



Moonlight ROBBERY

Campaign to stop the robbery of council tenants

MAY 2008

News Bulletin

Moonlight Robbery Campaign:

Moonlight Robbery is a tenant led campaign, highlighting the fact that year after year the government robs money from council tenants rent payments – around £1,400 million this year and a total of £19,000+ million since 1997.

Most of this money is used to pay off debt – on loans taken out to build and improve council homes. Since tenants don't own their homes and when council homes are sold, the majority of the proceeds go straight into government coffers, it is very clear that it should not be tenants but the tax payer (through the treasury) that should pay off this debt.

Tenants' rents should be used exclusively to pay for management, maintenance and major repairs of their homes. But, because of the robbery, these are massively under funded. According to government own analysis, the total under funding – for management, maintenance and major repairs to council homes currently amount to £2,250 million a year.

Informing Tenants about Moonlight Robbery:

Many tenants will simply assume that their rents are used to pay for management, maintenance and repairs of their homes and not know about this robbery. For the campaign to grow, tenants need to be informed. Please distribute the Moonlight Robbery Briefing on your estate or in your neighbourhood. It can be downloaded from the Moonlight Robbery website - www.moonlightrobbery.org.uk,

Moonlight Robbery Campaign Supporters:

If you are a constituted tenants association or federation you can sign up to support to Moonlight Robbery Campaign on www.moonlightrobbery.co.uk

Invoice to Government:

Government does not acknowledge that it is robbing tenants. The only way government will change is to show our strength, in numbers, in opposing the robbery. We encourage council tenants and residents associations to send a copy of an invoice for the rent monies robbed between 1997 and 2005 (download from www.moonlightrobbery.co.uk) to 10 Downing Street. We will draw up further notices once we have the exact details (from government figures) of the amount robbed since 2005.

Giant Invoice:

Moonlight Robbery has printed a giant invoice for the monies robbed from council tenants nationally from 1997 – 2005. We will be taking the invoice to parliament on Wednesday June 25th. We hope to gain some press coverage in order to expose the robbery and the resultant under funding of the running costs to council homes.

If you would like to join us please email us on info@moonlightrobbery.org.uk or phone us on 07985 878 629

Open letter to MPs and Councillors:

It would seem to be in the interests of local authorities to lobby for an end to this robbery, so that they could do a better job in managing, maintaining and repairing tenants' homes. What are your MPs and councillors doing about the robbery? We urge tenants' federations to send a copy of the attached 'open letter' (add in your federation's contact details and sign) to your local politicians (MPs and councillors). We encourage tenants' federations to also send a copy of the open letter (noting who you have sent the letter to) to your local newspaper's letters page. This will help to publicise the robbery and put pressure on politicians to lobby for the robbery to be stopped.

Please email Moonlight Robbery Campaign to let us know of any responses you receive (info@moonlightrobbery.org.uk).

Early Day Motion (EDM):

If you find that your MP is keen to support the aims to end the robbery of council tenants rents ask them to sign the **EDM 1459 Management and Maintenance of Council Homes put forward by Brian Iddon MP**, which calls for an end to Moonlight Robbery (as part of the Government's current review of the Housing Revenue Account). The text of the EDM can be found on - <http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=35721&SESSION=891>

Barefaced Robbery:

Whilst government does not (yet) acknowledge the full 'Moonlight Robbery' of council tenants rent monies, it is finding it a bit more difficult to hide the robbery of an additional £194 million this year which is going straight into the treasury for use on things other than council housing. This 'barefaced' robbery is shown very clearly in answers to parliamentary questions and has been exposed in the housing press. Winchester tenant, Alan Rickman (who is now active in the Moonlight Robbery campaign) is taking the Government to the European Court of Human Rights about this. The Moonlight Robbery Campaign wishes him luck with his case.

