



Anna Firth: 25,740 families in Bexley and Greenwich will have the right to buy their housing association home thanks to the Conservatives

Anna Firth has welcomed a new manifesto commitment by the Conservatives to extend the Right to Buy to the tenants of housing association properties.

In Bexley and Greenwich this will mean 25,740 families will potentially be able to buy their housing association home – addressing the unfairness that has meant that up to now only council house tenants could buy their home.

Across England 1.3 million families will have the chance to buy their housing association home – that’s 1.3 million more families being able to achieve their dream of owning their own home.

Homes that are sold will be replaced by new affordable homes. In addition, by requiring councils to sell their expansive council houses as they become vacant £1 billion will be made available to bring derelict, brownfield land back into use for housing.

Anna Firth commented:

‘Conservatives want more people who work hard and save up to be able to enjoy the security of owning their own home.

‘That is why we are committed to extend Right to Buy to housing association tenants. This will mean 25,740 families in Bexley and Greenwich will have the chance to buy their home. Right to Buy has already helped over two million families get on the housing ladder since it was first launched in 1980 and now many more people will have the same opportunity.

‘This is part of our commitment to back families who have worked hard, paid their rent and played by the rules. This will mean a new generation of people able to achieve their dream and enjoy the security that comes from owning your own home’.

ENDS

For more information please contact Anna on 07807857230 or email anna@annafirth.org.uk.

Notes to Editors:

- **Extend Right to Buy to housing association tenants.** To make sure more people can enjoy the security of home ownership, a Conservative Government will extend the Right to Buy to up to 1.3 million tenants of housing associations, ending the unfairness that allowed only council house tenants to use Right to Buy. Homes that are sold to tenants will be replaced with new affordable homes on a one for one basis.
- **Create a £1 billion Brownfield Regeneration Fund worth a billion pounds over four years.** This fund will be available for local authorities in England to bid for on a competitive basis in order to bring forward additional brownfield land for housing. It will enable them to clean up derelict or contaminated land, and provide infrastructure to open up inaccessible brownfield sites. This fund will unlock the construction of 400,000 additional homes over four years.
- **Sell expensive council-owned houses to pay for these policies.** We will fund the Brownfield Regeneration Fund and replacement of properties sold under the extended Right to Buy by requiring councils to sell their expensive council houses. While no-one will have to move house, local authority properties that rank among the most expensive third of all properties of that type in their area – including private housing – will be sold off and replaced in the same area with normal affordable housing as they fall vacant. This will lead to the sale and replacement of around 15,000 homes a year.
- **Over 40,000 families have used Right to Buy since 2010.** Since April 2010 there have been over 40,000 council houses and housing association sales to tenants. Over 33,000 of these sales have been since Right to Buy was reinvigorated in April 2012 (*DCLG Press Release*, 24 February 2015, [link](#); *Hansard*, Col. 152WS, 26 March 2015, [link](#)).
- **Council house building is at a 23 year high.** In England, council house building starts are now at a 23 year high and almost twice as many council homes have been built in the last four years than from 1997 to 2009. Previously, councils were not encouraged to build new homes from sales receipts and only one new council home was built for every 170 Right to Buy sales completed under the last Labour Government (*Hansard*, Col. 152WS, 26 March 2015, [link](#)).
- **The Right to Buy is increasing housing investment and housing construction.** Since the Right to Buy was reinvigorated across England, £730 million in sales receipts are being re-invested in affordable house building; leveraging a further £1.7 billion of investment over the next two years. This means that in total, over £2.4 billion will be raised to invest in affordable house building as a result of Right to Buy since 2012 (*Hansard*, Col. 152WS, 26 March 2015, [link](#)).
- **Labour cut back Right to Buy in England when in government.** In 2003 Labour cut and capped discounts at between £16,000 and £38,000. In 2003/04 there were 84,000 Right to Buy sales but by 2009/10 this had collapsed to only 3,100 (*Hansard*, 22 January 2003, [link](#); DCLG, *Table 671, Annual Right to Buy Sales for England*, 16 May 2013, [link](#)).
- **Labour in Wales want to scrap Right to Buy.** On 22 January 2015, Lesley Griffiths, Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty, announced that the Labour will look at ‘the development of new primary legislation to end the Right to Buy’ (Welsh Government, *Written Statement – The Future of Right to Buy and Right to Acquire*, 22 January 2015, [link](#)).