

DEFEND COUNCIL HOUSING

VOTE NO



TO PRIVATISATION

Stockport DCH Meeting

7.30pm, Tuesday 16th July

Stockport Labour Club, Wellington Road (near Hope Inn)

EIGHT GOOD REASONS TO REJECT TRANSFER...



Evictions Up

We lose our 'secure' tenancies. Evictions by housing associations soared 36% over a two year period



Rents Up

Housing Association rents are higher - 17% on average and sometimes 50% more. Rent guarantees only last 5 years



Extra Service charges

On top of the new rent are additional 'service charges' which can be increased at any time. They are not fully covered by housing benefit



No accountability

Council tenants get to vote for their landlord in local elections every 4 years. RSL Boards are accountable to no one and dominated by the banks and lenders



More homeless

Shelter, the homeless charity, reports that 43% of councils after transfer said they were having trouble getting the new landlords to deal with homeless applications



Massive setup costs

Transfer will cost millions. This money could be used instead to carry out the repairs and improvements tenants need!



Higher borrowing costs

Councils can borrow much cheaper than Housing Associations. Transfer means more of our rents going on profits for the banks rather than repairs to our homes



No return to the council

Transfer is a one way ticket - there's no going back to the council if promises are broken. RSLs make lots of promises but what happens if they go bust?

Vote NO to privatisation

If you transfer to a housing association - you can't come back. It's a one-way ticket. We should defend and improve council housing for our children and for future generations - it's their right as well as ours.

A big campaign by tenants backed by trade unions and sympathetic councillors, MPs and others is forcing the government to listen to tenants. A new government Bill concedes councils should have a new 'right to borrow'. It shows they are feeling the pressure!

We want better housing - not privatisation

Councils hold a gun to our heads - they say money will be spent on our homes only if we vote for transfer. That isn't choice - it's blackmail. Politicians should be ashamed. There's money to waste on consultants, glossy leaflets and videos - we say stop the blackmail and spend it on our homes instead.

Vote 'NO' to the con trick

The council is wasting OUR time and money on this con job, while they starve housing of money and make services worse. Privatisation wastes about £600 per home on lawyers, consultants and PR - paid for out of rents and council tax. It's an outrage!

No accountability - greater risk

RSLs (Housing Associations and companies) borrow on private markets

BIRMINGHAM TENANTS REJECT PRIVATISATION IN 2:1 NO VOTE

Tenants in Birmingham are the latest to reject privatisation. They join tenants in the following areas who have said NO! - Salford, Dudley, Ealing, Harrogate, Exeter, South Beds, Southend, Barnsley, Wycombe, Waverley, Fareham, Cambridge, Camden, Haringey.

In Birmingham the bribe was worth £650 million. Birmingham tenants voted a resounding 2:1 against transfer.

They are now campaigning to make the government cough up the £650 to enable the council to do the repairs and improvements itself.

Tell Stockport Council to stop the transfer

Tenants, Trade Unions and some Councillors and MP's are working together to oppose Stock Transfer. Stockport MP, Andrew Bennett, is a vocal opponent of StockTransfer. Why won't Stockport Council listen to these concerns and use the £5million they have spent so far on leaflets promoting privatisation to pay for repairs and improvements to our homes instead?

Tameside tenants have recently expressed their regret at transferring their homes to *New Charter* and are waiting for the promised improvements. The Chief Exec of *New Charter* has already had his salary increased by 50%.

Tell Stockport Council tenants want to remain with the council. Demand they join the campaign to ensure the Local Government Bill introduces a level playing field for council housing and enables the council to do the work itself.

Oppose privatisation and demand that the council get on with the job...

at higher rates - more of our rents will go on interest payments. Instead of elected local councillors making decisions unelected and unaccountable businessmen and bankers will be pulling the strings.

The trend is towards bigger and bigger organisations. Many RSLs are in financial trouble - and get taken over by big ones, making huge surpluses out of tenants. They are £multi million businesses paying telephone number salaries to their top executives. The Government's National Audit Office downgraded the status of 45% of RSLs from satisfactory status to 'cause for concern' or 'cause for serious concern'. Any tenants on the boards are told they are responsible to the board, not the people who elected them. They have only a token role and no real power.

Lots of promises - no guarantees they will be kept

Glossy pamphlets promise massive improvements but these promises are not always kept. After privatisation Coventry tenants complain of sub standard work; in Hackney when costs over-ran the new landlord 'modelled' selling off flats privately. Do YOU know exactly what improvements are being promised to who by when?

Nearly seven out of ten tenants who have transferred from councils to alternative landlords consider services to have either stayed the same or got worse, according to the latest survey from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

You can't go back to the council

If you vote for a different landlord, you are stuck with them: even if rents go up, they merge or are taken over. What happens to your home and the promises you were made if your new landlord goes bankrupt?

The government say £19billion is needed for council housing. But since 1990 they have taken over £10billion out of council repairs budgets through the 'Daylight Robbery' tax. Our councillors should be fighting this outrage. Why can't we have that money to invest in council housing now?

So vote no - and join the campaign! Talk to friends and neighbours, leaflet your block or street, put up posters, and come to a meeting. Stand up for Council Housing - demand first class homes and services.



Demand investment in council housing - with no strings attached