

# A HOUSING CHARTER

Caroline Lucas MP

*A list of national measures to bring the kind of housing I want to see to Brighton and Hove: better quality, affordable, secure and enough of it.*

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## **BETTER QUALITY IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR** - *Housing that can be called home*

*While many good landlords exist in Brighton and Hove, stories of substandard housing are rife, so I am calling for:*

- A national register of landlords, linked to a licensing scheme to improve housing standards.
- Letting agent fees to be scrapped and a licensing system for letting agents, including to outlaw discrimination against those on benefits
- Action to protect tenants' deposits
- Local authorities to set up not-for-profit ethical letting agencies, in close co-operation with universities and student unions

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING** - *Housing that doesn't bust budgets*

*House prices and rent levels in Brighton and Hove are way above the national average, so I am calling for:*

- A Living Rent Commission to explore ways of bringing rent levels in line with the basic cost of living
- The abolition of the Bedroom Tax
- A 'Right to Rent' policy to help those struggling with mortgage payments to stay in their home
- The phasing out of stamp duty and replacement in the long term with a progressive Land Value Tax

## **SECURE HOUSING IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR** - *Housing that lets people put down roots*

*In Brighton Pavilion, the private rented sector is roughly double the national average, so I am calling for:*

- Every tenant to have the right to a five-year tenancy
- Written tenancy agreements to be compulsory
- Measures that link notice periods to how long you've been in your home
- More help for people who want to 'Rent a Room' so they can stay in their homes

## **ENOUGH HOUSING** - *Housing that meets the need for new homes*

*18,000 people are on the waiting list for housing in Brighton and Hove, so I am calling for:*

- Local authorities to be allowed to invest in a mass programme of sustainable council housing
- An end to council housing sales - money from current sales should be invested back into new council housing with all homes lost because of Right To Buy replaced to meet local need
- Action on empty homes to bring them back into use
- A programme of subsidised social rented housing to help low income households
- Seed funding to expand Community Land Trusts, housing co-operatives and self-build