



Draft Membership policy, Feb 2022

Why your co-op should become a member of Student Co-op Homes (SCH)

Instead of individual student housing co-operatives operating in isolation, being a member of SCH means that you are contributing to increasing visibility and strengthening the network. By working together, individual co-ops benefit when the sector is doing better and the sector can grow faster. By increasing our members, SCH aims to raise the profile of the student housing co-operative sector to access more funding.

We want to encourage all UK based student housing co-ops to join Student Co-op Homes as official members. Membership fees are only expected from co-ops who have a property, but any solidarity contribution is welcome.

About Student Co-op Homes

Student Co-op Homes (SCH) was founded as a co-operative in March 2018. Currently we have co-ops in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Birmingham, Sheffield, Brighton and Bristol.

SCH supports the growth of the student housing co-operative movement by:

- Either purchasing student properties to take them out of the speculative private market, or leasing properties through third parties.

- Delivering student-led co-operative management of properties.
- Raising awareness of co-operative housing as a solution to the broken student housing market.
- Providing support and services to member co-operatives through training, sharing resources, access to funding, specialist knowledge & skills, and more.

Please see separate membership structure document for co-ops with property (to be shared following consultation with our members at the AGM Feb 22)

The aims of SCH membership programme

SCH's membership programme is a way to help the network achieve its aims. For example, the programme will enable SCH to provide shared support and resources to all member co-ops, such as providing opportunities for its members to communicate, learn and share their experiences in running their own homes.

Being a member of Student Co-operative Homes is an act of solidarity in the struggle for better student housing, which unite student housing co-operatives, housing campaigns and tenants' rights across the UK.

By having a paid membership programme, it will generate a stable and consistent funding stream, allowing SCH to plan its budgets and grow the student housing co-operative sector. More fundamentally this structure directly ties SCH funding into its success in growing the student housing movement.

Having a paid membership programme provides a financial incentive for member co-ops to approach the question of new

property acquisition on a shared strategic basis, rather than their individual student housing co-op alone.

SCH offers a proven solution that provides good quality, affordable, and democratically controlled homes that respond to the needs of the students living in them.

Benefits of SCH membership

Access to co-op development resources and support

- Policy templates, useful resource lists and guidance notes.
- Business planning support
- Access to in-house expertise and dedicated staff

Training and events

- Signposting to relevant training^[1]_[SEP]
- Invites to events run by SCH, Confederation of Co-operative Housing (CCH), Co-operatives UK, Cooperative Housing International (CHI), NASCO and other organisations in Europe

Funding support for your co-op

- Signposting to funding opportunities, advice on grant applications

Shape SCH's future

- Through contributing to core projects.

- Opportunities to elect directors to the SCH Board of Directors^[SEP], ability to put forward and vote on motions at General Meetings^[SEP], attend and vote at General Meetings.

Legislation

- Advice on Health and Safety compliance
- Electrical, gas and fire safety standards

Co-op development

- Advice on developing and refurbishing your co-operative.
- Annual health assessment on your co-operative.
- Signposting to specialist service providers.

Communication

- Regular e-newsletters to keep everyone up to date with what's happening in different parts of SCH.
- Opportunity for user members to feature on our website/ social media.
- Use of SCH logo on your marketing materials
- Engagement with press and support with press releases

Co-ops who plan to lease directly from SCH

Property

- Support to secure a property
- Advice on talking to agents
- Criteria for identifying suitable properties

User members who want an additional property in their town/city must be paid up members to be eligible to be considered.

User member eligibility to become an SCH member

- You are a housing co-operative group (early stages or incorporated)
- You are located near a University or College.
- Your members are over 18
- Your organisation aims to provide housing to students in need of co-operative housing (eligibility criteria should be included in your Allocations policy)
- You agree with the aims, purpose and values of SCH.
- If you intend to lease independently, we expect you to be closely involved with SCH and its network.

We want to encourage all UK based student housing co-ops to join Student Co-op Homes as official members. By working together, individual co-ops will collectively benefit from sharing resources, learning and ideas. The student housing co-operative sector will be more visible and stronger if we have more members working co-operatively to grow the movement.

Appendix

Definitions

User member

Any student housing co-operative that is recognised by the Board as being a co- operative and that meets any other

criteria for membership as determined by the Board. Such Members will be User Members of the Co-operative.

Member of members

Individual tenants/ prospective tenants of a student housing co-operative.

Investor supporter member

Any individual or organisation (other than a User Member of the Co-operative) that supports the objectives of SCH, and has invested in the Co-operative through the purchase of at least the minimum shareholding, and that meets any other criteria for membership as determined by the Board from time to time.