

BATH GREEN PARTY HOUSING PLEDGES



Promoted By Hugh Prentice, Canteen Cottage, Bath, BA2 8PY. On behalf of, Eleanor Field and Bath & NE Somerset Green Party at 5 St James's Park, Bath, BA12SS

FOREWORD

In Bath we all know someone who is either struggling to get on the ladder or struggling to make ends meet because of high mortgages or extortionate rents. Many people are forced into trying to purchase a house because of a lack of security in tenancy agreements. We need to ensure that people feel satisfied and supported in a rented home.

Over the years, my own rent has increased by 40% and has increased year-on-year due to renters being at the mercy of the market rent. Due to unavailability of homes, the young will struggle to get onto the ladder and those who are older will struggle to downsize.

This is why I support the creation of Bath's Better Home Network that sets up a better system for providing the affordable housing that Bath needs. Bath could be the place where affordable, well-designed homes are actually provided and not continuously promised for each new generation.

With a Green MP, we can protect those who rent and provide opportunities for those who want to downsize.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eleanor Field".

Eleanor Field
Bath Green Party
Prospective Parliamentary Candidate

OUR NATIONAL POLICIES

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

We should all have a safe, affordable, secure and warm place to call home. The Green Party will tackle the causes of the housing crisis: giving renters get a fair deal, making social housing widely available and bringing the housing market under control.

- A living rent for all through rent controls and more secure tenancies for private renters, an end to letting fees and the introduction of mandatory licensing for all landlords.
- Giving tenants a voice by supporting the development of renters' unions.
- A major programme to build affordable, zero carbon homes, including 100,000 social rented homes each year by 2022.
- End mass council house sales and scrap Right to Buy at discounted prices.
- Abolish the cruel and unfair bedroom tax.
- Action on empty homes to bring them back into use and a trial of a Land Value Tax to encourage the use of vacant land and reduce speculation.
- Protect young people's housing needs by reinstating housing benefit for under 21s and reverse housing benefits cuts.
- Stop declaring people as 'intentionally homeless' and give Local Authorities the same duties towards single people and childless couples as to families.
- Help first-time buyers by aiming for house price stability - axing buy-to-let tax breaks, and backing community-led approaches to building affordable homes.
- Significantly improve housing choice for D/deaf, disabled and older people by requiring all councils to appropriately plan for their housing needs and significantly increase the numbers of homes built to lifetime home and mobility standards over the next 5 years.

TACKLING THE HOUSING CRISIS

We will introduce a **living rent** for all through rent controls, provide more secure tenancies for private renters, and introduce mandatory licensing for all landlords.

We will launch a major programme to build affordable homes including **half a million new socially rented homes**, over five years and start action to bring empty homes back into use.

In Bath this doesn't mean building on the Green belt, but building high quality homes in the right places. We need proper, decent and affordable homes for people across Bath. Not just for the few well off.

We will **reinstate housing benefits for the under 21s** and bring an end to the cruel and unfair Bedroom tax.

HIGH-QUALITY HOMES IN THE RIGHT PLACES

We need well-insulated warm homes for the elderly, and starter homes and flats to help young people get on the housing ladder. We have ended up in a housing crisis after mishandling over 30 years and poor planning in local Councils.

We can recondition disused buildings, demolish what's dilapidated and poorly designed, and build on brownfield. Too often the greenbelt is seen as a quick-fix option but we shouldn't be resorting to destroying our irreplaceable green spaces. The cost of buying the land, and the legal challenges that often occur around it means it is not a real solution.

SUPPORTING FIRST TIME BUYERS

For first time buyers in the area, a house is a home and we should be providing people the opportunity to own a home in their neighbourhood. We need to work with responsible developers and local communities to produce quality well-designed homes that reduce the cost of living while improving quality of life.

TACKLING THE HOUSING CRISIS

INTRODUCE A RENTERS' CHARTER

For those who prefer to rent, too often some rogue landlords will look to exploit their need and provide poor accommodation at extortionate prices. University landlords prey on a huge demand, charging obscene rents for property not fit for purpose.

We believe that a **Renter's Charter** should be introduced that sets out a good standard of home that landlords are encouraged to be a member of. Rents should also be kept under control with the introduction of a **Living Rent** which should be no more than a 3rd of someone's income. I would like Bath to introduce a Renters' Charter that landlords and tenants can sign up to. Let's get a mark of quality so the best landlords are rewarded for being that.



OUR PLEDGES FOR HOUSING

INTRODUCE A LIVING RENT

BUILD COUNCIL AND SOCIAL HOUSING

INTRODUCE A RENTERS' CHARTER FOR BATH

SCRAP THE BEDROOM TAX

BATH'S BETTER HOMES NETWORK



Bath's residents are gradually being priced out of their homes. We need the right homes, built in the right places that are suited to our needs. That's why I'm campaigning for **Bath's Better Homes Network** that will:

- Support all new housing to be of the highest environmental standards and to be energy producing homes.
- Survey all empty property in Bath and begin a process of using compulsory purchase orders on properties that have been vacant to ensure empty homes can be put back in use.
- Ensure that all new housing developments are mixed developments, with an aim of at least 50% social housing.
- End the 'backdoor entrances' that we see some executive homebuilders make for their social renters.
- Ensure that new housing encourages sustainable transport use, including car-free housing with access to public transport and within walking distance of facilities.
- Support longer term tenancies and fair tenancy agreements.
- Create a Renters' Charter where the best landlords can receive recognition.
- Support the creation of Renters' Union.
- Create a Living Rent where rent is at no more than a third of the average income in Bath.