

Radical Housing Network conference

Direct action in times of crisis: Where next for the grass roots housing movement?

Start: 10:00 Arrival and introduction

Session One: 10:30- 11:45 Roots of the Crisis

How has capitalism created a housing crisis? What is the historical background to the housing crisis? What's the role of national government policy, and of the global financial system?

- Role of capitalism (Ravi - Dorchester Court Resists)
- History of housing policy (Glyn - Unite Housing Workers and Defend Council Housing)
- Economic, political and social roots of the housing crisis (Nigel - worker for a housing charity)

Questions, comments, discussion

Break: 11:45- 12:15

Session Two: 12:15- 1:30 The State: On our side or on our backs?

What role does the State play in the fight for housing justice? Should we make "demands" of the State? How can we tackle the planning system? What are the alternatives to negotiating with the State? How should housing activists respond to Jeremy Corbyn's election?

- Critique of the State and reliance on representation rather than direct action (Bonnie - Action East End)
- Planning (Ian - Radical Housing Network)

Discussion in small groups and plenary

Lunch: 1:30- 2:30

Session Three: 2:30- 5:00 The Activist Response

What lessons can we draw from our campaigns? What is the role of direct action? How does the housing movement relate to other struggles for social justice and against capitalism? What kind of society do we want and how can we achieve it?

- History of working class resistance to housing (Vicki Cooper)
- The housing struggle as a general struggle- anti-capitalist, anti-patriarchal, and anti-racist, environmental (Katya)
- Housing as a community struggle and its links with struggles in the workplace (Harriet-GMB Young London)
- Doing direct action case work (Sarah - Housing Action Southwark and Lambeth)
- How to build a campaign: lessons to learn (Liam - Sweets Way Resists/Focus E15)

Group discussions led by members from RHN campaigns followed by reportbacks to full group.

Finish: 5:00. However, the venue is ours until 7pm so depending on energy levels, people may want to form other discussion groups (open space) to discuss particular ideas that they want to carry forward.