

Housing

What we have now

More than 25% of families live in housing which causes health problems and an extra burden on our NHS. 20% of High Peak residents can't afford to heat their homes properly. In 2008 High Peak Borough Council found that over 3000 new affordable homes were needed. Fewer than 300 have been built.

Only a small proportion of new houses are "affordable". Only big developers can afford to buy land for housing. Little land is available for shops, schools and other services for people living in new homes.

Lower local government income from central government encourages local authorities to sell their property. This means we may lose buildings as well parks and playing fields.

The percentage of homes for rent long-term is much lower in High Peak than the average for the country. Many families and individuals live with leases as short as six months.

What the Green Party proposes

Everyone needs an affordable, secure, warm home. Instead of the one-size-fits-all solutions of large developers, we will encourage new, local approaches to housing. Community-led housing projects are creative and varied. Better houses can be built, by small and medium local firms.

All new developments need to have good access to services. We will work with partners to make sure they are served by decent public transport.

Community-Led Housing

- **Community Land Trusts (CLTs)** can be set up and run by ordinary people to develop and manage homes. They are truly affordable for present and future occupiers
- **Co-housing and cooperatives** mean people come together to buy or build homes
- **Civic housebuilding** involves private landowners, the community and the local authority. Landowners invest their land in a community housing scheme. They then have a share in the returns from rents and sales. Councils can also take a share and so have a long-term income.

Better use of buildings

- Use Council powers more to prevent homes lying empty
- Convert empty Council buildings to housing wherever possible

Renting a home

- Help tenants' unions to support tenants and ensure they are aware of their rights
- Expand the Council's Landlord Accreditation scheme to include more information to tenants
- Give landlords accreditation for energy efficiency and other sustainability improvements.

It's not just the purchase price or rent

- Make sure new Community Housing is built to high efficiency standards, to stop heat escaping
- Install systems that recycle heat that does escape
- Install renewable energy generation such as solar panels and ground source heating coils
- Promote energy efficiency retrofits for existing buildings, with advice and zero-interest finance
- Negotiate a scheme where the Council partners with an energy company to offer lower bills
- Hold landlords to their legal responsibilities for energy efficiency.