



Supporting our membership 2015

Introduction - it's been a busy year for co-ops, and possibly a challenging one. This summary sets out the work the CCH has done for our membership over the last year.

Consultation and networking - members will already know about the extensive membership consultation and networking we have carried out this year. A lively membership debate at our annual conference led to the following conclusions:

- that we would carry out a membership survey, which we did
- that we would hold ongoing meetings with our membership. This year, we have started holding *General Council* meetings for CCH members every six months to debate policy issues. The first two meetings (London in March; and Liverpool in October) have helped to shape our policy approach
- that we would investigate the potential for co-ops deregistering from the Homes and Communities Agency. This isn't straightforward, but we are exploring options, which we will share with our members in due course.

We have previously reported to members on the outcomes of the survey and the membership meetings. Members told us that the three most important issues for the housing co-op movement are:

- supporting existing co-ops to maintain viability and governance
- building more co-operative homes
- helping with the sustainability of co-op committees/governance

These issues are shaping our plans for next year (see below).

The Government changes -the changes being made by Government have required us to provide information to members about them; ask you your views on them; and lobby where appropriate. Our approach has been

informed by our member survey and further developed at the membership meeting in Liverpool in October.

At the request of our members, we have particularly fed our members' views into debates about Right to Buy (and our current understanding is that we have been successful in ensuring that co-ops will not have to sell their homes under Right to Buy) and the DCLG Pay to Stay consultation. We made a submission on behalf of the sector to the DCLG Select Committee inquiry into the future of housing associations, and we are currently feeding into the Housing and Planning Bill Committee through Gareth Thomas MP.

Members will be aware that we have been keeping them informed about the Government changes and our activities in relation to them through our monthly updates.

Developing new homes - members identified in the membership survey the importance to the movement of developing new co-operative and mutual homes, and our work in this area progresses well. New housing co-ops are being set up as a result of our work with the Welsh Government and Wales Co-operative Centre, and some of these developments were featured at our annual conference. The environment for developing new housing co-ops remains challenging in England, but some new developments are emerging.

Work with mutual housing associations - we have worked with mutual housing associations to develop a CCH membership offer for them and we held an annual mutual one day conference.

Providing services - we have formally provided services to 45 co-op and other organisations over the last year. This assistance ranged from small pieces of governance work to much larger governance and mutuality review.

CCH governance – the CCH's new governance arrangements have been bedded in over the last year, with the CCH's new Board working well to set the strategic direction of the organisation. During the last year, the CCH updated our website and we hope that the new website is gradually becoming a useful communications tool for members.

Plans for next year – based on what members have told us they want, we plan the following activities for next year:

- ongoing and developing communications with members, particularly using digital communications methods
- ongoing advice and lobbying, particularly regarding Government changes
- provision of services to co-ops and other organisations
- launch and implementation of the CCH's training programme
- exploration of de-registration options
- updating the CCH accreditation framework to accommodate policy changes
- member guidance document on financial viability
- member guidance document on committee and governance sustainability
- publicity work on developing new co-operative homes in England and Wales (particularly with reference to the London Mayoral and Welsh Government elections). It is our intention to launch a publicity document on developing co-ops at our annual conference in 2016.
- working with partners to examine future tenant management options
- support for mutual housing associations, including an annual conference

We have set the following provisional event dates:

- **CCH annual conference – 13th to 15th May 2016**
- **CCH Member Policy Forum London – 17th March 2016**
- **CCH Member Policy Forum Liverpool – 15th September 2016**

These dates are provisional and will need to be confirmed.

We look forward to working with our members over the coming year.

CCH December 2015