

The Woodstock Hub
P.O. Box 12227
Mill Street
Cape Town
8001

Dear Misters Van Embden, Shapiro, Winkler and Zekry

We write to you as Bromwell Street tenants and on behalf of our neighbours who also stand to be evicted when you instruct the Sheriff to remove us on or after 9 September 2016.

At its most basic level, this is a matter between us as tenants and yourselves as the new owners of the properties 120-128 Bromwell Street. We are reaching out to you so that we may find a resolution which will satisfy both your rights as property owners and our needs as families and residents of the Woodstock community.

We understand that you have secured an eviction order. We understand that you are the legal owners of our homes at Bromwell Street, and that you may enforce evictions against us. But, if the eviction order is enforced, it will result in us – 23 Bromwell Street families – becoming homeless.

The City of Cape Town has a place for people who become homeless due to eviction. It is called Blikkiesdorp. Blikkiesdorp is a relocation camp next to the airport. There are no work opportunities in Blikkiesdorp. Woodstock is far away and travel is expensive. The City is now saying that Blikkiesdorp is full. As new-comers to Blikkiesdorp, some other relocation camp like it, or areas on the Cape Flats we will likely be vulnerable and targeted by criminals. Our children risk becoming victims of gangsterism and drug abuse. We stand to lose our entire way of life and our children's futures in the city if we are made homeless. An eviction of this type will tear apart the community into which we were born, and into which we have invested our entire lives.

We were poorly represented by our legal counsel but understand now that it is not only the state that has a constitutional obligation relating to housing. As a private party with means you *also* have a responsibility to not effect homelessness, which is what will happen if you follow through with these evictions.

Since you bought the property in October 2013, we have never seen or met with you. We ask that you use this opportunity to meet with us now, so that you can see that we are reasonable people. You secured the eviction orders because you claimed we did not pay rents but it was impossible for us to pay rent. You had not introduced yourselves so we did not know who we needed to pay. We have always been willing to pay rent, as we did to the previous owner during the many years we stayed at Bromwell Street. We are willing to do so again, while we find a suitable resolution.

There has been a lot of attention on Bromwell Street these last few weeks. Our protest at the Old Biscuit Mill on Saturday was an opportunity for the many people concerned with the removal of poor families from Woodstock and Salt River to speak their minds. The whole city is watching what will happen next.

We think that this moment provides you with an opportunity to make a moral choice and to do the right thing. Do not evict us. Do not make us homeless. Meet with us. We want to continue living in our homes. If we are forced to move we want to stay near our home

community, our support networks, places of worship, schools, families and the many opportunities – like jobs, education and safety – found in the city. Each family has searched very hard for another place to stay but we can no longer afford the high rentals being asked in Woodstock and surrounding neighbourhoods. Even if you gave us more time to search, it is unlikely that we would find good alternative housing without help. We do not have enough money and there are no affordable options left in this area.

Given the urgency of this matter and the desperate situation facing us, we trust that we will receive a response by Saturday, 3 September 2016.

Charnell Commando 0761539033

Graham Beukes 0611955914