

Whatever happened to social housing?

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As [the Guardian has noted](#):

Hundreds of empty homes in Birmingham, originally designed as an athletes' village for the Commonwealth Games, will be sold by the council at a loss of more than £300m to the taxpayer.

Ayoub Khan, the independent MP for Perry Barr where the apartments are located, said it was an "absolute scandal" that the Labour-led authority had agreed last week to sell more than 700 homes to a private company in a deal forecast to result in a multimillion-pound loss.

There are three obvious thoughts.

The first is that if this area had a Labour MP, this would not have been said.

Second, why haven't these homes been used for social housing?

Third, what sort of madness in local authority administration requires this? Is Labour really acquiescing in this when Birmingham City Council is effectively under government control? What does that say about its own housing targets? And why not just fund a housing association to take them over if need be?

This is incomprehensible.