

## Liverpool Left Unity

### Housing

There are many aspects to the housing crisis in Britain.

- The bedroom tax,
- the relentless attacks on social/council housing and its removal from democratic control
- the virtual end to the concept of housing based on social need
- the cost and insecurity of private rental,
- the prevalence of short, insecure term lets ,which damage the construction of viable communities, and impact on children's schooling
- the rise in homelessness,
- the shortage of mortgages and the lack of affordable housing
- the slowdown in the house building industry
- The scandal of viable housing standing empty
- The use of housing once again as speculative capital especially in London

These all make housing a key policy issue for Left Unity

Left Unity Liverpool agreed that Left Unity should

- Campaign for dignity in housing for all.
- Campaign for the immediate end to the bedroom tax and should support the campaigns (including direct action and organisation in the communities) to see it abolished.
- Campaign for publically owned and democratically controlled ( council) house building programme funded by government at minimal interest rates

Left Unity should adopt as policy to guide all elected representatives and to use within campaigns and to implement as soon as elected. The following policy points.

- Planning for housing to be within an overall plan of the town or city to ensure full access to the existing social and recreational facilities for the residents.
- Planning of housing to be linked to plans for schools, health care,
- Housing should be aesthetically pleasing to the eye and take into account existing designs of property's in the local area
- Heating for all houses to be planned within a neighbourhood plan and at the most efficient use of fuel. Incorporating solar wind or ground source energy where ever possible.
- Every home should have fire alarms and sprinklers
- For union recognised building sites
- For housing to be eco-friendly and sustainably sourced and run.
- For house building programmes to integrate provision for the elderly close to family housing
- The need for long term secure tenancies so as to build communities
- For rents to be affordable within the living wage
- For most houses to be built to Parker Morris standards and with back and front gardens
- To ensure the needs of LGBT, elders from all communities, and other minority groups are respected in housing and to build at least one LGBTQ shelter -extra care units in every major conurbation
- For rent control on private landlords
- to defend housing benefit for under 25 year olds, and for reversal of previous caps
- ensure that Local Authorities are required to house all those who are unintentionally homeless.
- re-legalise rent strikes
- Local Authorities to be given the responsibility to safe guard standards in the private sector and to intervene where requires
- to reverse the cuts in legal aid

- to reverse cuts in emergency accommodation with the creation of a diversity of units that meet all needs
- To recognise the needs of people in flood prone areas.
- To ensure as much run off water as possible is held within the areas
- To facilitate the organisation of tenants.
- To use idle industrial capital to build sustainable and high quality prefabricated housing•
- A radical reform of the planning system which will allow planners to plan, with detailed site allocations determining the value of land (essentially a nationalisation of development rights). Included within these reforms would be the introduction of mandatory housing standards, and a review of the Use Classes Order with a new separate Use Class introduced for social housing. In addition, a new National Spatial Plan would be introduced to provide a cohesive and holistic strategy and a joined-up approach to planning for major housing and economic growth, and infrastructure investment. There would be increased capacity and support for local planning authorities, including investment in training and education programmes for the planning sector
- Development of a large scale State construction programme in partnership with local authorities and local communities, focusing on the regeneration of urban areas. The role of the Government's housing and regeneration agency the Homes and Communities Agency will be reviewed, with a view to them focusing on supporting the new State programme, and direct development of their own assets where appropriate. All surplus public sector land will be put to use in order to support the programme.

Left Unity Liverpool recognises that there is much more than house building needed to humanise and truly civilise our cities and wishes to work with international political campaign "The Right to the City"

To this end, we invite supporters of Left Unity and all campaigning for dignity in housing and our other demands to attend a meeting on this matter in Liverpool, the first city to develop social housing, but now one of the cities most damaged by the government's policies.

Further details will follow

