

Defend Council Housing

Model Motion for tenants, union, political and other organisations, 21 June 2007

We [name of organisation] welcome the report that "Mr Brown has an 'open mind' about the fourth option for council housing, as an alternative to transfer, arm's-length management and the private finance initiative" (Inside Housing 8 June 2007); "I cannot promise to implement the fourth option on council housing today [a demand from the Defend Council Housing group for the last six years] but what I will tell you is that councils will be allowed to build homes again" (Guardian Unlimited, 18 June) and press reports that all six candidates in the Labour Party Deputy Leadership contest back the 'Fourth Option' too.

We further support the call for the Prime Minister to appoint a Minister for Housing at Cabinet level tasked to implement the 'Fourth Option' of direct investment in council housing as a priority.

New proposals from the government will need to be measured against three simple objectives and a clear timescale for implementation to:

- 1. Improve all existing council homes and estates**
- 2. Start a new council house building programme**
- 3. Ensure sufficient funds to maintain all council homes in future years**

The 'Fourth Option' principles of ring-fencing all revenue and capital receipts and a level playing field on debt write-off and gap funding would directly benefit some 200 local authorities across the UK. They include those retaining their homes, those with ALMOs and those where tenants have rejected privatisation or not yet voted. And all authorities across England, Scotland and Wales would gain from the opportunity to build new council housing.

We need to make sure that sound bites are turned into concrete proposals that secure a long term future for council housing and direct investment to replace the bullying and blackmailing of tenants to accept privatisation.

There now needs to be detailed discussion, involving representatives of the tenants, trade unionists, councillors and MPs who have successfully pushed the demand for the 'Fourth Option' to the top of the political agenda, to agree how the 'Fourth Option will be implemented. This must include a clearly defined timescale that meets the needs of tenants who are still waiting for improvements to their homes and estates.

In the meantime we call for an immediate moratorium on councils promoting transfers, PFI or ALMOs. Local authorities cannot be allowed to continue to tell tenants that no alternative options exist when it is now clear government policy is about to change.

Tenants,
trade unions,
councillors
and MPs say:

'FOURTH OPTION' for COUNCIL HOUSING



to improve existing council homes and estates and start a new council house building programme



To help bring this campaign to a speedy successful conclusion we agree to:

- Organise a delegation of tenants, trade unionists and councillors to attend the DCH national conference on July 12th at Congress House, London asking our local authority to fund a delegation of tenants to attend on the same basis they send tenants reps to other housing events;
- Organise a broad based campaign against any stock transfer, PFI or ALMO in our area and ensure that tenants are aware we are winning the argument for direct investment in council housing;
- Hold a "Hands Up for the 'Fourth Option'" press photo opportunity involving tenants, trade unionists and councillors in our area;
- Order and distribute the latest DCH newspaper to tenants, councillors and trade unionists in our area (£18 per 100 / £100 per 1000 copies)
- Encourage individuals to sign the Downing Street e-petition www.petitions.pm.gov.uk/fourth-option/
- Ask our MPs to sign EDM 136 'Funding Decent Council Housing'
- Affiliate and make a donation to Defend Council Housing
- Send this motion to appropriate national bodies, local authorities, MPs and the press with a copy to DCH.

