



Newham Housing Justice Charter

The following proposals are being put forward by the Newham & Leytonstone branch of the London Renters Union to all candidates in the upcoming Newham council elections. We're asking all candidates to commit publicly to supporting these proposals.

Improve temporary accommodation standards

- Set out minimum safety and quality standards for temporary accommodation and take enforcement action against landlords that refuse to meet them.
- Break contracts with temporary accommodation providers who are shown to consistently provide sub-par temporary accommodation.

Hold landlords accountable

Councils have a legal duty to make sure landlords provide safe and healthy homes. But councils are letting renters down. Landlords provide unsafe housing, refuse repairs and carry out illegal evictions because councils are letting them get away with it. Councils should:

- Take a zero tolerance approach to landlords who deny us our rights. Publish targets on increasing the number of fines and legal actions taken against landlords who deny us our rights. Hire more Tenancy Relations Officers and Enforcement Officers.
- Pledge that there will be no collaboration between their work enforcing housing standards and the Home Office or Border Force.

More council housing

- Council to commit to building the amount of council homes needed to house every person currently in temporary accommodation.

Bring the rents down

- Council leaders should add their voice to the housing movement's call for rent controls so that no one is forced to pay more than a third of their income on rent.
- Councils should pass a motion calling on the Government to introduce affordable and effective rent controls, and Labour councils should put pressure on the opposition to back them. Councils should collect and publish data on rent levels.

No more forced displacement

Everyone has the right to stay in their community and with their families and support networks. Councils must:

- End the practise of forcing working class people to choose between leaving London or being declared 'intentionally homeless' and become at risk of street homelessness.
- Support people who make homelessness applications to stay in their home borough, if they wish to.
- Councils should ensure they are giving appropriate weight to invisible disabilities such as chronic mental health when making housing offers (e.g. to prevent people being inappropriately discharged into the private sector)

More accessible housing and support

Disabled people and those with other support needs should be able to get the advice and support they need to exercise their housing rights in a way that works for them. Councils should ensure that both housing itself and advice and support services are as accessible as possible to tenants. Councils should:

- Ensure that council advice and support is clear and easy to access by the individual themselves without needing to rely on another person. Support should be able to be accessed through multiple channels (such as email, telephone, face-to-face), and long and complex online forms should be eliminated.
- Set out a clear expectation for landlords and letting agents within the borough to ensure that there are multiple channels of communication for their tenants to approach them via.
- Take a proactive approach to informing people about their potential entitlement to support such as the Disabled Facilities Grant through council communications and advertising.