**Failing Utopia: The persistent neglect of Thamesmead and its working-class community**

Alice Dean

(MRes Social Research & Psychosocial Studies)

‘Failed utopia’ is a term that has been used to describe large-scale brutalist social housing estates that were conceived in a post-war period of public-led development that experienced decades of devastating neglect and are now undergoing regeneration. One of these estates is Thamesmead, situated in Zone 4 of South East London. Thamesmead experiences high levels of poverty. There is a population of roughly 40,000 people, with only 36% of residents in full-time work, and only 50% of residents having internet access. There is no bank, train station, nightlife, or cafe and very little in terms of a local economy overall. Whilst ‘failed utopia’ suggests that failure is in the past, this dissertation suggests that Thamesmead is instead in the process of ‘failing’, a process that has been continuous over the decades since its conception with Peabody’s current regeneration being no exception. Using interviews and discourse analysis, this dissertation aims to explore the experiences of the residents, the persistent failed attempts of regenerating Thamesmead as well as looking at Loic Wacquant’s theory of advanced marginality and social exclusion. This research will then investigate the question of what the future looks like for Thamesmead and its residents.

*After working in fashion as well as the hair and beauty industry, Alice decided to pursue a career change into social research. Alice is particularly interested in social class and stigma. Her research focuses on the effects of social housing regeneration on working-class communities, with a strong emphasis on the experiences of those in large-scale post-war social housing estates that have become highly stigmatised.*