

# 'Brothel in new square' sparks angry response

by JAMES WILLISHER

A ROW has broken out over a call to establish a brothel in Gillett Square, Dalston, which was opened by the mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, two weeks ago.

Arthur Shuter, 49, wrote the offending email only hours before the official opening, sending it to contacts, and it was eventually circulated to councillors.

Mr Shuter, a member of Hackney Independent, a left-wing political organisation, wrote: "Nowhere in the speeches will there be an announcement that any of the unfinished buildings on the site is to be opened as a high-class brothel where the former nightly inhabitants of Gillett Street can safely ply their trade and progress to become part of the middle classes for whom this new scheme is designed.

"None of the invited speakers will be asking where the girls are now, nor will they care."

The comments sparked a storm. Cllr Jonathan McShane told the *Gazette*: "Since Hackney Independent allowed Arthur Shuter to take on a leadership role, their policy development has become much more imaginative.

"Arthur demands that a brothel be built on Gillett Square to provide a new venue from which prostitutes can operate now that the council have cleaned up the area."

Mr Shuter has since sent an email to councillors, town hall staff and other contacts saying he was expressing his personal opinions, and not those of any political group or campaign.

He added that he was



Above, Gillett Square in Dalston; inset, Arthur Shuter

merely pointing out that prostitutes and drug addicts who frequented Gillett Street before its transformation would simply move on, rather than the problem being solved.

"It is a real shame that those who were elected to

make important decisions in Hackney and/or whose salaries are paid by the residents and traders of the borough have nothing better to do with their time than to nit-pick and try to make trouble for others," he said.

Gillett Square, a former

car park, is to be a venue for outdoor events as well as being home to arts-based organisations and the Vortex Jazz Club. It is the first project to be completed in an initiative by Mr Livingstone to open 100 new public spaces in the capital.