

Sietske Boeles – Address to Council

My name is Sietske Boeles. I am speaking on behalf of East Oxford Residents Associations Forum about the surplus of student accommodation in East Oxford particularly since Brookes University has reported an unexpected high drop in its full time student numbers by 800. As result OBU reported to have 250 empty units (including graduate accommodation) on its Headington Hill campus site. We understand there are more empty rooms in the Paul Kent Halls in Temple Cowley and at Harcourt Hill campus.

East Oxford Residents Association Forum has repeatedly warned that the Council has approved too many planning applications for student housing in our area. We are angry and frustrated that the Planning Department and some councillors have refused to listen to the local residents who now have to suffer the consequences of bad decision making.

We are in particular angered at the granting of planning permission for the student housing development at St Clement's Car park which is likely to damage local businesses by taken away a well- used public car parking provision This site also offered an opportunity to build much needed affordable housing in East Oxford , as we believe that since 2008 not one not one affordable house was built in one of the three East Oxford wards .

The council needs to acknowledge that it has made a major mistake in permitting this student housing development, needs to understand the impact on the local community and change its policy to make sure this never happens again .

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