

British Theatre Guide

News, reviews, features and podcast on theatre across the UK

E15

Helen Monks & Matt Woodhead

Lung Theatre Company

Northern Stage at Summerhall

6–27 August 2016



You probably know someone who is having difficulties finding a place to live. Most of us do. Then there is also that niggling feeling that there are more people living on the streets. Shouldn't they be inside during the cold wet weather?

These are signs of a housing crisis. Helen Monks & Matt Woodhead's very entertaining documentary drama *E15* gives us some insight into what is happening and how we might respond.

The play centres on the mothers at the Focus E15 hostel who were threatened with eviction from their housing association in 2013 when Newham Council in London withdrew its funding. Faced with the threat of being rehoused a long way from London they mounted a successful campaign to remain which inspired activists across the country.

This exciting, fast-paced production is adapted from numerous interviews with the Focus E15 women and to give it a context also people in other campaigns and organisations concerned with housing. It is often very moving and occasionally funny.

The confident cast give a clear engaging performance speaking the stories of the E15 women, singing and dramatically recreating scenes from this special history.

At a time when the government's insane housing policy is geared not to providing homes but instead to making property a better investment opportunity for the very rich, this play shows us the terrible consequences of that policy and how it might be resisted.

Reviewer: [Keith Mckenna](#)