

London Labour Housing Group Manifesto submission for 2020 Mayoral and London Assembly elections

The London housing crisis has grown worse as a result of a series of inappropriate policies being pursued by successive governments and by decades of underinvestment. The Labour Mayor and Labour Councils are constrained in the action they can take to improve the situation by the policies of central Government. However, the Labour Party at its September 2019 Conference adopted a new progressive housing policy. A Labour Government, in implementing these new policies, will enable both the Mayor and London boroughs to respond more effectively to the challenges we face.

London Labour is therefore campaigning for changes in national policy, including:

- The repeal of the majority of the provisions in the 2016 Housing and Planning Act
- The end of the mandatory council house sales
- The reinstatement of an enhanced national programme of grant to provide social rented homes at lower rents and with security of tenure
- New powers for councils to acquire land for housing development
- Changes in planning rules to allow councils to insist that all new development provides appropriate proportions of social rented homes and other sub-market homes
- Increased regulation of the private rented sector in terms of standards, management and rent levels
- Improved regulation of standards of construction, fire safety and management of all rented homes, whether owned by councils, housing associations or private landlords
- Increased powers for local authorities to raise local revenue
- Dropping the Government's plans to withdraw all central government revenue support to local authorities by 2020
- Government grant to ensure that existing council dwellings assessed as fire risks to be made safe, so that the costs do not fall on tenants or local residents as a whole
- Decriminalisation of homelessness
- Enhanced powers for local authorities to take over the management of long-term empty properties.

The Labour Mayor commits himself to:

- Focusing available resources on maintaining existing council homes and providing new homes at low rents and with security of tenure

- Using publicly owned land to provide new homes at low rents and with security of tenure
- Resisting any further loss of existing socially rented homes, whether owned by the local authority or by housing associations
- Using planning powers to ensure all new housing developments includes appropriate proportions of socially rented homes and other forms of sub-market housing
- Ensuring all new residential developments meet the required standards
- Only propose redevelopment which at least replaces all existing rented and submarket homes on a like for like basis
- Ensuring full resident consultation in any proposals to improve or redevelop estates, with any proposals to be subject to a ballot of residents
- Supporting new mutual housing initiatives including coops, community land trusts and co-ownership schemes
- Ensure that temporary accommodation for homeless households is appropriate to the needs of the specific household and is of an acceptable standard
- Ensuring bad private landlords can no longer operate
- Co-ordinate a London wide scheme for regulating standards and rents in the private rented sector
- Provide support to tenants associations in council, housing association and private sectors.