

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Islington Councillors unanimously demand a halt to the eviction of Islington Park Street Community by One Housing Group

Yesterday evening, Islington Council unanimously approved an emergency motion demanding that One Housing Group (OHG) suspend the Notice to Quit served upon residents of Islington Park Street Community and enter into meaningful dialogue with them.

The low-income, mixed needs, supportive community, which has been in existence for 39 years, has been served with a Notice to Quit which is due to expire on 5 July 2015. OHG has stated that its only interest is in “securing a satisfactory decant of the property.” Some of the residents have been in occupation for over 3 decades and many are vulnerable.

Following a lively demonstration outside Islington Town Hall, supported by Labour and Green Councillors, the Council debated the emergency motion.

Councillor Gary Poole presented the motion describing the community's struggle against OHG as the “battle for the soul of Islington.” Referring to the actions of the housing association he concluded by asserting that the Council “will not tolerate social vandalism like this in our borough.”

Green Councillor, Caroline Russell presented a petition from the community asking the Council to recognise that the community has been in continuous occupation as a *sui generis* group home for 39 years and to affirm that it would be necessary for OHG to apply for change of use if it wishes to redevelop the property. Councillor for Housing and Development, James Murray, responded that it was “very, very likely that it will be considered as *asui generis*.”

Siobhan McSweeney, resident at IPS, states, “The Council's overwhelming support for our community completely undermines OHG's narrative; there is no justification for destroying our community. Additionally, it is now almost certain that OHG will need to apply for a change of use under planning law if they wish to redevelop the property. Judging from the Council's position tonight, planning permission is likely to be refused. We hope that OHG will now see sense and enter into dialogue with us.”