

Resolution Date: 11th April 2017
Resolution Title: The Renters' Power Project

End the housing crisis! For a union for London's private renters.

This branch notes:

- High house prices and a lack of social housing mean that by 2025, over 60% of Londoners will be long-term private renters [1]
- London's renters have higher rents and fewer rights than anywhere else in Europe. Rents are rising much faster than average wages – Londoners are now spending two-thirds of their earnings on rent [2]
- 1 million private renters in London are now in poverty – high housing costs are a key cause [3]
- Private renting is increasingly the only option for low income families in London, with many having no choice but to rent unsuitable housing at high cost in short term contracts – 1 in 4 children in London are now growing up in an overcrowded home [4]

Renters Power Project is an alliance of housing campaigns, unions and community groups emerging from meetings between Generation Rent, Hackney Renters, Take Back The City, Advice4Renters, Acorn and Radical Housing Network with the aim of launching a London-wide Renters Union in 2017

This branch believes:

- Londoners are suffering the effects of a full blown housing crisis
- The current government has talked of fixing the housing crisis but has instead introduced policies such as Help to Buy or Starter Homes which are only available to those earning over £70,000 in London, and exacerbate the problems of high house prices [5]
- The current government is unlikely to fix the housing crisis of its own accord considering the damning fact that 39% of Tory MPs are themselves landlords [6]
- London's private renters, many of whom are our union's members, are suffering as a result of high rents alongside a lack of access to either home ownership or social housing
- Mayor Sadiq Khan was elected in a 'referendum on housing' and can play a key role in alleviating the housing crisis in our city – however with the average cost of a family home now £1 million, London is still failing to supply the homes needed for those on ordinary incomes [7]
- A London Renters Union is sorely needed to organise renters and build renter power

Resolution Date: 11th April 2017
Resolution Title: The Renters' Power Project

- This union could organise renters, develop models for collective action around housing issues, encourage renters to play a role in their workplace unions and pressure politicians to enact policies for decent, genuinely affordable housing for everyone

Renters Power Project has secured the support of over 150 organisations and campaigns, and in January held a successful launch event with 70 representatives of groups from across London – including reps from Unite Housing Workers, Unite Hotel Workers Branch, Unite restaurant workers branch. The project needs funds to hire someone part-time to help with outreach, communications and grant applications, with the aim of launching a fully accountable London Renters Union in 2017

This branch resolves:

- To agree to endorse the Renters Power Project and add our name to its list of supporters
- To make a donation of £100 to support the Renters Power Project

[1]http://pwc.blogs.com/press_room/2016/02/london-to-be-transformed-from-city-of-home-owners-to-city-of-home-renters-in-a-generation.html

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2013-to-2014-headline-report>

[3]<https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/news-and-events/news-and-comments/huge-rise-in-number-of-working-families-in-poverty/>

[4] <http://www.childrensrighswales.org.uk/UserFiles/resources/no-space-at-home.pdf>

[5] <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-34465513>

[6]<https://www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2016/jan/14/mp-landlords-number-risen-quarter-last-parliament-housing-bill>

[7]<http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/demand-for-detached-homes-takes-average-london-price-over-1-million-mark-a3362616.html>