

Composite 23 - Housing

Conference notes that:

- Shelter's 'A Vision for Social Housing' report concludes that 3.1 million new social homes need to be built over the next 20 years – an average of 155,000 per year
- Under the last Labour Government's 'National Affordable Homes Programme' the grant available for councils to deliver new council housing was set at around £60,000 per home. Considering inflation since then, more per home will be needed for councils to deliver decent, genuinely affordable social rented housing.
- Under the policy of Right-to-Buy, over 1.8 million council properties in England have been sold to date. These homes have never been replaced one-for-one.
- This government has failed to tackle the housing shortage and homelessness, the serious affordability problems in many areas the imbalance between support for housing developers and constraints on local authorities and housing associations and the refusal to give private sector tenants protection □ Young people bear the brunt of this crisis, being priced out of renting, unable to access council housing and rely on assistance, with approximately 3,400,000 20to-34 year olds living in their parents' homes.
- Lack of security of tenure including Section 21 no-fault evictions.
- Increased homelessness and temporary accommodation rent arrears due to sky-high rents and benefit cuts.
- There has been a failure to build new council homes

Conference therefore calls upon the Labour Party to:

- Put housing at the heart of our campaigning efforts to win the next general election.
- Adopt a policy of building an average of 155,000 social rented homes a year, with at least 100,000 of these social rented council homes (minimum of 3,100,000 additional social homes over the next 20 years), to start with immediate effect when in Government.
- Pledge at least £10 billion a year for housing grant, ring fenced for delivering 100,000 social rented council homes to be announced at the first Budget.
- Support root and branch change to the housing system with solutions appropriate for different regions
- Invest in skills development in the construction industry
- Back councils with new funding and powers to enable the biggest council house building programme in 40 years.
- Ensure that all information about land ownership, control, subsidies and planning should be published as open data.
- Fund the retrofitting of sprinklers, and the replacement of combustible cladding in all high-rise social housing tower blocks, paid for by the Government.

- Adopt a policy of ending, not suspending, Right-to-Buy and Right-to-Acquire to be announced on day one of a Labour Government.
- Help private renters with an end to 'no fault' evictions, open-ended tenancies, caps and controls on rents linked to local income, new minimum standards and tougher enforcement.
- Pledge to create a new Labour Legal definition of an "Affordable Rent", as linked to local income
- Legal aid restored for repairing obligations with fairer eligibility
- Back households on ordinary income who aspire to own their own home with discounted homes to buy and first dibs for local people on new homes in their area.
- A commitment to stabilising nominal house prices.
- Establish New Public Development Corporations with power to purchase land at closer to current use value, and develop it in the public interest.
- End the fire sale of public land.
- A national housing and regeneration strategy with long-term funding for housing and regeneration/infrastructure through grants and loans allied to national/local targets for affordability
- Introduce new energy efficiency standards on all new homes in insulation to passivhaus standard and back large-scale green retrofit programme. Build a new generation of energy efficient / zero carbon, homes for sale and for rent, (including offsite construction homes) as part of a Green New Deal
- Removing restrictions to enable councils to build new council homes
- Abolish the Bedroom Tax forthwith.
- Build new properties with a lifelong design for easy adaptation
- Creating regional banks, regionalizing and reforming Homes England to restore the former HCA roles in regeneration and commitment to tenants and communities.
- The re-establishment of Local Housing Strategies with the same weight as the Local Plan.
- Ensure fire safety measures are in place and communicated to all inhabitants
- End rough sleeping within a Parliament and tackle the wider causes of rising homelessness including the Tories' punitive welfare benefit rules.
- Ensure building companies commissioned for these social rented and/or privately/association built intermingled accommodation pay as a minimum the current Living Foundation wage and employ and train an agreed percentage of apprentices
- Requisition 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
- Give councils the powers and resources to take housing associations under direct council control.

- Abolish Assured Shorthold Tenancies and legislate for open-tenancies, a Tenants' Rights Charter and compulsory registration for the private rented sector to enforce high common standards across all rented sectors.
- Establish and fully fund councils to deliver a Housing support service to protect people from housing stress and cut homelessness.
- Ensure that among the new properties to be built, these social rented properties include properties for the full range of age groups who have different needs at different stages of their lives. In larger development projects the following should be included at the planning stage and commissioned to include:
 - appropriate infrastructure, access to public transport, cycle and walkways
 - local shops with appropriate food outlets
 - access to or provision of care and advice services, medical and pharmaceutical provision
- Conference calls on the Party to accept these proposals as a commitment for immediate action on forming the government to provide the much needed housing to obviate the growing rates of homelessness and child poverty in our communities.

Mover: South East Cornwall

Seconder: Young Labour