”—which is not specific for Greater Carpenters, but refers to the entire LLDC housing strategy—highlighting the importance of “(p)rotecting existing residential stock” (LLDC, 2014, 44). In addition to this, the LLDC site allocation for the Greater Carpenters District states that development principles should “(c)onsider retention of existing low-rise family housing where this does not prevent the achievement of wider regeneration objectives” and “(s)upport the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan where this conforms to the requirements of this site allocation and involves cooperation with the Council in its roles as landowner and housing authority” (LLDC, 2015). The combination of proposing amendments to the Local Plan and making an NP places GCNF in a stronger position as regards the possible implementation of an NP in accordance with the Local Plan, influencing future developments in the area.

The second capability of this assemblage, visualised in Figure 1, is the capacity to access planning expertise through a strong support network, built up since the start of opposition to redevelopment and the drafting of the Community Plan. The GCNF has held some of its meetings in the former Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) building and works in collaboration with Just Space and the LTF. The LTF have had 3-year funding from Trust for London, which finished in January 2017, for “community development support”, “and for Just Space to provide some specialist planning support around the community plan and then the Neighbourhood Plan”⁷. The same source of funding “enabled all the participation in the LLDC Local Plan”, since the funding is actually “to support community involvement within the LLDC area”⁸, not just Carpenters. Just Space and LTF are also collaborating with the UCL Department of Engineering, supporting the GCNF on policy proposals on estate refurbishment and energy and water retrofit⁹.

In addition to the strategies discussed, other informal actions outside this neighbourhood organisation have also had an impact on the redevelopment plans for the estate. One case is the temporary occupation of a building in the estate by Focus E15, which led to the repopulation of 40 empty flats in the estate, discussed in the following case study.

Focus E15

This campaign is also located in the LBN and targets the same estate, Carpenters, although it goes beyond fighting for a particular place and has become a broader campaign against social cleansing (Watt 2016). However, its origin is quite different from that of the GCNF. Focus E15 is a group of young mothers who received an eviction notice from their temporary accommodation in Newham. When one of the mothers sought help from the council to find accommodation within the borough, she was told that she should find private accommodation

outside London¹⁰, as it was not possible to rehouse her in Newham. Following this negative response, a group of 29 mothers who had received eviction notices started to self-organise and ran a petition to be rehoused in Newham. In addition to this, they started a series of direct actions, such as occupying council offices and attending events organised by the council. Through this petition and direct actions they gained public support and the council agreed to rehouse them within the local area¹¹. They decided to keep fighting for “social housing, not social cleansing” (<https://focuse15.org/about/>, accessed 06 June 2017) and continued to hold their weekly stall in Stratford. On the first anniversary of their campaign, in September 2014, they carried out the ‘political occupation’ of an empty housing block on the Carpenters Estate. The aim of this action was to bring “attention to the fact that people are being forced out of London due to a lack of affordable housing while huge numbers of perfectly good social housing units sit empty” (<https://focuse15.org/e15-open-house-occupation/>, accessed 6 June 2017). This action had a major impact in media and finally led to the council deciding to repopulate 40 empty homes in the estate. It also drew attention to how Newham council had treated the Focus E15 mothers, leading to a public apology from the Mayor of Newham in The Guardian on 6th October 2014 (see Wales, 2014). At the time of writing, the campaign continues to hold its weekly stalls every Saturday and has a space, Sylvia’s Corner, where events are organised and support provided to people experiencing housing struggles.

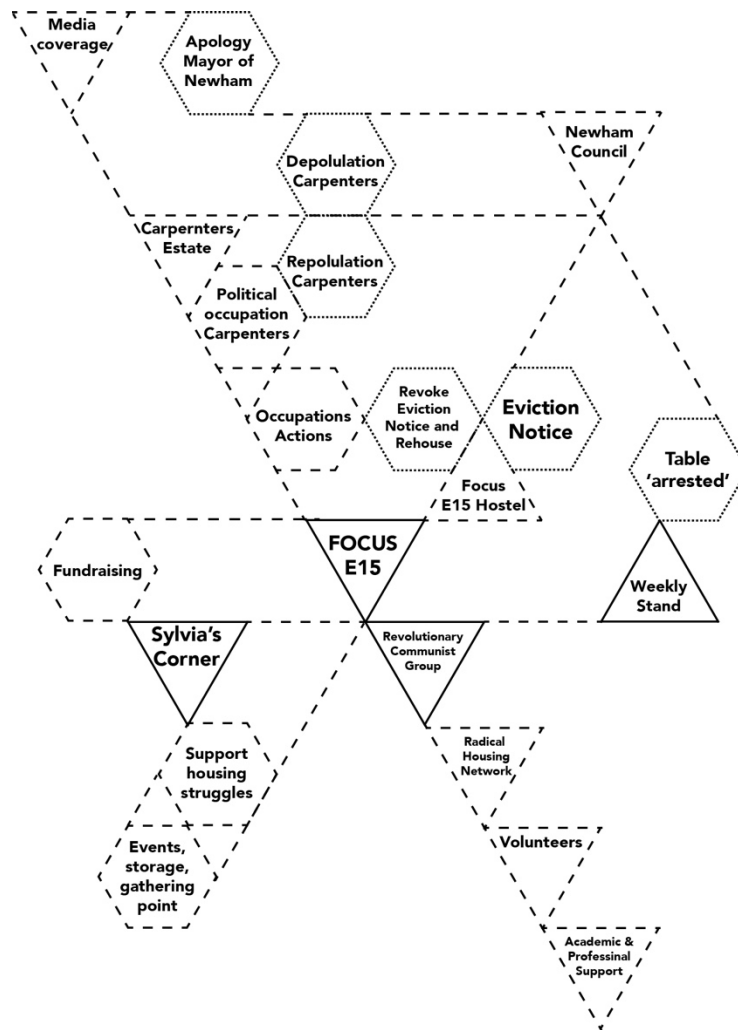


Figure 2: Assemblage of actors, actions and strategies in Focus E15 campaign. Key to the diagram in endnote 7.

Assemblages:

Watt (2016) explains Focus E15 through the lens of assemblage urbanism, also explaining the capabilities of this “nomadic war machine”. This paper looks at how this assemblage operates on a different dimension from that of the GCNF, with different socio-material interactions, different levels of engagement with the planning process, different responses, and different capabilities in resisting social housing demolition and proposing alternatives. Unlike the GCNF, Focus E15 does not propose a community-led plan (they are not residents in the estate). However, some common elements are their opposition to demolition and the

displacement of residents, as well as calls for resident-led management (<https://focuse15.org/e15-open-house-occupation/>, accessed 6 June 2017). The analysis of this assemblage looks at the fluidity of the campaign and the capacities generated by socio-material interactions.

Focus E15 differs from the GCNF and other campaigns and organisations examined in this paper in that the campaign has not taken the form of any kind of formal organisation. It has remained “fluid”¹², a group made up of different people engaging at different times. It started with 29 mothers, and soon created an alliance with the Revolutionary Communist Groups (RCG), and started running a joint weekly stall. Watt (2016, 304)—referencing Negri (2009, 252)—defines this alliance as an ‘unpredictable’ encounter, in which this group of mothers became more political and learned “campaigning know-how” (Watt 2016, 304) from the RCG. Since then, volunteers have joined the campaign, and academics and professionals have provided support and become part of the Radical Housing Network. Today, only two of the mothers out of those initially involved are still part of the core campaign¹³. According to one of the volunteers, they want to remain a housing campaign, a group of people, some coming and going, rather than setting up any kind of formal organisation in order to preserve this fluidity and radical nature and to adapt to an uncertain future¹⁴.

As Figure 2 shows, there are three socio-material assemblages with a strong capability to bring people together in the campaign, each with a different character: the ‘political occupation’ of the block at the Carpenters Estate, the weekly stall and Sylvia’s Corner. The ‘political occupation’ of a housing block in the Carpenters Estate had the strongest impact in the media, as well as a tangible impact in the defence of social housing, as it highlighted the fact that fit-for-purpose homes were being left empty by the council while there was great

demand for social housing. This action was successful in pressuring the council to re-occupy 40 empty homes. This victory was a veritable boost to the campaign, since it demonstrated that ‘grass roots action can work’¹⁵. Another socio-material assemblage, with a different kind of impact from that of the occupation, is the weekly stall. Although it has not had the same media impact, it is a vital socio-material actor in the campaign. It started with the alliance with the RCG, previously in charge of an anti-austerity stall (Watt 2016, 304), and it has been very important for holding their petitions, fundraising, and to ensure a constant presence on the streets, keeping the campaign alive. Campaigning materials have also become important actors: in an interview a volunteer referred to their table as another actor when, one Saturday, the police temporarily confiscated it from their stall: ‘they arrested our table’. Lastly, a socio-material assemblage which has strengthened the campaign is Sylvia’s Corner, a space in a corner shop on a residential street in Stratford (<https://focuse15.org/sylvias-corner/>, accessed 6 June 2017), used to store campaigning materials, hold monthly meetings open to the public, and organise drop-in sessions to help people struggling with housing issues¹⁶. Through fundraising and donations, they managed to rent this space and have a meeting point where the problems of housing and gentrification could be tackled. They also host other groups’ events, which helps them to connect with other campaigns and housing movements.

The malleable nature of the campaign makes it adaptable and dynamic. Its alliance with different groups, campaigns and network, and the three different kinds of socio-material assemblages—that is to say, action with strong media impact, constant presence on the streets, and a meeting point in a corner shop—have made Focus E15 a point of reference in housing campaigns, providing different kinds of capabilities for campaigning for social housing.

Save Cressingham

Cressingham Gardens (Figure 3) is a council estate in Lambeth, South London. Located near Brockwell Park, this low-rise medium/high density estate built between 1967 and 1979 was designed by a team of Lambeth architects led by Edward Hollamby (<https://c20society.org.uk/botm/cressingham-gardens-lambeth/>, accessed 6 June 2017). Ironically, the campaign to resist the council-led demolition and propose an alternative viable plan reflects the idea of the Big Society, where housing estate tenants and residents do not rely on the state but instead raise funds to pay their own consultants and propose a plan with an accompanying financial viability analysis.



Figure 3: Residents and visitors walk around Cressingham Gardens during a theatrical performance representing community resistance to demolition. Photograph by the author.

The Save Cressingham campaign started in September 2012, when an exhibition on the future of the estate raised suspicions among residents concerning the council's demolition plans. A group of residents quickly set up a Facebook page and started to post STOP signals around the estate to make other residents aware of the situation¹⁷. One of the first proposals made by residents to the council in early 2013 was to follow a 'project plan' where they could have a 'common understanding of facts'—especially regarding the structural damage and the high cost of refurbishment alleged by the council without providing any evidence—in order to make informed decisions based on these facts¹⁸. The council hired a company to run a "consultation and co-production process" (EWHC, 2015) in 2013, and the same company ran workshops with residents in late 2014. The workshops and discussions within the 'project team'¹⁹ between residents and the council between late 2014 and early 2015 considered five options, from full refurbishment to full demolition, and their financial implications. In March 2015, the council made a Cabinet decision to reject the three options that considered refurbishment and to consider only the options that proposed partial or total redevelopment. Later, in July 2015, the council decided to fully redevelop the estate. The residents brought the March 2015 Cabinet decision to judicial review, claiming that the consultation had not been lawful as the Cabinet had not taken the views of the residents into account but had decided not to proceed with the three refurbishment options as these were 'not affordable' (EWHC, 2015). The verdict was favourable to their case, and the judge concluded that the decision of March 2015 had been "unlawful" and "quashed" it (EWHC, 2015).

After this first judicial review in late 2015, residents engaged a local architect and former resident of the estate, and a local quantity surveyor to help them put together the 'People's Plan', a community-led regeneration plan recording the demands of the community and providing up to 37 additional new homes, community spaces and workspaces mainly by

transforming garage spaces (<http://cressinghampeoplesplan.org.uk>, accessed 21 June 2016). They ran a resident-led consultation process in parallel with a further consultation process by the council in early 2016. In March 2016 the Cabinet again decided to redevelop the estate. Residents brought this decision to judicial review again and on this occasion, the claim was dismissed (EWHC, 2016).

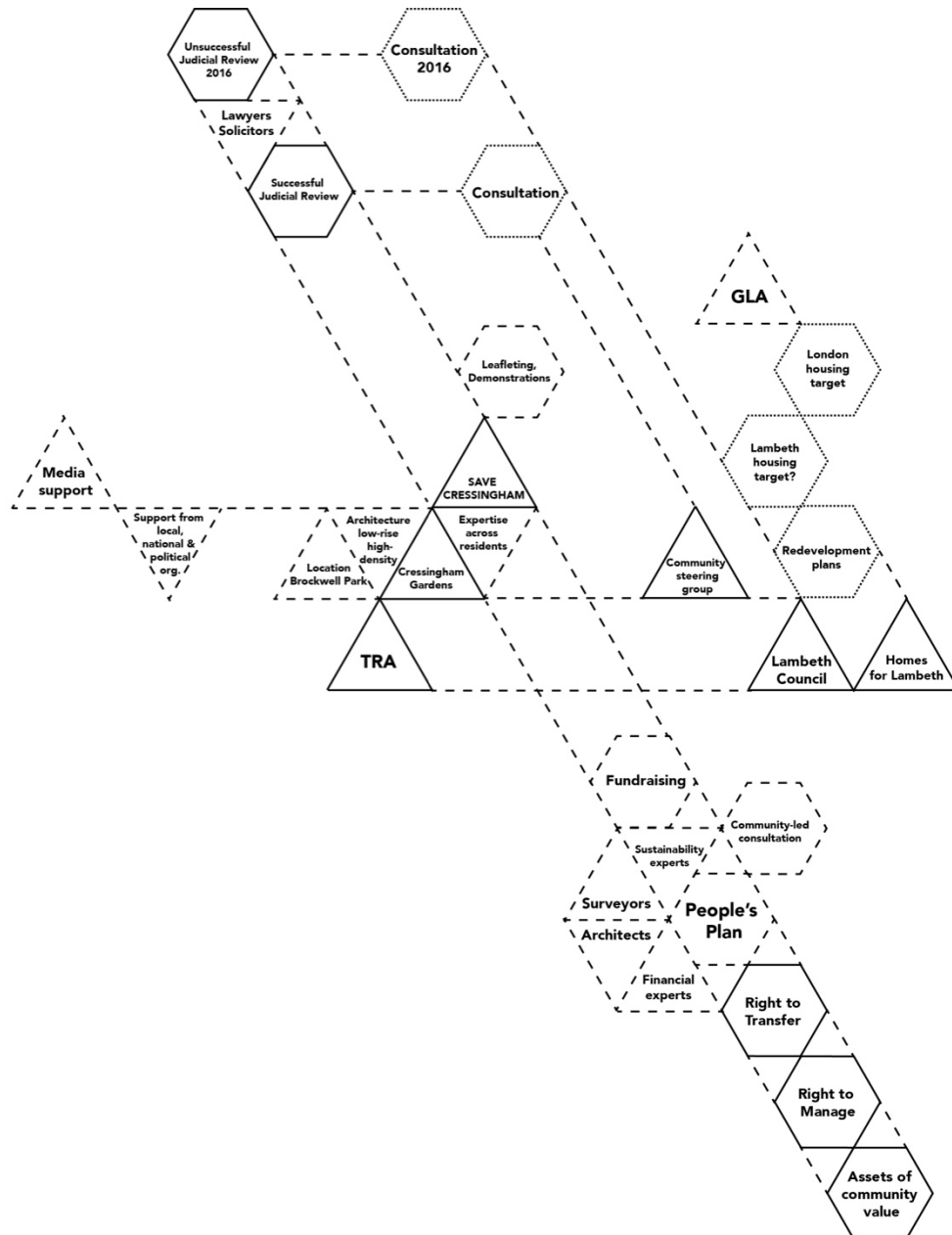


Figure 4: Assemblage of actors, actions, strategies, formal planning framework and policies in the context of Cressingham Gardens. Key to the diagram in endnote 7.

Assemblages:

The campaign for resisting demolition and proposing an economically viable alternative plan based on the will of the residents has generated assemblage with great capabilities, where residents display extraordinary expertise, and have used formal and informal organisations, strategies, legal processes, planning frameworks and actions to fight for their homes.

One characteristic of this assemblage—residents who become community activists, a housing estate in an attractive location, the threat of redevelopment, a campaign lasting over four years, consultants and lawyers working for the community—is the expertise that communities develop during this process. Cressingham Gardens has a resident community with diverse skills²⁰, which has been able to react promptly, contest demolition and propose alternatives. The threat of losing their homes has prompted many of them to use most of their free time to fight for their cause, providing a vast amount of unpaid labour and mutual support, and also building strong ties between residents²¹ (see Harvey 2014, 189-191). This wholehearted commitment to the campaign and a wide range of formal and informal strategies and legal actions has created great expertise in community-led planning and political activism. The campaign has used both in-house skills and external support and consultancy: voluntary or discounted work from professionals, Legal Aid lawyers and architects and other consultants paid through fundraising.

Another characteristic of this assemblage is its ability to operate through different kinds of formal and informal organisations that are independent from each other in order to engage with formal planning processes while also carrying out a housing campaign with no legal organisation. The initial discussions with the council were conducted through the Tenants and Residents Association (TRA). A project team was set up by the council and residents were

included in it to discuss the regeneration options. The judicial reviews were carried out through individual claimants, although speaking on behalf of the whole community. In parallel to this, Save Cressingham acts as a housing campaign, with no legal organisation and no formal membership, something which allows flexibility and the possibility of acting quickly, like Focus E15.

This ability allows them to use a wide range of formal and informal strategies and legal action, the third capability of this assemblage. They describe this strategy as ‘cumulative’²², using almost every planning framework, legal strategy, and informal action or process available to propose a community-led plan that prevents the demolition of the estate. As Figure 4 shows, the LA 2011 was used to register the community centre as an asset of community value, and applications have been submitted for the Right to Manage²³, now in the development phase²⁴, and the Right to Transfer, which is now with the Secretary of State following the objection of the council²⁵. As mentioned above, applications were also made to Legal Aid to bring the Cabinet decisions of March 2015 and March 2016 to judicial review. The March 2015 decision was successfully quashed, but not that from March 2016. In addition to these planning and legal strategies, informal actions and strategies employed also included leafleting, demonstrating, and the People’s Plan. The People’s Plan has been highly effective in bringing together the demands from residents and proposing alternative futures in very limited timeframes. The residents carried out a consultation process collecting around 100 responses (there are 306 households), with other surveys also carried out previously²⁶. The People’s Plan is a highly detailed 326-page document which includes 14 appendices with reports on topics including heritage conservation, the implementation of renewable energies and financial viability. This document demonstrates residents’ ability to put together a community-led plan, with the support of professionals and backed with evidence and reports

from experts. This would not have been achieved so quickly through an NP. The document was submitted to the council on 4th March 2016 (<http://cressinghampeoplesplan.org.uk>, accessed 21 June 2016). On 11th March, officers from the Housing Regeneration Team produced a report to be considered in the Cabinet held on 21st of March, and which concluded that this ‘was not a viable proposition, technically very difficult and costly to achieve’ (EWHC, 2016).

Lastly, what this assemblage also demonstrates is the inability of local authorities to carry out public participation processes which satisfactorily meet the wishes of the residents. The council have used a range of events and activities to consult the residents, hiring external consultants to run workshops, creating a project team that includes residents, and using words such as ‘co-production’ (EWCH, 2015). However, as the council believes that the estate should be redeveloped, these efforts towards consultation and community engagement events have not been successful in engaging with the residents, most of whom are in favour of the refurbishment option²⁷. The impossibility of running a veritable co-production process between council and residents also means that the council is wasting the chance to use the potential of a highly skilled community capable of producing a detailed community-led plan within a few short months.

West Kensington and Gibbs Green Community Homes

West Kensington and Gibbs Green are two housing estates located in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF), within the London Plan Opportunity Area of Earls Court and West Kensington, which aims to provide ‘thousands of new homes’ (LBHF and RBKC, 2012, 1). This is another case where the community has taken the initiative to self-organise,

secure funding, and hire consultants to support it in their fight against demolition while proposing their own alternative plan. This is another case of a ‘Big Society’ proposing an economically viable alternative to demolition, owned and managed by the community, and still disregarded. Residents became aware of the council’s intention to sell the land for redevelopment in December 2008 and started campaigning in early 2009, when they reactivated the two Tenants and Residents Association. Jonathan Rosenberg, who had experience in transferring local authority homes to a community-owned housing association in West London, joined them as community organiser and in that year they attempted to give notice to the Right to Transfer. However, they could not give valid notice²⁸ as regulations were only drafted in November 2013 (DCLG, 2013b). In 2011, they set up West Kensington and Gibbs Green Community Homes Limited (WKGGCH) as a vehicle for the Right to Transfer process. In September 2012, the council resolved to sign a Conditional Land Sale Agreement (CLSA) with a private developer to carry out a large redevelopment scheme (CLSA WKGGCH, 2013) which the residents challenged in judicial review. Although this challenge was eventually dismissed, the Judge praised the residents for the quality of their submission and emphasised their right to challenge the decision in the first place²⁹. This action delayed the signing of the CLSA³⁰, which took place in January 2013. As the CLSA requires residents to be rehoused before any land is transferred (CLSA WKGGCH, 2013, 6), all the estates remain in Council ownership. WKGGCH finally served its Right to Transfer notice in August 2015³¹. In anticipation of having to carry out a feasibility study, WKGGCH hired Architects for Social Housing (ASH) to produce an alternative community-led plan to undertake a range of improvements and add 200 to 300 new homes by introducing infill housing and adding floors to existing housing blocks (ASH for WKGGCH, 2016)³². The Right to Transfer notice is currently with the Secretary of State of Communities and Local Government, and a decision is yet to be announced. After submitting additional information

requested by the Secretary of State, when WKGCH followed up the case in August 2016, ‘the government said that they did not have the expertise in-house to evaluate our submissions and that they had worked out a method to procure the necessary expertise’³³.

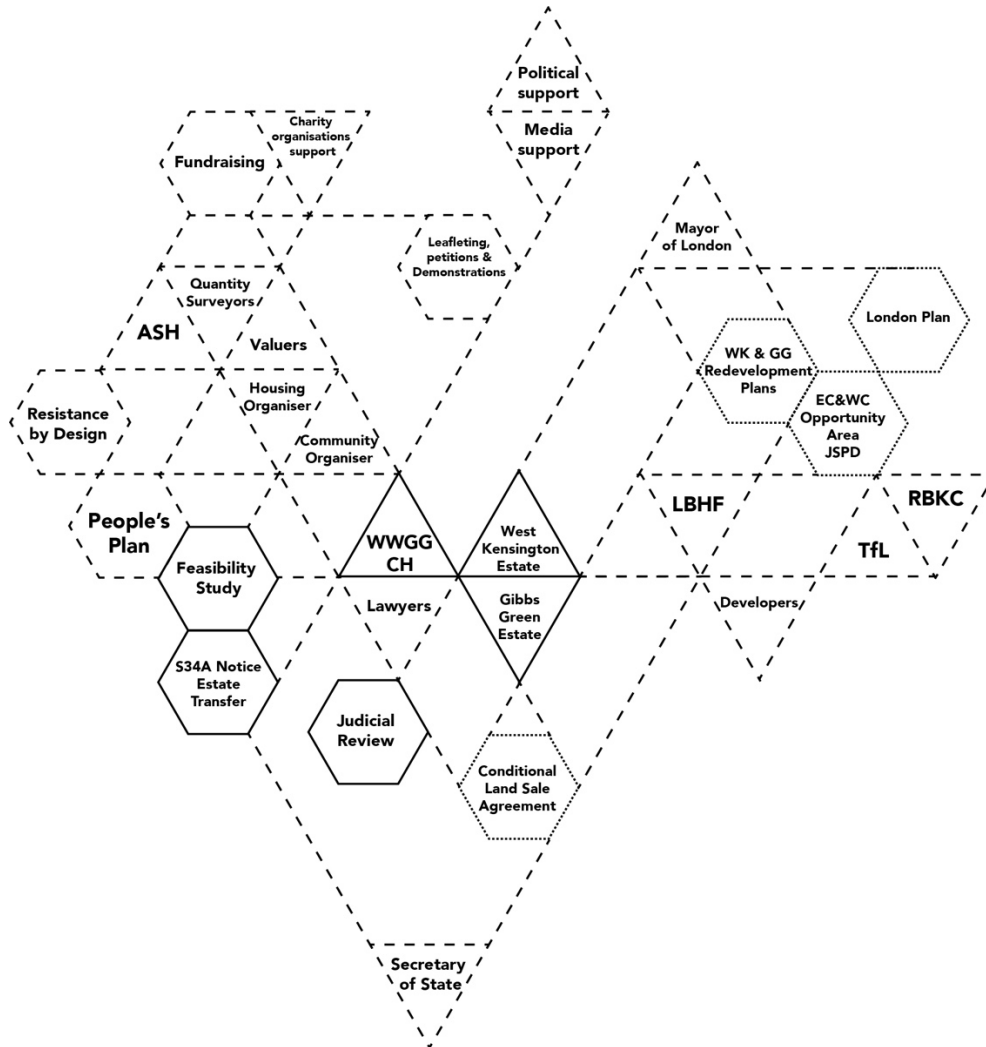


Figure 5: Assemblage of actors, actions, strategies, formal planning framework and policies in the context of West Kensington and Gibbs Green. Key to the diagram in endnote 7.

Assemblages:

This lengthy process has led to a highly committed assemblage of community entrepreneurship, who hire consultants and experts to assist in pursuing its objective of saving their homes, gaining control and ownership of their neighbourhood and improving their housing estates and community facilities, in a situation in which public authorities seek

to sell their council estates for private development. This assemblage has also revealed potential new roles for urban designers working for and with communities.

The first capability of this assemblage is the ability to run a long-lasting campaign, which at the time of writing has been active for 8 years, as well as to fight against what the developer and the council have claimed is “the largest redevelopment in the world outside of China”³⁴. When we were asked about their most effective strategy in the campaign the community organiser and a resident answered that “by far it is visiting people in their homes and maintaining close relations with individuals and households over time and building up trust”. Bringing the community together has helped provide them with a clear vision and helped them maintain a long-lasting campaign. This is having a knock-on effect on development opportunities for the area, since in the press release for its annual report the developer has identified activist opposition as a risk. This has been accompanied by a newly set-up risk mitigation strategy “(m)onitoring intelligence on activist groups” (https://www.capitalandcounties.com/sites/default/files/Press%20Release%20December%202015%20Final_0.pdf, accessed 6 June 2017).

The second capability of the assemblage is to raise funds in order to employ experts and consultants to assist the community in the process. At the time of writing, WKGCH has a housing organiser and a community organiser, both full-time. In addition to this, architects were hired for a six-month period to produce the People’s Plan to be included in any future feasibility study for the Right to Transfer, valuers and surveyors. In this case, rather than relying solely or primarily on in-house expertise, professionals experienced in transferring council housing to community land trusts were hired, as well as architects capable of creating community-led plans (Figure 5).



Figure 6: ASH walk around West Ken and Gibbs Green estates with residents and WKGCH staff. Photograph by ASH.

Thirdly, this assemblage has also generated different capabilities in the role of the architect or urban designer³⁵. As happens with other architect-client relations, the architects produce a design based on a brief provided by the community—in this case, this was done through walks (Figure 6) and workshops—, they receive feedback on the design and change it as necessary until the client agrees. However, the clients here are the residents, not the landowners—which is currently the council, except for some freeholds. This means that the role of the architect in this case is not to produce a prescriptive plan aiming to get a design built, but to help community efforts to demonstrate that there are economically viable alternatives to demolition which provide new homes, refurbish existing ones and improve community facilities. ASH calls this ‘Resistance by Design’ (<https://architectsfor-socialhousing.wordpress.com/2016/04/01/resistance-by-design/>, accessed

6 June 2017). The role of the architect is to be an instrument for 6 months in this 8-year process and to translate into plans the wishes of the community so that its position in fighting for this vision is far more advantageous.

Discussion: Assemblages for community-led social housing regeneration

Reflecting on the tools offered by the LA 2011 and other planning regulations framed within the Big Society and localism agenda, as well as the four case studies analysed in London, this discussion first examines the types of assemblage resulting from these processes of resistance and their capabilities. The final part of the discussion addresses the problems of the Big Society and localism agenda, especially when communities are not able to self-organise as the case studies presented here (Uitermark 2015).

The capabilities developed by community groups and campaigns to oppose demolition and propose alternative plans can fall within three different assemblage categories. The first of these is the assemblage of strategies within and outside formal planning, second, the use of informal and formal organisations as vehicles for the campaign and community-led initiatives, while the third is the construction of strong support networks.

Assemblage of strategies within and outside formal planning

One of the assemblages which generates stronger capabilities to oppose demolition and propose alternative community-led plans is the combination of informal actions, community-led initiatives outside the planning system, and engagement with specific planning frameworks and tools such as Local Plan consultation, NP, Right to Transfer and others. In all four case studies their strength lies in the use of combined strategies rather than reliance

on a single one. However, the level of engagement with the planning system varies from case to case.

The case of Focus E15 is the only one which has not used any formal planning tools or framework, with strategies consisting instead mainly in direct action. They have also used socio-material strategies, which are tangible, easily communicated, and can have a direct impact. The power of these socio-material direct actions is that objects and other non-human elements such as an empty block of flats, a corner shop, or a table become political (see Amin and Thrift, 2016, McFarlane, 2011a). In the specific case of Cressingham Gardens residents, they combine formal and informal strategies, also carrying out direct actions, demonstrations and even a theatrical performance in which they explain the socio-material relationships between people, their homes, their trees, the park next door and their interaction with the council (Figure 3). Cressingham Gardens residents have also taken part in legal processes and used a variety of urban design and planning strategies both within and outside formal planning—People’s Plan, Right to Transfer, Right to Manage, registering community assets. As they explain, their strength lies in using a ‘cumulative’ strategy to achieve their objectives. WKGGCH, like Cressingham Gardens, has also used a combination of formal and informal strategies including a similar range of actions and use of planning tools. However, since the beginning, all strategies have focused on preventing the council from selling the land to private developers and trying to get ownership of the housing estate through the Right to Transfer. This is also the longest-running campaign/initiative and, according to them, its strength lies in succeeding in bringing the community together to achieve an objective. The GCNF differs from WKGGCH and Cressingham Gardens in that these have evolved from creating a community-led plan outside formal planning and turned this into an NP, starting the process to make it into a statutory planning framework. Another positive factor is that

they operate both at NP level and at Local Plan level (Sagoe 2016), so they can produce an NP in accordance with the Local Plan.

The four case studies can reveal which assemblages of strategies have stronger capabilities for opposing demolition and proposing community-led regeneration. These are socio-material assemblages where material objects become political and easily communicated, cumulative strategies that combine a wide range of formal and informal strategies and actions, working on strategies to keep the community united in the process, using the potential generated by residents' initiatives to engage with the planning process and to try to make community-led plans statutory, operating at different levels of the planning system.

Assemblage of formal and informal organisations

The kind of organisation(s) that campaigns and community-led initiatives have used as vehicles for their opposition to demolition and proposing alternatives are linked with the kind of strategies they have used. As with the strategies, the four case studies have used different kinds of organisations, which can be informal—with no legal form—, an assemblage of formal and informal organisations, informal campaigns that become formal organisations, and also setting up a company.

In the case of Focus E15, no formal organisation has been set up, so that it remains a campaign by a group of people who take direct action against social injustice, with no predetermined rules, and remaining flexible with no ties to any kind of formal structure. Save Cressingham, like Focus E15 is also a campaign which is not restricted to any kind of formal organisation. Its members do not have predetermined roles but are organised through a website and social network pages. However, in the case of Cressingham Gardens, residents

have also used other formal organisations to engage with the planning process or with individuals who represent the community in a judicial review. In the case of West Ken and Gibbs Green, the kind of organisation is also a response to one of their main strategies: they created a company in order to secure the Right to Transfer and to take ownership of the estate. The GCNF, like the strategies, evolved from a campaign with no legal organisation, CARP, to a Neighbourhood Forum designated by the LLDC.

The effectiveness of the organisations does not depend so much on whether they are formal or informal. Instead, the kind of organisation(s) depends on the strategies that the community wishes to use. Depending on the combination of strategies, they can create one or more formal or informal organisations, whichever works best for putting these strategies into practice.

Building support networks

There are two kinds of assemblages that strengthen the capabilities of community organisations that find support in other actors. The first is to join forces with other campaigns, creating federated activist networks, while the second is to work with professionals such as architects, surveyors, lawyers, financial advisors, and other professionals, both paid and voluntary.

A good example of the first type of assemblage is the London-wide network of campaigns Just Space, which is federating different initiatives in order to build support among communities and to influence policy. They also act as mediators, facilitating the relationship between community groups, academics and students. This symbiosis allows community groups to have access to support from experts in planning and engineering and contributes to

the research and teaching activity of academics and students. This is the case of the GCNF, which has been collaborating with UCL PhD students since its CARP phase and is now collaborating with the UCL Department of Engineering. In the case of Focus E15, alliance with the RGC provided them with activist and political capabilities (Watt 2016). They have also joined the Radical Housing Network and they are helping other people going through eviction or other housing issues through their drop-in sessions at Sylvia's Corner.

This kind of assemblage can empower communities with less capacity for self-organisation. As the case studies have shown, running a campaign to stop social housing demolition and propose an alternative plan requires high levels of commitment, is time consuming, and requires in-house expertise and funding to hire experts. The case studies have also shown the lack of support from local authorities in developing community-led initiatives. However, the fact that there are community groups which have built a strong capability to fight against social housing demolition and propose community-led plans can be replicated in other communities. An example of this is that those who feel disempowered and in fear of losing their homes are able to go to a drop-in session with Focus E15, and receive support from this group to fight for their cause. Another example is the Just Space network, which has a long list of members who support each other and build "contacts with parts of London's society which have not been much engaged before" (<https://justspace.org.uk/about/>, accessed 6 June 2017). This capacity for building networks can motivate communities that feel disempowered and, ultimately, build a larger critical mass that influences the political agenda. In addition to this, these support networks extend local campaigns from the 'geographical scale' (Smith 2008, 230) of a group of residents resisting demolition to a London-wide problem of wholesale demolition of social housing estates, elevating the struggle "to the next scale up the hierarchy" (Ibid, 232).

Save Cressingham and WKGGCH are good examples of the assemblages between community groups and professionals, since they have hired architects, lawyers, community organisers and other experts to assist them with different strategies of the campaign. WKGGCH has a community organiser and a housing organiser working full-time. In addition to this, they hired architects for a 6-month period to work on the People's Plan and have also worked with other experts on specific strategies. Save Cressingham, however, is more reliant on in-house expertise and has developed extraordinary skills to oppose demolition and propose alternatives, faced with the threat of losing their homes. Like WKGGCH, they hired a local architectural office and other consultants to assist them with some of these strategies.

The assemblage of activist groups with professionals paves the way for a different kind of client-consultant relationship. In the case of architects, urban designers and planners, this client-consultant relationship is different from the traditional one of built environment professionals for two main reasons. Firstly, the clients are not individuals but diverse communities, groups of residents, which means they have to learn new skills to run co-design workshops and participatory methods to include the vision of the different members of the community in the plan. Although the community groups in WKGGCH³⁶ and Cressingham Gardens were already well organised when they hired the architects, this is not necessarily the case for other groups of residents seeking assistance from built environment professionals. Secondly, they are no longer producing plans to build exactly what is on the plans, but to serve as a tool for the campaign and to show that an alternative plan is possible³⁷.

Contesting the Big Society

As discussed in the critical review of the localism agenda at the beginning of this paper, planning tools included in the LA 2011 such as Neighbourhood Planning can be difficult and time-consuming. In addition to this, communities facing the demolition and redevelopment of their neighbourhood face additional hurdles, since they cannot contradict their Local Plan. The case studies of WKGGCH and Save Cressingham show the difficulties of using the Right to Transfer to gain community ownership of the estate, since neither local authority has accepted the notice and at the time of writing both cases are yet to receive the determination of the Secretary of State.

Community groups have faced up to these obstacles by working with the assemblages mentioned above: using a combination of formal and informal strategies, through formal and informal organisations, and building strong networks of solidarity with other organisations and seeking professional support. However, not all council estate residents facing demolition and displacement have the same level of self-organisation as the case studies discussed. Some residents of council estates are in a vulnerable position (see Jacobs and Manzi 2013) and/or may not have the time to engage with long-lasting campaigns against redevelopment and complex planning processes. As Uitermark (2015) argues, “an exclusive focus on success stories might be inspiring but it will not lead to greater understanding of self-organisation’s uneven development and inner workings”. The discussion of four case studies with a strong capacity for self-organisation must not be understood as a call for more self-organisation to replace state support, as suggested in the Big Society political agenda, supported by liberal thinkers like Hayek through the concept of ‘spontaneous order’ (Macmillan 2013; referencing Hayek 1979). These self-organisation processes have emerged as forms of resistance to the demolition, displacement and redevelopment of social housing estates, not as a replacement for the services provided by the state. Furthermore, the communities’ aim of

gaining ownership of the estates differs from privatisation, given that communities want to achieve *collective* ownership of the land, protecting its social purpose³⁸.

Conclusions

This paper has engaged with the discussion on ‘London housing crisis and its activism’ initiated in the special feature of *CITY 20 (2)* and its accompanying conference. It has contributed to this debate by exploring the capabilities developed by activist groups when resisting the demolition of social housing, displacement and proposing alternative plans. The study has also explored how these campaigns interact with the context of Big Society and localism. It has shown that the use of tools for community engagement provided by the LA 2011 and other planning regulations requires high levels of commitment and dedication. Furthermore, the case studies have revealed that when communities manage to use these tools to propose community-led plans, local authorities are not willing to cooperate.

Connecting to the debate initiated by McFarlane (2011) on ‘assemblage and critical urbanism’ and, more specifically, with Watt’s (2016) analysis of Focus E15, this paper has further developed the use of assemblage theory as a tool to understand housing activism by analysing and graphically representing the interactions between the different actors and strategies involved in processes of resistance and community-led planning. While Watt (2016) identifies assemblages in ‘nomadic’ activists such as Focus E15, this analysis has shown that communities defending their homes also work through different kinds of assemblage: they are networked, evolving and adapting to different circumstances, proposing alternatives and using strategies within and outside formal planning. The analysis of the case studies has identified three kinds of assemblage that build capabilities for fighting against demolition and proposing alternative plans. The first of these types of assemblage has shown

that the effectiveness of the campaign lies in using a combination of diverse formal and informal strategies which involve human and non-human, material and non-material actors, rather than relying solely on individual strategies. The second kind of assemblage has shown that campaigners operate through different kinds of formal and informal organisation, depending on the strategies being developed. Finally, the third type has shown the potential for collaboration between different activist groups fighting for similar causes and how the creation of networks can politicise communities less able to self-organise. It has also identified a new kind of client-consultant relationship, where built environment professionals, lawyers and other consultants work for a group of residents to assist them in resisting demolition and proposing alternative plans. This emerging relationship between built environment professionals and community activists is a topic worthy of further research.

The case studies analysed are not completed community-led projects that can be presented as ‘successful’ case studies where residents have managed to regenerate their neighbourhood according to their wishes. They are rather, ongoing processes. The three case studies of community-led plans are now at a critical stage. They are facing the challenge of defeating the demolition plan and proving that their plans can be implemented. However, the criteria for measuring ‘success’ in these cases might not only depend on whether they have managed to build their community-led plan³⁹. The fact that these campaigns have managed to add hurdles and slow down the councils’ plans to demolish the estates is in itself a success. These processes have also been a success in strengthening the bonds of the community and the interaction among its residents⁴⁰, as is the fact that people are becoming more political and increasingly capable of fighting against injustice.

This capacity for self-organisation, creation of community bonds and acquisition of planning and legal skills have been prompted by the possibility of losing their homes. The question for local authorities is whether this potential for self-organisation and leading a regeneration process within communities could be used either to truly engage them in a co-production process or to support and encourage community-led initiatives for the improvement of their homes, providing the new housing needed, and finding ways to overcome the austerity measures imposed by the central government without destroying people's homes.

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Notes:

¹ The questions first cover the actors involved in the process, secondly, the strategies, actions and planning and design tools used, thirdly, the effect of each of these strategies and, finally, funding sources.

² Interview with Richard Lee, Just Space coordinator, 18/01/2017.

³ Interview with Richard Lee, Just Space coordinator, 18/01/2017.

⁴ Interview with Richard Lee, Just Space coordinator, 18/01/2017.

⁵ This means that the community can nominate a piece of land to be included in this list and, if its inclusion is approved by the local authority, the community will have a moratorium of six months to bid if it is on sale. See LA 2011, Chapter 3, for further details.

⁶ Key to the diagrams: Triangles are the actors involved. Those with a continuous line are those directly involved and those with a dashed line are indirectly involved or supporting actors. Hexagons are actions, strategies, formal planning tools and policies. Those with a continuous line are those which engage with formal planning. Those with a dashed line are actions or strategies outside formal planning and those with a dotted line are strategies developed by public authorities.

⁷ Interview with Richard Lee, Just Space coordinator, 18/01/2017.

⁸ Interview with Richard Lee, Just Space coordinator, 18/01/2017.

⁹ Interview with Richard Lee, Just Space coordinator, 18/01/2017. See also Fourth Draft of Greater Carpenters Neighbourhood Plan, February 2017.

¹⁰ Interview with a volunteer from Focus E15 campaign, 08/01/2017.

¹¹ Interview with a volunteer from Focus E15 campaign, 08/01/2017.

¹² Interview with a volunteer from Focus E15 campaign, 08/01/2017.

¹³ Interview with a volunteer from Focus E15 campaign, 08/01/2017.

¹⁴ Interview with a volunteer from Focus E15 campaign, 08/01/2017.

¹⁵ Interview with a volunteer from Focus E15 campaign, 08/01/2017.

¹⁶ Interview with a volunteer from Focus E15 campaign, 08/01/2017.

¹⁷ Interview with two residents of Cressingham Gardens, 10/01/2017.

¹⁸ Interview with two residents of Cressingham Gardens, 10/01/2017.

¹⁹ A project team was set up by the council for ‘steering and managing regeneration options and co-producing the regeneration options with the residents’ (EWHC, 2015). Residents were included in this project team.

²⁰ Interview with two residents of Cressingham Gardens, 10/01/2017.

²¹ Interview with two residents of Cressingham Gardens, 10/01/2017.

²² Interview with two residents of Cressingham Gardens, 10/01/2017.

²³ ‘Local authority tenants have had a statutory Right to Manage since 1994. By forming a Tenant Management Organisation, and following Right to Manage Regulations, such tenants can take over responsibility for managing housing services, such as repairs, caretaking, and rent collection from their landlord’ (DCLG, 2013a).

²⁴ Interview with two residents of Cressingham Gardens, 10/01/2017.

²⁵ Interview with two residents of Cressingham Gardens, 10/01/2017. As discussed in the case of West Kensington and Gibbs Green, the Secretary of State still does not have the expertise to deal with these cases and residents are waiting for a reply (Interview with community organiser and resident of West Kensington and Gibbs Green, 06/01/2017).

²⁶ Interview with two residents of Cressingham Gardens, 10/01/2017.

²⁷ ‘A survey of residents between 5th-13th July (2015), with a household response rate of 72%, showed that 86% of residents wanted refurbishment and only 4% wanted demolition’ (People’s Plan, 2014, 6).

²⁸ Interview with Jonathan Rosenberg, community organiser of WKGGCH and a resident of West Kensington Estate and Director of WKGGCH, 06/01/2017.

²⁹ Source: Jonathan Rosenberg, community organiser of WKGGCH, from the transcripts of the oral hearing on 23rd April 2013 for reconsidering the previous Judge’s decision to refuse

permission for Judicial Review. In this oral hearing, the Judge refused permission to judicial review. The Judge also dismissed LBHF's application for costs.

³⁰ Interview with Jonathan Rosenberg, community organiser of WKGCH and a resident of West Kensington Estate and Director of WKGCH, 06/01/2017.

³¹ Interview with Jonathan Rosenberg, community organiser of WKGCH and a resident of West Kensington Estate and Director of WKGCH, 06/01/2017.

³² Interview with Jonathan Rosenberg, community organiser of WKGCH and a resident of West Kensington Estate and Director of WKGCH, 06/01/2017. Interview with Geraldine Denning, ASH, 26/01/2017.

³³ Interview with Jonathan Rosenberg, community organiser of WKGCH, 06/01/2017.

³⁴ Interview with Jonathan Rosenberg, community organiser of WKGCH, 06/01/2017.

³⁵ This reflection on the role of the architect is discussed in the interview with Geraldine Denning, ASH, 26/01/2017.

³⁶ As has been discussed in the interview with Geraldine Denning, ASH, 26/01/2017, about WKGCH.

³⁷ As has been discussed in the interview with Geraldine Denning, ASH, 26/01/2017.

³⁸ This reflection on the difference between community ownership and privatisation emerged during a second interview with Jonathan Rosenberg, community organiser of WKGCH, on 15/11/2017.

³⁹ This reflection emerged during the interview with Geraldine Denning, ASH, 26/01/2017.

⁴⁰ Interview with two residents of Cressingham Gardens, 10/01/2017.