**The high cost of gentrifying inner Sydney**

**Australian Social Policy Conference at UNSW Sydney (25-27 September)**

**Monday, 25 September 2017:** Sydney’s public housing tenants in Millers Point and the Sirius building have had their communities destroyed thanks to NSW Government policies that foster ‘administrative evil’, says a leading researcher in public policy.

Recent sales of public housing in inner Sydney’s Millers Point and The Rocks ignore the human costs of displacing tenants and create a physical and social divide between poorer and wealthier households, says Professor Alan Morris from the UTS Institute for Public Policy and Governance. The Government’s policy is driven by financial considerations that dehumanise tenants, and lead to so-called ‘administrative evil’, Morris will on Tuesday 26 September tell the [Australian Social Policy Conference](https://www.aspc.unsw.edu.au/), being held at UNSW Sydney.

“The blanket forced displacement of public housing tenants from Millers Point and from the Sirius apartment complex in The Rocks represents a new wave of gentrification,” says Morris.

Tenants in the city’s massive Waterloo public housing complex, which the NSW Government has targeted for redevelopment, fear the same will happen to them, he says.

“If you scrutinise the government’s media campaign to convince the public the Millers Point displacement was legitimate and fair, it is clear its justifications were all contestable, and obscure an approach driven by a deep neoliberal perspective.”

The Government has sold more than 20,000 properties including schools and public housing dwellings since it came to office in 2011, raising more than $9.1 billion, according to Government budget estimates.

Professor Morris’s research draws on interviews with public housing tenants still living in the area and tenants who have moved. Many of them spoke about being treated like “commodities” and asked why the building of public housing was dependent on the sale of existing housing in inner Sydney rather than on general revenue.

“This question becomes more pertinent in light of the NSW Government having a budget surplus of $3.4 billion in 2015–2016,” he says.

The biennial Australian Social Policy Conference, hosted by UNSW’s Social Policy Research Centre, brings together over 300 leading national and international researchers, practitioners and policy makers with a view to influencing debate and practice.

**What:** Australian Social Policy Conference

**When:** Monday, 25 September to Wednesday, 27 September 2017

**Where:**  John Niland Scientia Building, UNSW Kensington

For information on the conference and the full program, go to: https://www.aspc.unsw.edu.au/

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