



Policy Discussion Paper (January 2019)

Unite Housing Workers Branch Demands

Introduction

This paper sets out the housing policy demands democratically agreed by the Unite Housing Workers Branch (LE1111), all under the broad aim of rolling back the commercialisation of social housing.

Funding for Housing and Homelessness Services:

- Reopen the 2012 debt settlement for council housing.
- Campaign for a serious increase in funding for agencies working with rough sleepers.
- Oppose 'payment by results' funding methods [for homeless services] such as 'Social Impact Bonds' which introduce instability and perverse incentives.
- Ending the freeze on Local Housing Allowance (LHA).
- Repeal of the deeply flawed Universal Credit system which is exacerbating the housing crisis.
- Reverse local authority cuts and call on Labour local authorities to set legal 'no cuts' budgets as a basis for a mass campaign against cuts.

Housing Provision

- Campaign for 100,000 social rented homes per year backed by the required grant funding.
- Support for housing built by local authority direct labour.
- Support for Jeremy Corbyn's call for empty homes to be requisitioned for use by the homeless, particularly those made homeless after Grenfell.
- The use of public land for council house building rather than private housing schemes.

People-Centred Housing Policy

- A review of information sharing [on migrant rough sleepers] to ensure client confidentiality is maintained. Reviews should be implemented by homelessness agencies and funding bodies.
- Binding ballots of local people before regeneration schemes proceed.



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- A mandatory requirement for each housing association to have an independent and democratic tenants' organisation.
- Ensure council and social housing residents' needs are placed at the centre of [housing] policies.
- Ensure that all housing placements are suitable for the residents concerned.
- Oppose the demolition of tower blocks that do not have the clear support of residents.

Fire Safety Campaigning

- Retrofitting of sprinklers and other safety measures as appropriate with full funding from central government.
- Continued support for Grenfell survivors through the inquiry process including forming a parallel people's inquiry if necessary.
- Immediately make safe all tower blocks regardless of who the landlord is.

Rent Controls

- Campaign for effective rent control.

Housing Regulation and Planning Regulations

- Review of the Social Housing Regulator's powers, including the ability to intervene on behalf of tenants whose concerns are being ignored.
- Full updating of building regulations and restoration funding previously cut from emergency services and for conducting fire building checks.

Protection for Housing and Construction Workers

- Review of housing management staffing levels, management practices and job roles to ensure safety critical roles are adequately resourced.
- Ensuring housing associations and firms awarded public sector construction contracts are free from blacklisting.
- Offer [housing] workers full trade union rights including recognition of their chosen union.



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- Reverse charges to planning regulations that give more power to property speculators.

All resolutions passed by the Unite Housing Workers Branch since February 2014 are available from www.housingworkers.org.uk > About Us > Resolutions.

- **Housing Debt Campaign Resolution** - 2018/11/13

<http://www.housingworkers.org.uk/imgs/files/Branch%20Resolution%20-%20Council%20Housing%20Debt%20Campaign.pdf>

- **Submission to Labour Party** - 2018/06/12

<http://www.housingworkers.org.uk/imgs/files/Branch%20Resolution%20-%20Labour%20Housing%20Green%20Paper.pdf>

- **Homeless Agencies and Deportations** - 2018/06/12

<http://www.housingworkers.org.uk/imgs/files/Branch%20Resolution%20-%20Homelessness%20Agencies%20and%20Deportations.pdf>

- **Submission to Labour Party on social housing policy** – 2018/01/24

<http://www.housingworkers.org.uk/imgs/1516872666.pdf>

- **Housing Rights Campaign** - 2018/01/09

<http://www.housingworkers.org.uk/imgs/files/Branch%20Resolution%20-%20Unite's%20Housing%20Rights%20Campaign%20V3.pdf>

- **Grenfell** - 2017/07/11

http://www.housingworkers.org.uk/imgs/files/2017_07_11%20-%20Resolution%20-%20Grenfell.pdf