

Letter to Get Living over their eviction of traders at Castle Square, Elephant and Castle

Key information

Publication type: General

Publication date: Friday 14 November 2025

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Dear Get Living,

Eviction of traders in Castle Square

Dear Get Living,

I am writing in my position as an elected member of the London Assembly regarding your eviction of traders at Castle Square.

I urge you to resolve the ongoing dispute with traders over energy bills, re-instate the traders at their business premises, and find a sustainable solution that enables them to stay in Castle Square, and subsequently in the new permanent units, in the long term. In particular, I urge you to accept the lower payments proposed by traders who have been hit with the highest electricity bills.

The value of these businesses cannot simply be reduced to numbers – they are part of the surviving fabric of Elephant and Castle, which is being steadily eroded in the face of the massive redevelopment of the area.

Not only do you have a planning duty to ensure businesses in the demolished shopping centre have a new home in the area, you have a moral duty to the long-standing community around Elephant and Castle to preserve its culture as best as possible.

Residents I have spoken to have described the last few years as “racialised displacement” and “cultural erasure”. This is what is at stake here – and it must not be allowed to continue.

The Mayor of London agrees. He wrote to me about these evictions on 4 November, stating: “I share the concern that regeneration should not come at the expense of the people who live and work in an area who are an integral part of its identity and vitality.”

I urge you to recognise the value of these traders, as the local community do, as I do, and as the Mayor of London does, and find a sustainable solution.

Kind regards,

Zoë Garbett

Green Party Member of the London Assembly