

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 Jenni Marrow (SCOTTISH TENANTS ORGANISATION), Mick Graham (GMB Union), Councillor Ros Gladden (LABOUR LIVERPOOL HOUSING SPOKESPERSON) and Bolton MP Brian Iddon. Read a full conference report on the DCH website

Vital services, libraries, old peoples 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 Almo's, 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!

Petra Dando, Co-Founder, Campaign to Save Wellesley 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 ALMOs) and many who have don't expect to get tenant's support for their decision.

A united campaign can win much more.

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

In Camden we didn't accept the blackmail in 1997 that stock transfer was the only way to get new windows and roofs repaired.

Miraculously money was found and we lost nothing by saying NO.

Council housing is now needed by more people than ever. It's worth fighting for.

We shouldn't accept their blackmail today.

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 real choice for council tenants.

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



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!

If privatisation is not behind the government's ALMO agenda why must councils set up a private company?

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 deputation to council scrutiny

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

Peter Crook, Bacton Low-Rise Estate

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

Ray Adamson, spokesperson for Waxham Program Group and former mayor of Camden

It is hi-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.

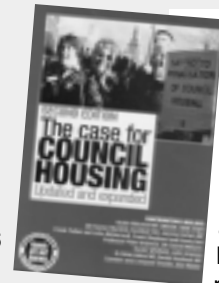
Every time we were told there was 'no alternative' – and proved them wrong.

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



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 rents 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

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 first class – even a 'good' housing authority should be forced by government to transfer housing by any of the methods we are looking at today. Money that could be spent on bricks and mortar is being wasted."

Brian Iddon MP

"There is an issue over whether [prudential borrowing] could be extended to cover housing in a more effective way..."

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

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

Austin 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 protect and save council housing."

Gerald Kaufman MP (former Housing Minister)

"The tide seems to be turning 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 ODPM House of Commons Select Committee)

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.