

Labour calls for urgent action to give renters and leaseholders security in their homes

Labour is today calling for immediate action to give renters and leaseholders greater powers and security in their homes.

Ahead of Thursday's parliamentary debate on Social Housing and Building Safety to mark five years since the Grenfell Tower tragedy, Shadow Levelling Up & Housing Secretary Lisa Nandy is laying out a series of constructive measures to make good on cross-party promises to fix the broken housing system.

Labour is urging the government to introduce a second bill on leaseholder reform in this parliament, ending the outdated rules that deny too many people sufficient security and control over their homes. The party is also calling for the promised bill on renters' reform to be brought forward without delay.

Speaking ahead of the debate, Lisa Nandy MP, Shadow Levelling Up & Housing Secretary, said:

"The arcane system we currently have denies far too many people power, control or even a say over things as fundamental as the safety, security and future of their own homes and communities.

"We've known for years that the system is broken, but the reforms that people have been crying out for have not happened.

"People shouldn't have to wait any longer for basic rights over their own homes. The government needs to tear up these rules and immediately bring forward new laws that end this scandal and support people and families across Britain."

While Labour have cautiously welcomed the two bills in the Queen's Speech to reform social housing standards and private renter rights, action needs to be taken more urgently. Continuing problems for tenants with building safety costs, social housing disrepair and the cost-of-living crisis mean that families now need additional measures to improve their security in their homes.

During Thursday's debate, Lisa Nandy will say:

"Grenfell was a national disaster, and a wholly avoidable tragedy that was the product of a housing system that is broken and gives too little control and power for people in their own homes. All political parties have recognised the need for change, but we have further to go and must be faster in doing it."

NOTES TO EDITORS

Labour is calling for five key measures to be included in a new Leaseholder Reform Bill:

- An end to the sale of new private leasehold houses with immediate effect after the Bill receives royal assent, and a workable system to replace private leasehold flats with commonhold.
- In the interim, greater powers for residents over the management of their homes, with new rights for flat owners to form residents' associations and a simplification of the Right to Manage.
- The right to extend a lease to 990 years with zero ground rent at any time; or a cap on ground rents when extending a lease to 0.1% of the freehold value, up to a maximum of £250 a year.
- Bringing forward of law commission proposals to reform the process of enfranchisement valuation leaseholders, including abolishing marriage value and prescribing rates for the calculations of the premium.
- Crackdown on unfair fees and contract terms by publishing a reference list of reasonable charges, requiring transparency on service charges, and giving leaseholders a right to challenge rip-off fees and conditions or poor performance from service companies.