



NABCO

Review and Revision

NABCO Strategies for 2010 - 2015

Executive Summary

May 2010

National Association of Building Co-operatives

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Introduction

National Association of Building Co-operatives formed in 1973

- ~ a co-operative of co-operatives
- ~ jointly owned by affiliated co-operatives housing societies
- ~ the federation representing, uniting and serving the Co-operative Housing Movement in Ireland

Co-operative Housing:

- 3,500 + dwellings built in co-operative home-ownership group schemes around the country.
- 1,200 dwellings in local co-operative rental housing developments.
- Mixed tenure co-operative rental and ownership housing developments.
- District/Area co-operative housing societies with management boards representing member/user residents.
- Contributing to socially balanced communities with good quality well managed rental housing in not-for-profit, co-operative communal and ownership.
- Management of apartment buildings and services for member/user residents.
- Developing co-operative neighbourhood social services for community benefit.

National Association of Building Co-operatives (NABCO) Society Ltd. is a not-for-profit federated co-operative society, registered under the Industrial & Provident Societies Acts 1843 – 1828. Approved housing body under Section 6, Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1992. Recognised as being formed for community benefit charitable purposes by Revenue Commissioners.

NABCO Objects and Aims (Summary)

- **Relief of housing needs for community benefit using co-operative organisational principles;**
- **Support and assist co-operative housing societies with the provision and management of housing;**
- **Provide information, advice, training and other services;**
- **Act as the representative, promotion, development and co-ordination organisation for the co-operative housing sector.**

Policies

- To unite, represent, promote and co-ordinate the common interests and concerns of affiliated co-operative housing societies;
- To provide information, advice, guidance, training and other support services for the organisation, management and performance of co-operative housing societies;
- To develop and expand the contribution of co-operative housing towards the relief of housing needs, at costs and in tenures suited to needs of members;
- To encourage the building of better communities, with co-operative member/resident participation, neighbourhood self-help projects and services.

Mission Statement

- **Represent, Promote and Develop the Co-operative Housing Movement in Ireland.**
- **Support well organised and managed co-operative housing societies.**
- **Contribute to the building of better communities
~ socially, economically, environmentally.**

Review and Revision of NABCo Strategies for 2010 – 2015

1. To position the National Association of Building Co-operatives, as the representative, promotion and development federation for housing co-operatives so that it can:-
 - respond to challenges facing the sector in a changing housing system and market;
 - continue the expansion of the co-operative housing sector;
 - cope with changes in public policies and funding schemes;
 - identify new or alternative ways to deliver co-operative housing, including independent financing and market orientated approaches where appropriate;
 - sustain support for the well organised management of co-operatives and the provision of quality housing services for members;
 - strengthen the public profile and awareness of co-operative rental and home ownership solutions for people in need of housing, including the management of apartment buildings;
2. To identify the competencies, capacities, resources and processes required to meet changing circumstances and new challenges;
3. To adjust the configuration of the Association's management committee, executive and staff roles accordingly.

1. Representation, Promotion and Co-ordination of the Co-operative Housing Sector

National

- Continue the co-ordinated representation of the co-operative housing sector as a distinct network of housing providers, operating according to co-operative organisational principles;
- Monitor public policies relevant to the role, potential and activity of housing co-operatives
 - housing legislation, regulation, funding schemes etc.;
- Promote co-operative housing as a reliable sector for the provision and management of housing, working for the benefit of members and their communities;
- Seek an updated and modernised legislative code which recognises and supports Co-operatives in Ireland.

Regional

- Make efforts for a more balanced development of Co-operative Housing in the Regions across the country;
- Promote co-operative housing as a distinct and reliable sector for the provision and management of housing in regional towns and city areas;
- Pilot new co-operative housing development initiatives where feasible in towns and cities;

European Union and International

- Determine priorities for representation and participation by NABCo – the national federation for the co-operative housing movement in Ireland – as an affiliated member of

CECODHAS / Housing Europe - Co-operative Housing Section,
International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) - Housing Co-operatives Europe,

with the objective of contributing to the representation of the common interests and concerns of not-for-profit, public, social and co-operative housing providers needing attention at the European Union and/or International levels. Ensure the cost of participation is kept in balance with an appropriate level of representation from Ireland and facilitate the exchange of information, data and good practices.

2. Public Profile and Communications

- Improve and strengthen the public profile of the role, activity and potential of co-operative housing societies and the sector as a whole;
- Achieve the more regular issue of public information and viewpoints from the co-operative housing sector;
- Focus on both the economic and social benefits of participation in co-operatives as a means to deliver and manage social rented and affordable ownership housing and the building of better communities;
- Identify housing co-operatives as an effective means to manage estates and apartment buildings;
- Increase profile and contact with local authority, public, community, public, professional organisations, trade unions and also housing developers in Dublin and other Regions.

3. Services to Support the Organisation, Management and Performance of Affiliated Co-operative Housing Societies

3.1 Membership, Organisation and Leadership

- Continue to focus on housing co-operatives as not-for-profit *member/user* organisations, serving members and their communities;
- Update and improve *information and familiarisation programmes* about how co-operatives are organised and managed for *new* members in collaboration with affiliated societies;
- Continue to assist the proper formation, organisation and legal registration of new co-operative housing societies, while encouraging balanced organisational development of the sector around the country and the avoidance of unnecessary duplication;
- Initiate a *development programme for members of management committees/boards of directors*, to enhance their skills, knowledge and confidence in co-operative organisation, management and decision making, as a key resource for the success of the Co-operative Housing Movement;
- Support co-operative management boards and managers with the adoption of good governance policies and procedures for the conduct of their business affairs;
- Continue to facilitate the work of the *Co-operative Managers' consultative forum*;

3.2 Housing Management and Quality Housing Services

- Support and sustain the delivery by affiliated co-operative housing societies of *quality housing services for members* with information and guidelines about good housing management practices, policies and procedures;
- Assist affiliated co-operatives in the adoption and implementation of good practices in housing management, caretaking, repairs and maintenance services;
- Alert affiliated co-operative housing societies about changes in relevant legislative or regulatory requirements;
- Assist affiliated societies with the collection and analysis of housing management performance data, service quality surveys, together with supporting the provision of *shared services* and *co-operation between co-operatives* for their mutual benefit;

3.3 Building Better Communities

- Support co-operative housing societies in promoting the *involvement of member/residents* in the upkeep and care of local co-operative housing estates and apartment buildings and to actively encourage their representation on the management committees or boards of directors.
- Support participation by co-operative member/residents in *neighbourhood self-help projects and community social services*, including assistance to co-operative housing societies for the exchange of information about resources and good practices for community social services, including management and staffing requirements.

4. Information and Training

Ensure adequate co-ordination between public communications, the promotion of housing co-operatives and the skills and knowledge of members, management boards, managers and staff by the provision of adequate advice, information and training services for:-

- the proper formation, registration and legal incorporation of co-operative housing societies, including the responsibilities involved;
- the enhancement of the information and familiarisation programmes conducted by affiliated societies for recruitment of new members;
- society management committee/director development to enhance knowledge and skills in the organisation, management and performance of societies,
- co-operative managers and staff in the delivery of housing services and for staff engaged in community development and social services

5. Refurbishment & Replacements in Older Co-operative Rental Housing

- In furtherance of the commitment to *quality housing services*, to undertake building condition surveys of older housing developments with affiliated co-operative housing societies, in order to plan and prioritise, within budget resources, responses and projects aimed at
 - preserving the investment made in the housing stock and amenities,
 - ensuring continued good living conditions for member residents.
- Apply value for money and cost benefit criteria for appropriate refurbishment/replacement projects, including environmental and amenity improvements, more efficient energy usage with reduced CO₂ emissions, minimisation of future caretaking, repair and maintenance costs, within feasible budget planning, estate income and funding arrangements.

6. Development and Expansion of Co-operative Housing

- Continue to act as a development agency for more new co-operative housing projects, which contribute towards the relief of local community needs and improve the range of housing options and tenures;
- Carry on the development of new projects and initiatives in support of affiliated co-operative housing societies or with a view to the organisation of new societies as necessary, including co-operative societies to manage apartment buildings;
- Seek to implement co-operative housing development, or the acquisition of suitable sites or houses and apartment buildings, for co-operative housing purposes, with rental and/or ownership purchase tenures, based on adequate advance business planning and feasibility studies, prudent financial management and risk control, utilising independent financial and/or public funding supports as appropriate;
- Seek productive partnerships with local authorities which contribute towards the fulfilment of housing strategies and service plans to serve local communities;
- Commission and design or acquire housing developments which provide good living conditions and amenities for member/residents, minimise ongoing upkeep and maintenance and contribute towards sustainable environmental policies.

Explanatory Information about Co-operative Organisational Principles (Summary)

Co-operatives are based on values of self-help, responsibility, democracy, equality and solidarity with members who believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice:-

- Open membership to all persons willing to accept the responsibilities of membership and able to use or benefit from the co-operatives' services or activities, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.
- Democratic member control with one member one vote and elected representatives accountable to the membership.
- Equitable economic participation based on members contributing financially, with limited or no distribution of surplus which may be applied to reserves or for the development of the co-operative and other approved activities for community benefit.
- Co-operatives are autonomous, independent, self-help organisations; agreements with other organisations or governments must ensure democratic control by members and that co-operative autonomy is maintained.
- Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, managers and employees so that they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives and also seek to inform the public about the nature of co-operatives.
- Co-operation between co-operatives to serve members most effectively by working together through local, regional, national and regional structures.
- Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by members.

Source: International Co-operative Alliance (ICA)

Co-operative Housing Movement:

Building on the Past

Looking to the Future.

United Nations International Year of Co-operatives: 2012

