

Federation of Housing Collectives
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What's coming up 2011/2012

FOHCOL happenings to look forward to:-

- * August Management Committee meeting—planning for FOHCOL's future, send in your ideas
- * First weekend in November 2011—FOHCOL's 17th annual conference.
- * January to December 2012—International Year of Co-operatives celebrations nationally, internationally and here in WA (contract FOHCOL).
- * April 2012—Face 2 Face for the sector to get together and consult together on issues particular to the housing co-op sector.
- * July 7, 2012—International Day of Co-operatives in the international Year of Co-ops.

International Day & YEAR of Co-operatives



FOHCOL has always been strong in making WA's housing co-ops accessible and relevant for the wider housing sector and broader community. This year, as in 2010, FOHCOL held the only WA celebration of the International Day of Co-operatives (always the first Saturday of July).

This may well change next year. A lot of state interest is being shown in showcasing the reinvigorated co-operative sector, especially as the United Nations General Assembly has declared 2012 as the **International Year of Cooperatives**, highlighting the contribution of cooperatives to socio-economic development, and in particular recognizing their impact on poverty reduction, employment generation and social integration.



The gathering this year for the 2011 International Day of Co-operatives was at the remarkable Pinakarri Community in Hamilton Hill, where many years of concerted effort and focused inspiration have brought the benefits and challenges of a living community into a constructive resilience.

This year's focus for the Day was Youth—as housing co-ops grow and mature there is more of a challenge to include young people. Changing times and needs bring changing co-op structures. This topic is important to address and find creative relevant answers. Perhaps working and living co-operatively is a way to help young people move through their struggles of becoming and being.

89th ICA International Co-operative Day
which is the
17th UN International Day of Cooperatives

Waitlists— sharing waitlists and tenancy selection policies, and education of prospective tenants

One of the strong calls from the Face 2 Face held by FOHCOL in May was for shared waitlists across the sector.

This makes you wonder how that can happen? It's a many-handed issue, and will take many people to work out.

With housing co-ops leaning towards transparency and inclusive governance, this means gathering the ingredients for a good strong sector: training, education, communication, get-togethers, discussions, and action.

FOHCOL has changed over the year of Co-operation Housing's formation and strengthening. Now FOHCOL holds a clear role of advocacy and sector development in different ways to previously. Still the voice of housing co-ops in WA, it also looks to what is the glue-of-engagement that makes people in housing co-ops make it work in a co-operative manner? Whether the masthead is hewn from the International Principles of Co-operation (see last newsletter or try searching online), or whether the leading vision comes from any of the many community/capacity-building

ventures essayed over the decades and centuries, the aim is clear

**Working together we create our community,
our world.**

**If we act in isolation,
we can only ever benefit the few.**

If your co-op is interested in developing the platform of shared waitlists and membership education, FOHCOL's annual conference (this year FOHCOL's 16th annual!) will be held in the metropolitan area on the first weekend in November. Along with good food and entertainment, the sector will be training in how to best make these ideas a reality.

See page two for the list of training options the FOHCOL Management Committee have gathered, and add your interests to that list.

The community focus of housing cooperatives make for members strong in skills of meeting procedure, negotiation skills, consensus (perhaps), and other procedures many ordinary community members would find daunting through lack of experience.

Is it possible to establish housing cooperatives in Western Australia outside the present rental model linked to the Department of Housing?



Lynne Tinley's 'Big Bird'

Elizabeth Cheong, FOHCOL's immediate past Co-ordinator, is currently researching this question in her pro bono work for FOHCOL. Elizabeth is particularly interested in the limited equity and full equity models of housing cooperatives. Other questions related to the research are

- what land title systems best apply to the group based housing cooperative model
- what funding and financing options are available in Australia to fund land acquisition and help members get mortgages to fund their dwelling in a housing cooperative

Elizabeth is using a case study approach to document actual examples of group-based community living that have been established in Western Australia and Australia.

Several interviews include:

Christabel Chamarette from St Paul's Church in Beaconsfield. (Christabel, with several other congregational members, was instrumental in establishing some innovative housing next to the church, guided by the

principle of 'living, working and worshipping in walking distance'.) # Richard Hammond from National Lifestyle Villages (NLV). (Richard, an architect with a deep interest in sustainable living, was one of the early champions of First Fremantle Housing Collective and other cooperatives in the greater Fremantle region. NLV has adopted an innovative approach to housing under the Caravan and Camping Grounds Act using prefabricated housing. Elements of this approach may be of interest for future housing cooperatives.)

Debra Goostrey, CEO Urban Development Institute of Australia (WA) (to gain a developers' perspective and level of receptiveness by developers about this form of housing.)

Bendigo Bank Manager, Fremantle Branch (to identify if it is possible to lend to a housing cooperative and individuals who wish to mortgage their entry into a housing cooperative. Funding housing cooperatives in the 'mainstream' finance sector is a challenge and a potential stumbling block to future housing cooperatives without some creative thinking in this area.)

Elizabeth will be following up with

- the Department of Commerce (Cooperatives Unit about Cooperative Credit Units (CCUs) as an instrument for the community to invest in housing cooperatives
- Ivy Penny from Medina Residents Group – to discuss their exploration of community based property trusts in the Kwinana region. While their research is in

its infancy, the overlap of concepts and objectives with housing cooperatives is strong

- Michelle Hovane from SHAC (Sustainable Housing for Artists and Creatives) about options for a combined living and workspace cooperative for artists in the Fremantle region.

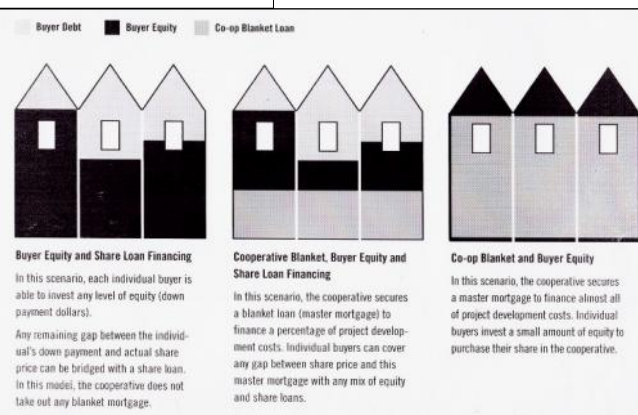
In addition to these interviews, Elizabeth has been undertaking desk research on housing cooperatives and co-housing initiatives in Australia and internationally.

The Wolery offers interesting insights to the evolution of community living over several decades as original members retire and new members are integrated into the community. Investigation of the Strata Titles Act may offer a simpler way to develop housing cooperatives in WA which will ease the finance problem. The act is under review to introduce greater flexibility in types of strata titles, which could be of interest to future housing cooperatives.

As the research is unfolding, new leads come to the fore. Elizabeth will be speaking with representatives of a 'private' housing cooperative; parents of people with disabilities interested in self managed housing; and an individual with a site north of Perth exploring community based options for the site

The research to date has been reaffirming about community interest in housing cooperatives as a sustainable and community based way to live. Elizabeth will be providing FOHCOL with regular updates on the outcomes of the research. She welcomes any feedback and comments on the research.

The diagrams below illustrate the three methods that are used to finance cooperative housing...



Training and education of co-op members and other likelies...

The Federation of Housing Collectives has been reassessing its focus for the next phase of its life.

With Co-operation Housing offering the sector vibrant and solid potentials in consolidation and growth, FOHCOL is focusing on its support of existing and emergent housing co-ops through training and education.

The latest Face 2 Face held a few weeks ago confirmed this gaze to a future of expanded capacity for WA co-ops.

1. Residential Tenancies Act (RTA from TASWA);
2. Common Waiting List (and its implications);
3. How to Read a Balance Sheet;
4. International Co-operative Principles;
5. Rent Assessment;
6. Facilitation;
7. Responsibilities of Board Membership;
8. Maintenance;
9. Minutetaking/Recordkeeping;
10. Money Matters, investments;
11. Project developments;
12. Optimising resources, capacity development, efficiency of scale;
13. Quickbooks/MYOB =

14. Bookkeeping Skills;
15. CALD communities engagement;
16. Mental Health First Aid;
17. Working with Indigenous People

We are suggesting trainers be engaged for an initial session of 2 hours at the annual FOHCOL conference with the additional four hours following (therefore six hours for each training area).

Let us know what you think of the list—how your co-op or group would prioritise these suggestions, and if you have any others?

“Governance is the fourth bottom line—the other three are held together and maintained and nourished by each and all, and governance brings longevity to an organisation.”

Face to Face Review from Saturday May 21, 2011

**Report by Alisha Ryans-Taylor,
FOHCOL Convenor**

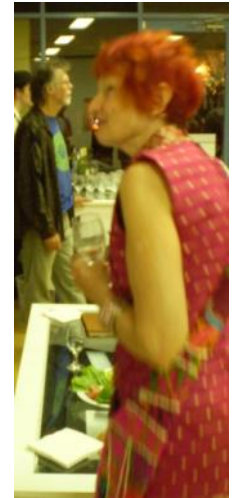
“ To everyone who attended this event at First Fremantle, a very big thankyou! It was just fantastic to spend some time hearing how the sector is moving, gathering personal reflections on co-op life, and looking forward into the future. Something that came out of this Face to Face is the ongoing issue of co-op members engagement in FOHCOL events. On this day the people in attendance were our usual dedicated cohort, but there are so many more of you out there! Of course we know of the tyranny of distance, of people

being flat out with their own lives, and how individual co-ops struggle to keep on top of their own work. But we would like you to know we can help. Contact us! FOHCOL has begun to engage the broader co-operative sector (beyond our housing), but we need to get our own people participating and involved first. At our annual FOHCOL Conference we plan to use Skype as a tool for starting dialogues with housing co-operatives over east and internationally. If we can get this technology workable, we can use it on a regular basis to engage with regional co-ops here in WA. As proposed at the Face to Face a 3 year training plan is planned to initiate meaningful training and capacity building for our co-op sector. If you want to find out more, or better yet, to send suggestions as to how we can all work together and grow/develop the sector better,

please email FOHCOL at admin@fohcol.org.au.

It can be challenging, but it is fantastic living in housing co-ops. Let’s create opportunities for more people to share the experience. Some highlights discussed at the Face to Face were:

- Elizabeth Cheong’s research work on growing new and existing co-ops,
- the proposed 3 year training initiative,
- the submission to the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee,
- connections with local MLCs and MLAs,
- new opportunities through the Social Innovation Fund, and
- possibilities opened up by membership to Cooperatives WA, and registration to attend the Commonwealth People’s Forum in October.”



Maud Martin at Lynne’s exhibition



Alisha—FOHCOL Convenor.

Caption competition and jokes...and our new Logo!

What have co-ops brought to my life?

At the 2011 housing co-ops Face 2 Face (held by FOHCOL at First Fremantle HC), our excellent facilitator Christina brought A4 sheets with the words “What have co-ops brought to my life?” typed on them, and participants wrote their gleaned benefits and blessings from the remarkable opportunity of living in their co-op. **We’d love to have your testimonials too.** Send them to us by email or snailmail, and we can add them to our worthy requests for funding to benefit the sector and you all.



Caption this...

Send your Funny Answers to admin@fohcol.org.au

Our new logo



With **Big Thanks** to West Australian Artist (and FOHCOL Management Committee member) Lynne Tinley.

Co-op stamp’n’coin



Australians will have the opportunity to celebrate our great co-operative history when they shop or post a letter in 2012. Australia Post has confirmed an IYC 2012 Commemorative Pre-Stamped Envelope - due in post offices around the country in January 2012. And the Australian Mint has confirmed a Commemorative IYC 2012 Coin!





What's been happening in FOHCOL...

Closing ceremony of Lynne Tinley's art exhibition

'On April 13, Lynne Tinley's successful art exhibition 'Primal Connections' closed with a bang!

Forty plus people gathered by invitation to view the paintings and to hear Lynne's floor talk on her artistic process. The \$10 per head entry fee was donated to FOHCOL as well as 50% of sales on the evening. A good time was had by all with snacks prepared by Elizabeth PO' and wine served by Alisha's partner Jesse.

Pictures from the night.
Recognise a few old friends?



Lynne in front of artwork and fans.



A favourite artwork - 'The Family'

"What have Co-ops brought to my life?"

- **More control over my life, taking responsibility for the place I live in, sharing with others in maintaining the place I live in and those around me**
- **A greater sense of community, and,**
- **I feel safe within the co-op knowing the people around me."**

One response from the Testimonial Wall at the FOHCOL Face 2 Face 2011

Our website
www.fohcol.org.au

*Thanks to Janet Allen (FFHC) for the idea for cutoutpeople

Big Art Project planned for International YEAR of Co-operatives 2012.

FOHCOL is gathering any photos you have showing your housing co-op through the years, and asking you to bring your camera to any co-op events, take photos, **send them to FOHCOL.**

We'll be making a **Big Art Project** from them all, and you're co-op will be in it!

We may even get a national event happening!

Keep your photos coming in—digital versions preferred. (not too e-big please). **Thanks!**

FOHCOL staff



Still working strong to keep the FOHCOL and CMT thriving on the office front are your three workers-of-the-world. Yvonne and Elizabeth are in the office during the week, and Sally provides housing services to the CMT property. Ring the main FOHCOL phone number if you have any enquiries.

Left to right —Elizabeth PO' (Coordinator). Sally Featherstone (Housing), Yvonne Hadad (Finance)