

# WA Housing Co-operatives News...

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**"If you want to be  
incrementally  
better:  
Be competitive.**

**If you want to be  
exponentially  
better:  
Be cooperative. "**

*Anonymous*

From the Federation of Housing Collectives

March 2010

## The Company— Co-operation Housing

Homes for Sustainable communities

**Co-operation Housing** was incorporated with ASIC on 25 February 2010 – a significant milestone for the Company Sub-committee. Four months was dedicated to finalising the constitution. A great deal of work went into this document, in particular by Ted Griffin from Pinakarri, to make sure it was as sound as possible. The paperwork associated with ATO endorsement for public benevolent institution (PBI), GST, ABN and deductible gift recipient (DGR) is well under way.

Business hours for the office will be Monday to Friday, from 10.00 am to 1 and remain based at First Fremantle.

Now **Co-operation Housing** is incorporated the sub-committee will likely dissolve to enable the **Board of Directors** to assume their roles. The Board will meet on a regular basis to run the company.

The next task is to register **Co-operation Housing** with the Department as a third tier provider. Policies from CHCWA,

First Fremantle and CEHL are being gathered to use as a starting point to begin the process of establishing the policies that will guide the day to day operation of **Co-operation Housing**. These policies will be matched to the requirements of the DOH registration document. Once the policies have been collated the Board will then seek input from among Member Co-ops on each policy.

A Face2Face (F2F) meeting in April is dedicated to company issues. This meeting would be in addition to the usual F2F held in July each year for the International Day of Cooperatives.

**...STOP PRESS...**

**A Face2Face information and discussion day about Co-operation Housing will be held at First Fremantle's Hall on May 15 from 10 am to 4 pm. Lunch will be provided and all interested housing co-op members are invited to**



The south entranceway to First Fremantle Housing Collective—a beautiful and familiar sight to staff and Management Committee at FOHCOL (and of course residents and locals!)

**come and be part of the progression of the company. More details will be circulated soon.**

(More page 2...)

## FOHCOL Management Committee



The FOHCOL Management Committee—some of them— from left to right:-

Lynne Tinley (rural coops rep) First Fremantle associate member, Susan Morrison from Freo Fringe, Elizabeth Cheong

FOHCOL Coordinator, Alisha Ryans-Taylor from Inanna's House, and Mick O'Loughlen (convenor) from First Fremantle. Missing from this gathering are Robyn Williams from Pinakarri (at that moment at the national co-op conference in Sydney), Ted

Griffin from Pinakarri (then in Melbourne meeting with CEHL for Company questions), Maud Martin from Inanna's House, Yamuna from Pinakarri and Tarsh Bates from Subi-Leederville Housing Collective.

This is a genuinely wonderful group of people to move forward the concept and vision and practice of housing cooperatives in WA. Join in! Great opportunities abound for becoming involved in planning the 2010 Conference and AGM. (More page 2...)



Freo Festival Parade—housing co-ops in force with banner and houses and people.

*“This is a genuinely wonderful group of people to move forward the concept and vision and practice of housing cooperatives in WA.”*



Relaxed visioning at 2009 Co-op WA Conference near Busselton.

## Coming Events

∞ **Eddy Bourke, Policy Officer for CHFA (Community Housing Federation of Australia) will be in Fremantle on April 1** for a gathering to discuss ‘Security of Tenure’ in the sector—a basic and serious issue for housing co-op residents.

Eddie was here last year and is a great resource to come visit. Bronwyn Kitching from Shelter WA, Daniel Guise from CHCWA, and Tina Merry from Foundation Housing will also

be attending. Time and venue is [10am to 12 noon at First Fremantle hall](#)—put this in your diary now!

∞ **An unmissable Face2Face for the brand new company Co-operation Housing** will happen on [May 15 from 10 to 4 at the First Fremantle hall](#). The Face2Face will review central issues for member co-ops and explore strategies for the new company to work with its member cooperatives.

Register your interest by phone or email—come along!

∞ **The yearly Face2Face for International Day of Cooperatives** is always the first Saturday in July,—this year is July 3. This event is always an informative enjoyable gathering and offers great opportunities to catch up with other regional and metropolitan co-operatives. Further details to come soon.

## How to be involved in your Management Committee

The FOCHOL Management Committee welcomes new members to contribute to the future of FOHCOL as the peak body for the WA housing cooperative sector.

The MC meet every third Saturday of the month. The meetings focus on strategic issues facing the sector, particularly strategies to increase the number of houses, national and state developments concerning housing cooperatives and building education resources to support

member cooperatives. A feature of the meetings is a ‘Round Robin’ from each member on the happenings within their respective cooperatives. Reports are given from MC delegates on the Company and the CMT, and staff update members on their respective projects, admin and finance portfolios.

The MC guide the role of staff to ensure that the WA housing cooperative sector has a presence in the community. Elizabeth Cheong as Coordinator



represents the staff, and Elizabeth PO’ takes the minutes. Keep in touch!

Contact us at FOHCOL on (08) 9336.5045, and our NEW EMAIL is [admin@fohcol.org.au](mailto:admin@fohcol.org.au).

## How to be involved in your Company

The fledgling company—**Co-operation Housing**—is the outcome of several years of work by co-operators who have contributed an fathomless number of hours to this exciting initiative.

On the wave of enthusiasm generated by the formal incorporation of this great vehicle for promoting co-operative living we hope

everyone has the opportunity to be engaged at levels best fitting their needs.

So if you are a Co-op rep, or an interested co-operator, make sure you are on the [coopswa@googlegroups.com](mailto:coopswa@googlegroups.com) list for breaking news.

If you wish to contribute or participate more actively, contact a representative on

the Company or FOHCOL. There are always things to be done to assist with the company and its future role as the vehicle to develop the housing cooperative sector.

We welcome your contributions and look forward to hearing from you!

## SWERVE—emerging co-op profile

As a force of inspiration and a reminder to those who have been in the exciting throes of visioning and auctioning a new co-op, the embryonic artists' co-op is all that and more.

If you attended last year's Conference you would have seen the preparation and painting of the 'housing' for the Freo Festival SWERVE organized. The colour and creativity and many-handed effort put into these miniature 'homes' was at once grounding and inspiring.

Currently in conversation

with Access and Foundation Housing as well as the City of Fremantle's new mayor (Sustainability Brad) and others, Michelle Hovane and her husband Frances Italiano are making sure their needs are being heard clearly and supported.

Elizabeth Cheong, FOHCOL's coordinator has been encouraging the fledgling co-ops in practical ways that strengthen their aspirations and resolve.

If you know of a group of people who are interested in starting a new housing cooperative, get them to ring FOHCOL.

Elizabeth and the team can work with groups to evaluate the potential of any initiatives.

New housing cooperatives will be able to incorporate under the Cooperatives Act 2009. This is tremendous news and it means that for the first time, newly incorporated housing cooperatives will be able to have the word 'Cooperative' in their name!



## www.fohcol.org.au and admin@fohcol.org.au

The new FOHCOL webpage is up and running. While the content is still being fine tuned, we encourage you to have a look at it. Any feedback is welcomed!

Over time, we intend to add a variety of resources to the site. Work has started on various promotional brochures and background information about housing cooperatives in general, how to establish one and how to work within one as a tenant.

FOHCOL also has a new email!

Contact us on admin@fohcol.org.au.



You can now find us in the on-line white pages.

We will also be in the hard copy telephone book when it is printed later this year.

With all these changes one this is still the same! Our telephone number. Ring us on 9336 5045.

*“The colour and creativity and many-handed effort put into these miniature ‘homes’ was at once grounding and inspiring.”*

## Co-operative Act 2009 (WA)

The new Co-operatives Act 2009 was passed by Parliament last year. Regulations are currently being drafted and it is anticipated that the legislation will be operational by mid 2010.

The objectives of the new Act are to provide a more suitable legislative framework that is reflective of the current commercial and social environment and which will facilitate inter-jurisdictional trade and the growth of the co-operatives sector.

The introduction and implementation of the Act also provides an opportunity to promote this form of organisation to regional, agricultural, indigenous, housing, artistic and other communities that could benefit from utilising the co-operative structure to meet their members' needs. The Act was developed in consultation with the industry and the key industry association for co-operatives in Western Australia, Co-operatives WA.

Further information (rather dry and yet readable) is available at this web-site:-

[www.parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/bills.nsf/9BF16EADAAB83579C825757C002A904F/\\$File/EM+024-1B.pdf](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/bills.nsf/9BF16EADAAB83579C825757C002A904F/$File/EM+024-1B.pdf)

The Cooperatives Unit at the Department of Commerce is a very useful resource.



**Giri from SWERVE leading the Freo Festival Parade of cooperative 'houses' through the streets of Fremantle, Nov 2009.**



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Our new web presence is  
almost ready!  
Watch it develop—  
[www.fohcol.org.au](http://www.fohcol.org.au)

**“We may have all  
come on different  
ships, but we're in  
the same boat  
now.”**

*Martin Luther King*

## Back When—Co-Op Conference 09 and Fremantle Festival

The 2009 Co-OpWA Conference organised by FOHCOL was both dynamic and relaxed as delegates met, reviewed and pondered the path ahead for FOHCOL and the emerging Company.

With solid input from eastern states' notables John McInerney (from CEHL) and Giselle Wilkinson (co-operator and sustainability VIP), the mix was juicy and vibrant. Add to the gathering the welcome support from the emerging artists' co-ops in SWERVE, Michelle Hovane and Frances Italiano, and the rest of us who made it there, swirl through a healthy delicious serving of good food and wonderful weather, and the scene was set for another important and enjoyable Conference.

Elizabeth Cheong, FOHCOL's coordinator presented a big picture view of the cooperative movement in the wider world. Olwyn Maddock facilitated the birthing of the fledgling company's name through an amazing consensus based process.

CHCWA's Daniel Guise presented integral trainings from his best practice expertise, and Alisha-Ryans-Taylor swept together cooperative business people to meet and connect.

There was a great band leading dances all Saturday night in the fairy lights, we celebrated elections victories on the wider political scene, and the beach lapped on regardless, which the kids enjoyed endlessly.

What SWERVE also contributed was quick novelty housing—colourful cardboard versions to be used in the following month's Freo Festival parade (see page three on their emerging co-op and pictures).

With coop delegates gathered from 2,500km apart (Broome to Margaret River) there was plenty to discuss on and off the agendas.

We all look forward to our next conference!

Stay posted as planning is already underway..

## And Conference 2010—coming up!

∞ **Conference 2010**—the date and venue are being sorted out now, the topic will emerge, the stage will be set for another in the string of pearls that is the housing co-op sector annual conference (the 15th!). Last year we had beach and grass and relaxing backdrops to hone decision-making, this year ... ?

Make your co-op part of the excellent mix.

## FOHCOL staff

The staff at FOHCOL have worked as a team in this configuration for many months, effectively handling the day-to-day traffic of FOHCOL business as well as the less usual, annual Face2Face gatherings and conferences. You may have met us in our various roles, and we are happy to help as we can to enhance the wellbeing of the housing co-op sector, with visits to co-ops and building the resource base for education and facilitating the communications and interactions.



From left to right—  
Elizabeth PO' (Admin), Sally Featherstone (Housing), Yvonne Hadad (Finance) and Elizabeth Cheong (Co-ordinator).