



Release: Immediate Release

Subject: Housing Association Residents Extend Rent and Service Charge Strikes

Date: 1st June 2021

A group of tenants and residents are to begin a coordinated rent and service charge strike from Thursday 1st July 2021 in protest over various landlords' failings, and because of the extreme barriers they have faced when trying to engage their landlords to resolve their issues.

Within a week of launching the support group, membership had grown to fifty. Complaints from the group range from incorrect service charge statements, insufficient information about the service charges, disrepairs relating to their homes or estates, and failures to make reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities.

The tenants and residents within the coordinating group all reside in housing association properties.

Attempts to address the issues directly with their landlords, and in some cases through other routes have been futile. One member of the group commented:

"I am in despair as to how to stop these atrocious companies any other way. We've experienced diabolical rip-offs, incompetence and lies. They have damaged our lives for years and years. Many thousands of tenants across the sector experience endless failed attempts to get their problem sorted out. We are ground down.

"I honestly can't see how anything other than withholding money is going to stop them. Even when the Social Housing White Paper is made law, I don't believe that there is any other way to hold these massive, powerful corporations to account"

Councillors and members of Parliament complain that they experience the same difficulties as tenants and residents when trying to engage with the associations, or are misled about the work done to address issues. The Regulator of Social Housing and Housing Ombudsman are both severely restricted in their ability to sanction housing associations, even when the landlords are shown to be non-compliant with their legal obligations. Access to justice through the legal system is also problematic, often requiring resources not available to many tenants and residents.

Their landlords are Clarion, Glasgow Housing Association, Guinness Partnership, Hyde Housing, London & Quadrant (L&Q), Metropolitan Thames Valley, Notting Hill Genesis, One Housing Group, Onward Homes, Peabody, Sanctuary Housing Association, and Tower Hamlets Community Housing.

The tenants reside across London, Beckenham, Manchester, Chichester, Bolton, Seaford, Brighton, Stevenage, Luton, Southampton, Northampton, Sidcup, and Glasgow.



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Ends

Notes

The Social Housing Action Campaign

SHAC is a network of tenants, residents, workers and activists in housing associations and cooperatives. It is aligned to the Unite Housing Workers Branch which represents staff in these organisations.

SHAC campaigns to improve the lives of those who live in housing association properties and to reduce the commercialisation of the sector. Its demands include genuine tenant and resident democracy, improved repairs and maintenance services, reduced rents and service charges, better health and safety provisions for all, and an end to the exploitation of housing workers.

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