

Riots and Young People

Conference notes the rioting and looting that spread across London boroughs and English towns and cities in early August 2011, sparked initially by the police shooting of Mark Duggan.

Conference expresses its sympathies to all those affected by the riots, and especially to those who lost loved ones or their homes.

Conference believes that housing and welfare are rights, not privileges dependent on good behaviour and condemns those who suggest that those convicted of riot-related offences should lose their homes or benefits. Conference believes this is both double punishment, and collective punishment of other family members.

Conference asks MPs – many of whom exploited their expenses for far larger personal gain – to show more humility and perspective, and believes good laws are not made in a climate of hysteria.

Conference notes that a large proportion of those who participated in the riots were young people from poorer areas and further notes that young people are the least likely to vote.

Conference welcomes the Labour leader's call for a National Conversation about the riots and what caused them, which should engage with the communities affected and those involved in rioting, so we can find lasting solutions.

Conference notes that:

- Youth unemployment is at record levels
- Housing is the least affordable it has ever been
- The Liberal Democrats (2010) and Labour (2005) broke manifesto pledges not to raise university fees
- Youth services have been harshly cut by many councils

Conference believes Labour must address these issues and represent young people's interests more effectively.