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Blueprint for a National Housing Union for All Tenants and Residents



A democratic, member-led organisation for tenants, residents and representative groups.

The Union

SHAC is working with community groups and housing activists to develop a national, democratic, trade union-style Housing Union. The aim is to build an organisation with the scale, structure and resources to support tenants and residents individually and collectively. We are seeking support from the trade union movement to help get it off the ground.

This would not be just another place to raise complaints. It would be a vehicle for building power: organising people, strengthening communities, supporting campaigns, taking strategic legal action, lobbying for stronger laws and challenging the imbalance between landlords and residents.

The union would be open to tenants, private renters, social tenants, leaseholders, shared owners and people in less traditional housing such as almshouses, caravans and boats. It would bring people together across tenures, landlord types and geography.

The Housing Emergency

Britain is facing a deep housing emergency. Across social housing, private renting, leasehold, shared ownership and temporary accommodation, tenants and residents are struggling with unaffordable costs, poor conditions, disrepair, damp and mould, discrimination, antisocial behaviour, service charge abuse and few routes to justice.

Too often people are left to fight powerful landlords, managing agents and developers alone.

Around **1.34 million** households are on social housing waiting lists in England, and **131,140** households are in temporary accommodation. The Housing Ombudsman issued **7,082** determinations last year, with **71% upheld** and 120 landlords recording maladministration rates of **75% or higher**. These figures show a system under sustained pressure, while weak sanctions allow too many landlords to carry on as they were.

A NATIONAL HOUSING UNION



Housing is a Trade Union Issue

Housing is a trade union issue. Rent and service charges swallow pay rises. Damp, mould and unsafe homes contribute to sickness absence and poor performance at work, which can lead to disciplinary and capability proceedings. Evictions, insecurity and unaffordable rents destabilise employment and family life.

Our partnership with the trade union movement is central and based on overlapping interests. Existing tenant and community groups do vital work, but most lack the resources, legal capacity and national reach needed to match the power of large landlords and developers. Trade union support could provide seed funding, organising expertise, recruitment routes and shared campaigning strength.

How it Would Work

The comprehensive Blueprint sets out the framework for the Housing Union. It was developed through a conference of tenants, residents and campaign groups, involving hundreds of individuals and thousands of hours of work. The result is a vision rooted in the lived experiences of people most directly affected by the housing emergency.

The Blueprint describes democratic governance, the central organising model, and provision of advocacy and legal support. It is also realistic about the establishment resistance and practical challenges the union will need to overcome.

How Unions Can Support Us

In the early years, trade union seed funding would help employ staff, build systems, develop legal and organising capacity, and make the union visible. Over time, the union would move towards financial independence through membership subscriptions, solidarity payments, affiliation fees, grants, crowdfunding and other ethical income.

We need your support to move the project to the feasibility stage.

Please contact us at shac.action@gmail.com or use the QR code.

We need power.

We need organisation.

We need solidarity.

We need a National Housing Union for All Tenants and Residents.



More info



Email us.

**A NATIONAL
HOUSING UNION**

