

# Observatory Case update

**London Community Land Trust, London, UK**

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## **London CLT: Memory of the past, legacy for the future**

**The St Clement's Hospital Site** in London has had a long journey from being a workhouse to a medical facility and now to a Community Land Trust residence. Located in Mile End, this site, which has been a local landmark for over a hundred and seventy years, had been disused and dilapidated for a long time. Linden Homes led a redevelopment project for the St. Clement site which was completed in 2017. The project provided a total of 252 new houses, for a third of the cost of their market value, including 58 houses for social rent and 23 Community Land Trust (CLT) homes. The concept relies on creating a cohesive community at St. Clements by working with residents to manage their homes. As much as the site is rich in its history and heritage, the new residents have gradually started to convert the spaces as their own. Its history is alive in the legacy of the buildings as well as in the memory of the community who lived around the facility or benefited from it. It was a site which used to be closed off with big gates and walls, is now open with routes and the open space has been converted to a park. Not only has the site opened up itself, but has also allowed other spaces around it to be welcoming, such as the cemetery opposite its southern entrance.

When COVID-19 hit, Community Land Trust faced some difficulties to continue working face to face. For instance, for the renovation of some buildings, like the John Dunham building, the developers had to start working on the outside, and negotiations for its purchase had to be postponed which slowed down the process of community ownership. However, CLT managed to start engaging the residents by starting a series of steering and work-in group meetings. The meetings lead to the setting up the board for the community and the residents management company. During the pandemic, the residents in St. Clements were strongly interconnected and were looking after each other, supporting one another. Additionally, London CLT provided some grant money for those who were struggling due to the COVID situation. CLT managed to endure all of these challenges collectively during COVID thanks to its community.