



# **LOBBY FOR**

## **DECENT, AFFORDABLE, SECURE AND ACCOUNTABLE**

# **COUNCIL HOUSING**

Council tenants across Britain are uniting with trade unionists, local campaigners, councillors and MPs to say hands off our homes – invest in first class council housing now.

We will not accept the lie that says we can only have repairs and improvements if we accept a change of landlord and privatisation. Decent, affordable, secure and accountable council housing is an essential public service alongside the NHS, comprehensive education and other services. We will not give it up.

From all over Britain we are coming to Parliament to lobby our MPs and put our case to government: invest in our homes now and improve all our estates. We demand the option of direct investment in first class council housing – with no strings attached.

## **STOP PRIVATISATION**

### **INVEST IN COUNCIL HOUSING**

### **– WITH NO STRINGS ATTACHED**

**Wednesday 29 January 2003**

**Rally 1-3pm Central Hall Westminster**

with speakers from the tenants and trade union movements, MPs and councillors and lobby of Parliament

#### **What you can do**

- 1.** Get tenants' organisations, trade unions, councillors and campaign activists together to build the lobby of Parliament. Book transport now.
- 2.** Help leaflet council tenants, hold a public meeting and request a deputation to your next Council meeting – to build support for the national campaign for investment not privatisation
- 3.** Write to your MP to put the case for council housing. Ask to see them on 29 January in Parliament (House of Commons, London SW1A 1AA).

This lobby for council housing is organised by Defend Council Housing, tenants organisations around the country and the trade unions UNISON, UCATT and GMB

**Get your organisation to add its support**

For further information contact your local tenants organisation, trade union branch or Defend Council Housing PO Box 33519, London E8 4XW phone 020 7987 9989 email [info@defendcouncilhousing.org.uk](mailto:info@defendcouncilhousing.org.uk) [www.defendcouncilhousing.org.uk/](http://www.defendcouncilhousing.org.uk/)

# STOP PRIVATISATION INVEST IN COUNCIL HOUSING

Lack of affordable housing is causing misery for millions. Now, more than ever, we need to win investment in decent, affordable, secure and accountable council housing to provide first class homes for all who need them.

The government and some councils are pushing privatisation of council housing. They say our repairs and improvements can only be done if we accept transfer, PFI or ALMOs. ***This isn't choice – it's bullying.***

Privatisation means loss of our security of tenure, more evictions, higher rents, and landlords who are accountable to the banks not the tenants. Council workers suffer worse pay, conditions and pensions and weaker trade union organisation. The community as a whole pays more through higher borrowing charges, increasing Housing Benefit costs and Bed & Breakfast charges for the homeless. Bad housing leads to higher health costs and lower education standards for our kids.

## What we are lobbying for...

We want the government to invest new money to repair and improve council housing and build new council homes for those who need them.

We want the new Local Government Finance Bill to end discrimination against council housing and provide a level playing field. This should include measures to:

- end all 'Daylight Robbery' tax on tenants' rents
- free councils to borrow for investment
- return all capital receipts to fund investment in our homes
- write-off all HRA debt – not just for councils who transfer
- fund council borrowing through an investment allowance
- use Local Authority Social Housing Grant to build new council homes

## It is not true that there isn't enough money

The government has siphoned more than £13 billion out of tenants' rents since 1990, clawing it back from councils' Housing Revenue Accounts. This is enough to pay for two-thirds of the total national backlog of repairs and improvements.

On average we pay £2,500 rent a year each. But only £1,000 in management and maintenance and £500 in major repairs allowances is spent on our homes each year. The difference of £1,000 per tenant per year – £2.8 billion – goes off our estates and into government coffers.

We do not accept that the only way to bring all our homes up to a decent standard is to privatise council housing. We will not trade secure, affordable, accountable housing for a new sink or bathroom. **We demand both!**

Why should government use our rent money and public subsidy to push privatised stock transfers, PFI or the new Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs)? Setting up ALMOs is costly, unnecessary and weakens us making privatisation easier at a later stage. If extra money is available why not use it to invest in our homes direct – with no strings attached?

## Secure the future for council housing!