

The Housing and Planning Bill

This branch notes that the Housing and Planning Bill is currently being considered by the House of Lords. The main points of the Bill are:

- The extension of the Right to Buy (RTB) to Housing Association tenants.
- A compulsion for local councils to sell-off their most 'valuable' homes, with the proceeds to be used to pay for RTB subsidies.
- The imposition of market or 'near market' rents for households with income over £30,000 (£40,000 in London).
- The abolition of lifetime 'secure' tenancies.
- The ability for private developers to build 'Starter Homes' instead of genuinely affordable social housing on new developments.

This branch condemns these proposals because they will:

1. Do nothing to solve the housing crisis or improve security and control rents in the private sector. On the contrary, they will make the situation worse by reducing the number of permanent, genuinely affordable homes for rent.
2. Introduce means-testing to council and social housing.
3. Undermine stable, mixed communities and the housing rights of vulnerable people.

The housing crisis is damaging the quality of life of members. Workers on low and moderate pay now find it almost impossible to afford a decent home close to where they work. An increasing number of our members are suffering high rents in sub-standard private renting or having to commute long distances because there's no alternative. Any improvements in pay and conditions won by unions are swallowed up by housing and travel costs. Housing is now a workplace issue and one that the whole labour movement needs to campaign around, starting with the Housing and Planning Bill.

We therefore resolve to:

- a) Join with other unions, tenant organisations and housing campaigns to oppose the Housing and Planning Bill.
- b) Support the next national march against the Housing Bill 18th June in London.
- c) Use union resources to support the Kill the Housing Bill campaign.
- d) Make a financial donation to the Kill the Housing Bill campaign.

See killthehousingbill.wordpress.com; and contact killthehousingbill@gmail.com
Donations c/o Defend Council Housing via Bank Transfer, or post to PO Box 33519
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