



AXE the HOUSING ACT

CONTROL RENTS  SECURE HOMES FOR ALL

8 June 2017 General election

Housing at a crossroads

This general election needs to focus attention on housing, a major concern for voters. Five million people are on council waiting lists; buying a home has never been more unaffordable; private renters typically spend half their income on rent; homelessness has doubled since 2010; good homes are being demolished in the name of 'regeneration'.

There are many places where people are being priced-out and communities broken by rising housing costs, benefit cuts and the shortage of genuinely affordable homes. Huge damage is being done to our society by insecure, unaffordable, sub-standard housing.

We need action to improve the situation for private tenants, living with constant rent rises and only two months from eviction. In Britain housing costs are at the highest ever as a proportion of incomes, with private renters paying the highest rents with the least security in Europe. The next government must take action to improve and extend tenancy rights and control rents.

We believe building more homes that are genuinely affordable and secure is essential. This requires long-term

government investment and freeing local councils to build the homes we need. Council housing pays for itself and is a permanent community asset.

We are also concerned about the role of housing associations (HAs), set up as 'social landlords' to help people in housing need but becoming increasingly commercial. We call on the next government to make HAs more accountable, restore regulation and demand that they build more homes for rent at not-for-profit social rent levels.

Housing is at a crossroads. Recent policies, and in particular the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and benefit cuts, are taking us in the wrong direction. Unless these change, millions more will be forced into insecure and unaffordable private renting or homelessness, as non-market housing alternatives are destroyed.

We call on all politicians seeking our votes to commit themselves to:

- Repeal the Housing and Planning Act 2016
- Stop demolition of council estates
- A national programme of council house building
- Decent, secure homes and rent control for all

Signed by

Eileen Short Axe the Housing Act/
Defend Council Housing

Ken Loach, filmmaker
Generation Rent

Demolition Watch London
Danny Dorling, author and academic

The Rt Revd Adrian Newman The
Bishop of Stepney

The Most Revd Peter Smith, RC
Archbishop of Southwark

Rt Revd Jonathan Clark, Bishop of
Croydon

Archbishop Fidelia Onyuku-Opukiri,
Council of African and Afro-
Caribbean Churches

Revd Nigel Cowgill, Chair of London
District of the Methodist Church

Revd Nicola Furley-Smith, Moderator,
URC Southern Synod

Canon Steven Saxby, Executive
Officer, London Churches Social
Action

Carrie Hedderwick Sheffield Axe the
Housing Act campaign

Jelana Stevic, tenant campaigner,
St Michael's Gate, Peterborough

Phil Sedler, chair Tower Hamlets
Tenants Federation

Shaun O'Regan Secretary Rodney
Road TRA

Tanya Murat, Chair Southwark
Defend Council Housing

Truus Jansen for One Housing
Tenants Action Group, primary
teacher

Carla Lane, One Housing tenant,
NHS employee

Barry Duckett, Chair Canada Estate
TRA and Rotherhithe Area
Housing Forum

Clare Solomon, outgoing Chair, Oxo
Tower Housing Coop (Redwood
Housing)

Disabled People Against Cuts
Sam Fairbairn Peoples Assembly
Against Austerity

Steve Turner, Unite the union,
assistant general secretary

Mark Serwotka PCS trade union
general secretary

Manuel Cortes, TSSA trade union
general secretary

Bob Hale Emeritus Professor of
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Dr Jackie Turner, Hon Sec BMA
London Regional Council
(personal capacity)

Guy Shennan, Chair British
Association of Social Workers

Dr Anna Livingstone, Tower Hamlets
GP, BMA and Unite

Dr Jack Czauderna, retired GP,
member of Doctors in Unite and S
Yorks Unite Health Service branch

Suzanne Muna, Secretary Unite
Housing Workers branch and
Unite executive council

George Binette, Phoebe Watkins,
Barry Waldner on behalf of
Camden Unison

Sue Plain, Secretary Southwark
UNISON, UNISON National
Local Government Service
Group Executive Member
(personal capacity)

Ruth Hayes, Unite executive council
(personal capacity)

Camden Unite Community
Jane Aitchison, Sean Vernell, for
Unite the Resistance

Miriam Scharf Newham NTA
Jan Sweeney, council tenant,
Kensington Labour Party

Emily O'Mara, ex-Heathview
Housing Cooperative

Jenny Kassman Islington
Ruth Clarke, Islington
Richard Kuper

Rosemary Addington, Surbiton
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