

## Co-operative Housing – the Welsh Way

In 2011 the Welsh Government established a Co-operative Housing Project, managed by the Wales Co-operative Centre and supported by the Confederation of Co-operative Housing. Since then the project has worked with dozens of local groups and housing organisations to explore mutual and co-operative options including several pioneer schemes across Wales.

Co-operatives can be developed in either new or existing housing, cover a full range of tenures and be adapted to meet local needs and priorities. Their unique features are that they are owned by members which gives them varying degrees of control over their homes and community, depending on the precise nature of the co-operative.

All of the pioneers have developed in contrasting ways, adopted different models or variants and have other unique and defining characteristics. This included the different ways in which individuals came to be involved, the size and nature of the housing co-operative, and how they engaged and identified who would eventually live in and run the housing co-operative.

There are some common features. Each pioneer has been 'hosted' by a housing association; and all were based on partnership working between the association, local authority, contractors, the support project and most importantly, residents who formed the co-operative.

The success of the initial schemes has been acknowledged by Welsh Government who recently awarded £149,530 to the Wales Co-operative Centre to further support the Wales Co-operative Housing project. Details of new support from Welsh Government can be found [here](#).

The funding will help to scale up the project which has already helped to deliver over 130 homes across Wales and is supporting the delivery of a further 75 by developing expertise in different co-operative models and providing advice to developers and co-operative groups.

The Wales Co-operative Centre recently a Co-operative Housing Pilot Toolkit, developed to help community groups, housing associations, co-ops, local authorities and others in the initial stages of considering how to develop new co-operative & community-led homes. You can download the pilot toolkit [here](#).

The project also published a new strategy for the current Assembly term, *Building homes, creating communities, changing lives*, which outlines how the programme will continue to promote and support an increasing role for co-operative housing in meeting housing need in Wales. The strategy can be viewed [here](#).

Details of the Welsh Government funded Co-operative Housing Project can be found [here](#). More information on the support available can be obtained from Dave Palmer, Co-operative Housing Project Manager on 02920 807 132 or at [david.palmer@walescooperative.org](mailto:david.palmer@walescooperative.org)