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**To: [union branch or committee]**

[Date]

Dear [union branch or committee]

We are appealing to you to support theSocial Housing Action Campaign (SHAC) campaign to prevent a rise of around 10% to social rents and service charges based on an inflationary uplift.

**Such a rise is unsustainable** for those who pay their own rents and service charges directly, many of whom are low paid workers whose pay rises are insufficient to meet such a demand. The rises will be implemented shortly after the sharp hike in energy costs and against the backdrop of the highest inflationary levels in 40 years.

**A social rent freeze would also save the taxpayer money.** Around 30% of tenants receive the Housing Benefit element of Universal Credit, amounting to £7.5 billion in 2020/21. This would increase if rents and service charges rise. Yet the housing association sector has a collective operating surplus of around £4.4 billion whereas public services are being squeezed to the limit. A further transfers of money from the taxpayer to rich landlords is unjustifiable.

**The campaign involves** getting housing association tenants and residents to pledge that they will not pay any uplift from 1st April 2023, and for the wider public to pledge support for those who are withholding payment. Our actions between now and April are therefore aimed at:

1. Getting signatures on the pledge
2. Lobbying politicians to set the social rents cap at zero and broaden it to include service charges; and
3. Lobbying housing associations to agree that even if the cap is raised, they will voluntarily freeze rents and service charges (the law does not require them to utilise the full extent of the cap).

**We are seeking support of around £10,000** to help cover the costs of online and hard copy materials flags to reach around 2.4 million households which rent from housing associations. We also need protest items like leaflets, banners, and to cover minor administrative costs like room hire.

We are working closely with Defend Council Housing as their membership will also be affected by the social rent rises. We are also supported by Homes for All and Radical Housing Network.

**If the F&GPC is kind enough to support this cause**, payment can be made to account name ‘The Social Housing Action Campaign’, account number 20434685, and Sort Code 60-83-01.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Suzanne Muna

**Secretary**

**The Social Housing Action Campaign**

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