# Cornwall Council's plans to demolish John Daniel Centre sparks community outrage



In West Cornwall, a significant controversy has arisen concerning Cornwall Council's plan to demolish the John Daniel Centre in Heamoor, Penzance, to construct a 72-flat care complex. This proposal has drawn sharp criticism from various stakeholders, including residents, charity leaders, and local politicians, with concerns about its impact on vital community services.

The council has indicated that the new facility, designed to serve residents over the age of 55, is essential in addressing the region's ageing population and easing the burden on local NHS services. However, the proposal is seen by many as a retreat from the council's earlier commitments to the community. Critics argue that the council is prioritising development over local needs, asserting that the process has been less than transparent.

Andrew George, the Lib Dem MP for St Ives, expressed strong opposition to the plans, labelling the council's approach as "disturbingly Putin-esque." Speaking to Cornwall Live, he remarked, “There’s something profoundly wrong when a council applies to itself for planning permission on land it owns, uses its own lawyers to review the case, and tries to push it through just before an election.” He further characterised the situation as a misuse of administrative power that disregards the community’s vulnerable members.

The John Daniel Centre currently serves as a crucial hub for various social services, including the Growing Links’ Street Food Project, which provides daily meals for the homeless and those facing food insecurity. This issue is particularly pressing in Penzance, one of the UK's most deprived areas. Lynne Dyer, director of Growing Links, emphasised the significance of the centre, stating, “We run a thriving centre here that’s genuinely changing lives. There is no viable alternative location for us. The town centre doesn’t want us, and other sites are already full or inappropriate.”

Initially, the proposed care complex was promoted as a 100% affordable housing initiative. However, this figure has since dropped to just 30%, further inflaming tensions among local residents and campaigners who argue that the council is neglecting community interests in favour of ambiguous planning processes.

As discussions surrounding this contentious proposal continue, the future of the John Daniel Centre and its associated services remains in jeopardy, with activists and local leaders advocating for a resolution that prioritises the needs of the community.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2022-01-23/the-childrens-centres-libraries-and-offices-cornwall-council-plans-to-sell> - This article discusses Cornwall Council's plan to sell various buildings, including the John Daniel Centre in Penzance, as part of a broader strategy to reduce its estate.
2. <https://www.falmouthpacket.co.uk/news/19858218.buildings-plots-land-cornwall-council-wants-sell//> - This report details the 45 buildings and plots of land Cornwall Council intends to sell, highlighting the John Daniel Centre among other properties.
3. <https://www.voicenewspapers.co.uk/news/project-feeding-the-most-vulnerable-in-community-opens-brand-new-kitchen-735387> - This article highlights the Street Food Project's relocation to the former John Daniel Centre, emphasizing the centre's role in serving vulnerable community members.
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