

THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO PRIVATISATION

Lobby our Camden's MPs

SUPPORT THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO WIN DIRECT INVESTMENT IN COUNCIL HOUSING

It's not just in Camden that council tenants and trade unionists are fighting to defend council housing.

Similar campaigns exist around the country – co-ordinated by the National Defend Council Housing Organisation.

115 MPs from all the major parties have signed a Commons motion – including several ex-ministers. Tenants, trade unionists, councillors and MPs from more than 60 areas took part in the 1800 strong rally and lobby of Parliament in January.



The campaign has delegates (above) attending the DCH National Conference in Liverpool. Speakers included James Morrow (Scottish Tenants' Organisation), Mick Graham (GMB Union), Councillor Ross Gladden (Labour Liverpool), Housang Shokrasiasian and Bolton MP Brian Iddon. Read a full conference report on the DCH website.

Vital services, libraries, old people's homes and now council housing.

Many of our relatives fought for our right to enjoy these services and, in particular, our right to decent and affordable public housing.

By introducing ALMOs, Camden will destroy that right and a tradition which has provided generations of ordinary working people with decent, secure and affordable homes.

It is crucial that Camden tenants unite to defend this tradition for today's and tomorrow's generation and demand direct investment in our homes – vote no to ALMO!

Peter Dando, Co-Founder, Campaign to Save Witley Road EPH



Tenants and trade unionists at the national lobby of Parliament

already won changes in government policy. They have had to concede a new right to allow councils to borrow to invest – something that many cynics said would be impossible to achieve.

Whilst Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, now in charge of council housing, is trying to look tough he is losing the argument. Tenants in Stockport, Nuneaton & Bedworth and Aberdeen have recently voted against stock transfer.

200 councils have still not backed one of the government's options (stock transfer, PFI or council housing and ALMOs) and many who have don't expect to get tenants' support for their decision.

A united campaign can win much more.

Many councillors believe in council housing and are backing the cam-

paign too. They are amongst the growing list of signatories to the campaign's six demands to win a 'level playing field' for council housing and council tenants.

We should be demanding that our councillors – and our two MPs – behind this campaign and secure a long term future for council housing – with no strings attached.

We shouldn't accept their blackmail today.



Where was the consultation?

The consultation with tenants and residents to date has been completely biased and unacceptable, with little or no

opportunity to debate the issues. A number of groups have supposedly been set up to discuss, scrutinise or 'push' the consultation process forward – it is quite clear that these groups are being used by Camden council to demonstrate to the Government that genuine consultation is taking place when, in fact, it is not

The latest copy of Camden's Housing News, an ALMO Special, was drawn up and distributed before any consultation or input from the ALMO Reference Group. There was no discussion either by the group or by the DMCs on the content of the

bid to be submitted to the government. Where was the consultation? David Rodgers, Chair, Gospel Oak DMC - leading deputee to council scrutiny

When are New Labour MPs and councillors going to pay attention to ordinary working class people and tenants on council estates. We don't want ALMOs or any other form of privatisation. Remember, we are the ones who traditionally vote for you and put you in power.

Peter Cook, Bacton Low-Rise Estate

ALMO means arms length management. Surely the reverse of ALMO is what tenants want.

Ray Alderson, spokesperson for Waltham Program Group and former mayor of Camden

It is high time that someone draws the line and tells Tony Blair & John Prescott, where to get off. To leave council housing alone, & to take responsibility for building or funding social housing instead of passing the buck to housing associations or arms length managements that nobody wants.

Alfred Macleod, Camden tenant, Oakley Square

Tenants in Camden have played a major part in defending council housing against government attacks. We fought big rent increases under the Housing Finance Act in the 70s (picture below), stopped the HATS (Housing Action Trusts) in the 80s and stock transfer in the 90s.

Every time we were told there was 'no alternative' – and proved them wrong.

Why should we just roll over now and accept anything less than direct investment in our homes – with no strings attached?



Both Frank Dobson and Glenda Jackson have done the right thing and come out against government plans for Foundation Hospitals. ALMOs are the housing equivalent.

Write to Frank and Glenda at the House of Commons, London SW1 1AA and ask them to support our campaign. Ask them to sign Austin Mitchell's motion in Parliament – EDM 116.

What other MPs say...

I do not see why a list claim – even a 'good' housing authority should be forced by government to transfer housing by any of the methods we now looking at today. Money that could be spent on bricks and mortar is being wasted.

Stephen Ryan MP (Minister in charge of Housing before Prescott)

There is no issue over whether [graduated borrowing] could be extended to cover leasing it as more effective way.

Justin Mitchell MP

This campaign is spreading. It's bringing in more support – from unions, tenants and councillors. We want a mass campaign all over the country.

Justin Mitchell MP

Let's be determined about it. Let's keep this going. Let's make the government listen. This government can do the job if we who are its supporters make clear that this is what we demand of them. Let's protest and save council housing.

Gerald Kaufman MP (former Housing Minister)

The title seems to be tending in our favour and I hope very much that the government will take note and realise that council housing is something worth defending.

Andrew Bennett MP (Chair of the DCH House of Commons select committee)

What you can do...

- Help distribute this broadsheet to every home and put the front page in your window.
- Organise a meeting on your estate – invite a speaker from Camden Defend Council Housing.
- Ask your TA reps to sign the Camden DCH statement and ask your Councillors too!
- Write to your MP (Frank Dobson or Glenda Jackson) and ask them to sign EDM 116 (see above).
- Make a donation to 'Camden DCH' – unlike the council we can't use tenants' funds to fund our campaign!



Order copies of the new DCH pamphlet. 76 pages with contributions by tenants, trade unionists, MPs and academics. Essential reading. £2.50

Camden claims that meeting the 'decent homes target' on time is critical. But how many government targets get changed, overrun or forgotten? It's just a ploy to get an ALMO setup.