

Barry**Resident, 1974 – 2008**

I was 18 when I moved onto the estate with Mum, Dad and my brother. There were lots of other teenagers moving onto the estate too and we made friends very quickly.

I was working on Parks back then, as an assistant gardener for the council. I cut the grass on estates including the Heygate. I liked being out in the open, in the fresh air.

I remember Christmas time on the Heygate, that was nice. We'd go and see neighbours; other neighbours would come in, just for half an hour or so, say Happy Christmas and all that, have a chinwag. Mind you, mum used to do more of the talking than me. I'd come home from work and she'd be out on the landing, talking to the neighbours, if it was a nice evening.

Dad died and then Mum fell ill in 2002. I was lucky because while I was at work the neighbours would come over and look after Mum. There were always neighbours I could call upon if I needed help with Mum: Jack & Maureen, Kathy, Trisha, Julie or Jeannie – there was always somebody there, they were like family.

After mum died, I was there on my own, but people would always be calling in to say hello. Now I've moved away I don't see them anymore, we all got separated. I didn't want to move - it wasn't easy; it made me lose two stone in weight. I don't know why we couldn't all move to the same place, this is what they said at the beginning – they were going to build new blocks just for Heygate residents, but this never happened.

It's prime land here, when you think about it. You can get any bus from here over to the city and you're there in 5-10 minutes. They say they are going to build new affordable homes on the Heygate and that we will have the right to return, but I don't think they will be affordable to us. I think they will be sky-high rents and I don't want to keep being moved anyway. I don't think they care much for the working class like us.

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