

## Housing Retrofit

Key policy points in the housing proposals to be launched at conference:

- The increase in social housing would be supported by a national housing fund provided by the UKIB (UK Infrastructure Bank) **existing policy**
- Local authorities should be borrowing to build more council housing (within prudential limits) with rents being funneled back into debt repayments. **existing policy**
- Introduce a Community Right to Buy for private rental properties that the landlord wishes to sell; any property that hasn't been insulated to EPC rating C or fails to meet the decent homes standard; all former social housing bought under the right to buy; any property that is left empty for more than six months. **Extrapolation of existing policy**
- Introduce a national landlord and rental property licensing scheme and an enhanced Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). **existing policy**
- Facilitate street-by-street retrofit requires by guaranteeing loans tied to the property. **Extrapolation of existing policy**
- Tenants of private landlords will have the right to insist their landlords access property linked finance for their homes. **Extrapolation of existing policy**
- Insulation including adaptation to extreme heat **existing policy**
- Rent controls. **existing policy**

## A national housing fund

The increase in social housing would be supported by a national housing fund provided by the UKIB (UK Infrastructure Bank). This fund would allow the crowding in of private institutional, environmental social governance (ESG) investment. The planning constraints introduced in parallel to ensure development was in balance with the UK carbon budget would limit the opportunities for investment in private house building.

## Social housing provision based on need

Local authorities will be expected and funded to assess both their social housing need, availability/suitability of existing housing stock and the sites suitable for new social housing.

The survey of need will need to assess both volume and type, ensuring that the needs of the elderly, families with children, people living with a disability or requiring support through sheltered housing are adequately catered for.

The Government working through Councils and other providers will deliver up to 150,000 social housing units a year through various measures including new build and refurbishment. New build sites will be acquired using quick turnaround compulsory purchase powers if necessary for homes and public services as well as shops. This will include areas of land, that once serviced, will be offered to private house builders to ensure that mixed communities are delivered.

Local authorities should be able to borrow (within prudential limits) to pay for the land and building. Rents paid into the local authority; housing revenue account would be allowed to be funneled back into debt repayments.

## Buy the supply

Local authorities have already bought existing homes to increase their stock of social housing. This is currently being done on the open market with no enhanced

leverage to reflect the wider social and economic benefits that can come from an increase in the supply of social housing.

Local authorities leverage in the market should be supported by the following:

A community right to buy for private rental properties that the landlord wishes to sell, this would give a first option to buy to local authorities, registered social landlords and community housing groups.

A community right to buy on any for sale private rental property that hasn't been insulated to EPC rating C or fails to meet the decent homes standard this would give a first option to buy to local authorities, registered social landlords and community housing groups.

A community right to buy on any for sale property that was formerly social housing and bought under the right to buy this would give a first option to buy to local authorities, registered social landlords and community housing groups. This would be irrespective of when the property had been purchased under the right to buy.

A community right to buy on any property that is left empty for more than six months would give a first option to buy to local authorities, registered social landlords and community housing groups.

The purchase of these homes would be supported by the national housing fund provided by the UKIB.

### **A national landlord and rental property licensing scheme**

A national register of both landlords and rental property would deliver clarity for tenants and a significant tool for local authority enforcement of an enhanced Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

Local authority's grants will be adjusted adequately to carry out the inspection and licensing of both property and landlords.

### **Gaining community support for retrofitting**

A national programme of information and support will be set up to communicate the benefits of retrofit and to support the public through the support that is available

This programme will include:

- Show homes demonstrating how retrofit can improve their living standards.
- How to live with new technology like heat pumps.
- How to access finance and get your landlord to access finance.
- How to access training and work retrofitting your community.
- Ensuring that controls for heat pumps are accessible for everybody.

### **Financing retrofit**

Public expenditure on retrofit of privately owned homes needs to be supplemented by contributions from the owners of properties. Street by street retrofit requires easy access to financing irrespective of the current financial situation of homeowners.

This will be achieved via property linked finance. The loans will be tied to the property. When the properties change hands the loan repayments will move to the new owner.

The loans will be government backed and secured on the property. They will be considered an Environmental, social, and governance (*ESG*) investment. These factors will enable a lower interest rate than is usual for a loan to an individual for home improvements.

Tenants of private landlords will get the right to insist their landlords access property linked finance for their homes. Landlords will not need to provide any upfront finance but will be responsible for the repayment of the loans.

### **Minimum insulation standards**

Landlords in the private rental sector would be expected to ensure that their properties meet minimum energy efficiency standard insulation EPC C by 2026 and EPC B by 2030.

Properties that do not meet those standards would be unable to be legally let to new tenants.

### **Rent controls**

The Green Party would bring in rent controls to achieve a 'Living Rent'. Rents in a locality would take up no more than 35% of the local median take-home pay and in implementing any controls we would strike a balance between affordability and predictability for tenants, and the landlords' need to invest in their homes and make a reasonable profit. The decisions in any locality would be under local or regional government control.

### **Adapting homes to extreme heat**

As a part of any retrofit program for insulation, homes assessed to be dangerous in heatwaves would be fitted with passive measures to reduce internal heating. These would include but not be limited to blinds, shutters and external shades.

## **3. Appendix C: New Interim Policy positions**

PDC is bringing these IPPs to conference as A motions (motions that have to be brought to conference). Amendments may be made to them all.

Interim policy on Net Zero Governance (Final approval)

Amendment to Monetary Policy (interim approval)

Interim policy for the manifesto (interim approval)

### **Policy statement approved by GPRC for last year's Leaders' speech Housing and Retrofit**

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