

LHG Annual Conference resolution 2019

Conference notes the outcomes of the Shelter Social Housing Commission, and in particular the recommendation to provide an average of 150,000 new public rented homes each year for 20 years, to meet needs and aspirations for decent, genuinely affordable homes.

Labour Housing Group notes the Labour Party's commitment in "Housing for the Many" to build 1 million affordable homes over 10 years, and considers that it will take determination and radical actions to ensure delivery of that target.

Conference agrees that the next Labour Government will give local government the powers and funding to lead on meeting the target locally by:

- Removing restrictions to enable councils to build new council homes, including ending the Right To Buy
- Building a new generation of energy efficient / zero carbon, homes for sale and for rent, (including off-site construction homes) as part of a Green New Deal
- Providing public, well-paid jobs with good training and apprenticeships, to build and to produce materials for new homes
- Requisitioning by Compulsory Purchase Order empty private homes, including unoccupied tower blocks in London (as in Berlin and Vancouver), as well as the worst private rented sector properties

LHG welcomes the policy decision that all new private tenancies will be indefinite, and asks Conference to agree that Assured Shorthold Tenancies will be abolished and that rent controls will be introduced. This will help to tackle the homelessness crisis, and provide more stable communities.

Conference also recommends that housing investment is seen as investing in assets rather than borrowing.

My notes

Conference, we have a housing crisis, and a dysfunctional housing market. The terrible Tory government and their Lib Dems friends are to blame for the escalation of misery and stress caused to thousands.

Only a Labour Government can tackle this housing crisis. Only the Labour Party has the plans and determination to deliver what we need to solve the crisis.

You all know, I am sure, that homelessness has been increasing **year on year** since 2010. The latest figures show **an increase of more than 10%** over the last year in the number of households counted as homeless by local authorities. Numbers of families in temporary accommodation reached the **highest since 2007**. We've seen a big jump in the number losing private rented homes, an increasing number of them older people. Meanwhile rough sleeping has increased by **165%** since 2010. And the Bureau of Investigative Journalism counts at least **449** deaths of homeless people in 1 year, but it could be as high as **600**.

Shelter estimates the real homelessness hidden figure is more like **320,000** people.

What's caused the increases? (USE FINGERS TO TICK OFF)

- Tory Benefit policies –sanctions, Bedroom Tax, the limits set by Local Housing Allowance, and moving to Universal Credit
- House prices rising till recently
- Unaffordable rents in the private sector: Crisis and the Chartered Institute of Housing say that 97% of areas in England are unaffordable for people on ordinary incomes, while landlords can end most tenancies after 6 months or a year as they wish
- Huge numbers of empty homes, the highest for 6 years – particularly in London, where over **22,000** homes sat vacant in London in 2018
- Loss of hundreds of thousands of public rented homes through the Right To Buy, demolition without replacement, and removal to other tenures.
- And of course, fewer homes built. This Tory shower has built fewer homes than any government, Labour or Conservative, since **1923**. They built only **6,500 new social homes built last year** compared to our record of an average of **35,000** in **our last 4 years of office**. In many LAs, **not a single social rented home** was built in 2017.

Shelter's recent Social Housing Commission called for an average of 150,000 new public rented homes each year for 20 years and Labour has well-developed plans to meet that target.

Of course, building houses also means jobs. We call upon Labour to commit to those being well-paid jobs with good training and apprenticeships, something that Labour LAs have been leading on for many years. (SMILE)

LHG is calling for local authorities to be able to build without restrictions, with no Right To Buy taking the houses out of the public rented stock.

These also need to be energy efficient homes, as part of Labour's Green New Deal.

Finally, we call for the money invested on new public sector housing to be seen as investment in assets, rather than a cost to the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement.

Let's be proud of spending money on housing the many, not the few!