Part I
Case Studies

This first part of the book presents seven case studies of residents and campaigns that have challenged the demolition of social housing estates in London and/or proposed community-led plans. We have selected seven case studies that use a variety of tools, so people who use this toolkit have access to a range of options depending on their situation.

The campaigns selected had different objectives. Greater Carpenters Neighbourhood Forum, Cressingham Gardens Community and West Ken Gibbs Green Community Homes are fighting against the demolition of their homes and suggesting alternative, community-led plans. The People’s Empowerment Alliance for Custom House is not opposing the demolition, but they are proposing a community-led plan and have managed to get the council to treat them as partners in the regeneration process. Focus E15 is a group of women, mostly single mothers, who when faced with eviction decided to form a campaign group for proper rehousing. They are not a group of housing estate residents opposing the demolition of their neighbourhood, but they did, through their campaign, end up campaigning against the demolition of the Carpenters Estate and provided support to other housing campaigns. Walterton and Elgin Community Homes no longer needs to fight against the demolition of their homes because the community owns the estates. They mounted a strong and successful campaign in the late 1980s and early 1990s that led to the transfer of the housing stock from the council to a community-owned housing association. Alexandra and Ainsworth Estates does not need to fight against demolition either because Alexandra Road buildings were Grade II* listed in 1993. The residents have been successful in getting funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to refurbish their park, however, providing a great example of community-led regeneration. They are now facing some problems with the repairs, maintenance and heating system of the estate.
This diversity of campaigns provides a set of tools and strategies for people who wish to use this toolkit. The case studies cross-reference the tools explained in more detail in the second part of this book. It is important in using this toolkit to look both at the tools themselves and at the cases that have employed them.