



**COMMON
EQUITY HOUSING**
South Australia

Common Equity NEWSLETTER

October, 2024 / Vol 40

Homes for Homes \$100,000 Grant

We are delighted to announce that Common Equity Housing were recently granted \$100,000 by Homes for Homes to contribute to our project to build 5 new homes. Find out more in this edition.

Inside this issue

- Homes for Homes
- CHIA SA Awards
- Gardening Competition
- Co-ops Day
- Cooperative Housing Summit



Update from the Board

Introducing Heidi Claus - Chairperson & Member Director

I thought it was about time I introduced myself to you all in the newsletter. I've been on the Board of Common Equity as a Member Director since October 2021. In the first meeting after my re-election to the Board at the 2023 AGM, the Board endorsed me as its Chairperson. This is the first time Common Equity has had a Member Director as its Chair and I think that reflects well on our organisation. My member organisation is Paris Flat Housing Co-operative and all of our 25 properties are located in the inner west in Bowden / Brompton. Outside of the board and co-op duties, I am a social worker in mental health and disability.

Homelessness SA conference

Recently, in my role as a mental health clinician, I attended the Homelessness SA annual conference, held as part of National Homelessness week, with the theme "Homelessness Action Now". I learned that homelessness as a government priority is now sitting in the Department of Human Services (DHS), instead of Housing SA. It makes sense that homelessness sits with DHS instead of the Housing SA; homelessness is not just about houses, and the focus for the department is very much on addressing the systemic factors that contribute to homelessness. Some of these factors include mental health, disability, domestic and family violence, addiction, poverty, unemployment and under employment, racism, homophobia and transphobia.



"This is the first time Common Equity has had a Member Director as its Chair..."

Update from the CEO

As our days get warmer with the beautiful spring weather it brings optimism, energy and opportunities for connection.

One of the ways you can connect is by attending the Inaugural Australian Cooperative Housing Alliance Summit on Thursday 17th October in person at the Adelaide Convention Centre or online. Common Equity Housing SA is hosting the Summit. You will have an opportunity to hear directly from our comrades who participated in the BCCM Study Tour and we are excited that the report **What Australia can learn from European affordable co-operative rental housing models** is to be launched at our Summit.

The theme, "The Value of Co-operative Housing," is very timely and important and the lineup of speakers will provide valuable insights and inspiration. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with thought leaders and practitioners who are shaping the future of co-operative housing.

Continued next page:



UPCOMING AGM

SAVE THE DATE: Common Equity's Annual General meeting will be held on Wednesday 27th November.

BOARD NOMINATIONS: A reminder that nominations for the two Member Director vacancies close on Friday 25th October. Joining the Common Equity Board is a wonderful way to share your lived experience for the greater good, influence policy and strategy and further develop your skills and knowledge.



 COMMON EQUITY HOUSING
South Australia

Please Save the Date for our
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

6.00 pm
Wednesday 27 November
Mile End Hotel: 30 Henley Beach Road, Mile End

Stay tuned for more details

RSVP via the QR code by clicking [here](#) or call Common Equity on 8354 2790



Update from the CEO continued

We are slowly making progress for co-operatives in the housing sector. The recognition from Homes for Homes with the awarding of a \$100,000 grant for our development in Wallaroo for Copper Triangle Housing Cooperative is a fantastic achievement for Common Equity Housing SA and our members.

It's been great to have many of our co-op members sharing their own stories about the true value of cooperativism at events throughout the last few months! Co-op members from around Australia will be attending the Summit and in the final panel discussion co-operative housing leaders will share their thoughts about the future and how we can work together to ensure more Australians can enjoy the benefits of collective ownership.

We proudly attended National Reconciliation Week breakfast and have been involved in some amazing collaborative work with the Coop Federation.

The International Year of Cooperatives in 2025 will be a significant milestone, offering a platform to champion the impact and social value of cooperatives. We once had 93 housing co-ops in SA. Today there are 16 remaining; 11 are members of Common Equity. We will continue to advocate strongly for housing cooperatives in SA and seek funding for more redevelopments like those we are doing for Porridge Bowl and Copper Triangle Housing Cooperatives.

Stephanie Miller
Chief Executive Officer

"The study tour findings clearly showed that a mainstream, scaled and affordable rental housing co-operative sector offers safe, secure and long-term housing solutions for low- and middle-income households that can have a substantial impact on improving the wellbeing of individuals and families. They serve as dignified and community-oriented housing solutions for single households, older people, and immigrants - as well as for people living with disabilities, young adults and students".

*Excerpt from **What Australia can learn from European affordable co-operative rental housing models: A report on findings from the BCCM 2024 study tour***

Homelessness SA conference continued.....

The highlight of the Homelessness SA conference for me was hearing from Fiona Hopper and Sandra Fuchs about the Housing First model which they base their approach to social housing at Common Ground, a social housing project that is part of Housing Choices Australia. In particular, hearing from Guy Calvert about his lived experience of homelessness was both moving and inspiring. Finding a secure base at Common Ground helped Guy turn his life around.

He lives with his wife and two children in a home they have bought together and Guy works as a psychosocial disability support worker. Guy explained that what helped him with his time at Common Ground was the "feeling of not being alone anymore", the genuine connection he made with others and the hope and belief that he found as a resident of Common Ground supported by the Common Ground staff and other residents. I am sure many co-op members can relate to Guy's story.

"...hearing from Guy Calvert about his lived experience of homelessness was both moving and inspiring..."



Homes for Homes Grant

We are delighted to announce that Common Equity Housing were recently granted \$100,000 by Homes for Homes to contribute to our project to build 5 new homes in Wallaroo for Copper Triangle Housing Association.

Copper Triangle Housing Association currently manage 30 properties in Wallaroo, Moonta and Kadina. The co-op identified a community and organisational need to supply dwellings suitable for their members to age in place. This development will be built with elderly singles and couples in mind and will be supplied as social housing for low-income occupants.

Our Board Chair, Heidi, had the honour of accepting the giant cheque from Homes for Homes and she was proud to note that Common Equity are the first South Australian organisation to receive this grant funding.

Housing co-operatives offer an alternative to private home ownership, private rental and public housing. Housing co-operatives are an innovative model of tenure that can bring housing security and agency to more South Australians. Co-op housing removes the incentive to profit from housing, in turn creating long-term housing affordability.

A big thank you to Homes for Homes for your contribution and we congratulate you for deciding to support cooperative housing!

"...the first South Australian organisation to receive this grant funding."



2024 International Co-operatives Day

In celebration of the 2024 *International Day of Co-operatives* Common Equity hosted an afternoon tea for our Valued Members.

The event provided an opportunity for open conversation and networking, and we were privileged to hear from guest speakers Matthew Shilcock (Paris Flat Housing Co-operative) and Claire Mackenzie (Phoenix Housing Co-operative). Their inspirational experiences of living in their respective co-ops highlighted the significant contributions of cooperatives towards community and well-being.

Together, let's showcase our commitment to building a better future for all!





2024 Co-operative Housing Summit

The Value of Co-operative Housing

Join Us In Person or Online at the 2024 ACHA Co-operative Housing Summit.

On Thursday, October 17, 2024, we're bringing together leaders, members, and advocates in the co-operative housing sector for an exciting day of learning, networking, and collaboration at the Adelaide Convention Centre.

This year's theme is "The Value of Co-operative Housing", and we have an incredible line-up of international and local speakers, including:

- 🌐 Tim Ross – Co-operative Housing Federation (CHF) of Canada
- 🌐 Dr. Sidsel Grimstad – Griffith Centre for Systems Innovation
- 🌐 Melina Morrison – Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals (BCCM)
- 🌐 Professor Wendy Stone – Swinburne University of Technology

💡 Plus, choose from three insightful workshops on:

- Building a Co-op Housing Community
- Co-op Principles in Practice
- ACHA's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Impact Framework

 Date: Thursday, October 17, 2024

 Location: Gilbert Suite, Adelaide Convention Centre or online

 Time: 9am to 5pm, followed by a networking reception.

 Scan the QR code to register

Please choose invoice when you check out and Common Equity will cover the cost



Don't miss this opportunity to connect with thought leaders and practitioners who are shaping the future of co-operative housing!

National Reconciliation Week Breakfast #NRW2024

Each year Reconciliation SA hosts the Annual National Reconciliation Week (NRW) Breakfast to launch NRW in South Australia. This year's event was the largest one yet with approximately 2800 people in attendance. Common Equity was represented by members of Phoenix, Paris Flat and Perch Housing Cooperative in addition to Board Directors and staff.

It was a sobering and emotional experience with a Welcome to Country by Auntie Rosalind Coleman, Keynote Speaker Adam Briggs, as well as an incredible performance by the Of Desert & Sea Dance Group and musical performance by DEM Mob and Rob Edwards.

Launching this year's theme, 'Now More Than Ever', a reminder to all that the fight for justice and the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will and must continue.

#NowMoreThanEver



CHIA SA Awards Night

Several Common Equity staff were in attendance to the 2024 CHIA SA Excellence Awards night recently. The evening provided an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the dedicated and passionate work of the state's community housing providers.

Congratulations to all the finalists and winners! What a great night!



Operations Update

It has been a busy and exciting last few months, there has been some fantastic events in the community housing and cooperative housing sector. We attended the Homes For Homes grant funding announcement and were very proud to be the first South Australian organisation to win, the International Cooperatives day event was fantastic and was truly inspiring to hear directly from two wonderful coop members and the National Reconciliation Week Breakfast was amazing.

I also attended the fabulous Coop Federation Co-operative Networking in Adelaide with our CEO Stephanie Miller as one of the excellent guest speakers and more recently we attended the fantastic Community Housing Industry Association excellence in community housing awards. We are really looking forward to the ACHA Co Operative Housing Summit in October.

We are pleased that Forecast Maintenance Plans have all been approved and please remember we are always here to support you if you have any maintenance enquiries.

Our team is excited to be bringing Office Bearer training in the next month, and we have the upcoming rent review in November.

Trudi Penrose-Starr
Cooperative services Manager



Maintenance Update

Programmed Maintenance is well underway now, with all Forecast Maintenance Plans having been reviewed by Member Organisations and approved - thank you all for making that happen! We have already completed 20+ jobs and have another 12+ jobs approved and underway, with many other jobs in the process of obtaining quotes.

The first quarter reports are currently being sent out now to the Maintenance Officers and Chairs of the Coops. Should you have any questions about planned maintenance please contact Christine Cholewa directly (christine@cehsa.com.au).

Cyclical maintenance consisting of annual smoke alarm checks is ongoing, with Smoke Alarm Solutions undertaking these checks and reports of compliance being sent to Common Equity. Lancasters Property Maintenance is also underway with gutter cleaning and as part of this service they provide reports about the gutters and roof conditions in addition to conducting minor tree trims from roof lines. Should you have any questions about cyclical maintenance please contact Chantelle Moore directly (chantelle@cehsa.com.au).



Claire Mackenzie - My Story

Recently Common Equity and some of our Member / Tenants were honoured to listen to Clair Mackenzies story at our International Co-ops Day Event. Claire found herself a sole parent in the private rental market, which was not only extremely expensive, but unstable. On more than one occasion the rental she was in was placed on the market leaving her in a position where she had to move with a young child in tow.

It was through a friend that Claire first heard about ISIS (now Phoenix), a co-op for single mothers. She also completed a counselling course during this time and again the model of co-op housing was brought to her attention. The process for securing a co-op house was very different to what it is now where majority of Member/ Tenants are sourced from the Single Housing Register. It was via a letter sent to ISIS that Claire put the wheels in motion.

From this initial expression of interest Claire was invited to attend meetings at ISIS, however no housing was available. Claire explains this time as a 'wait and see' period, where often the involvement from potential Member / Tenants without housing would drop off as they waited patiently for a current member to vacate, opening up an opportunity for housing.

Eventually Claire did have the fortune of being able to secure housing and subsequent membership with ISIS, lifting the weight of stress from Claires shoulders. Claire also had the opportunity of being able to relocate within the co-op to accommodate different stages of her life, including being close to her sons schooling.

Continued on next page...



Claire Mackenzie - My Story (Continued)

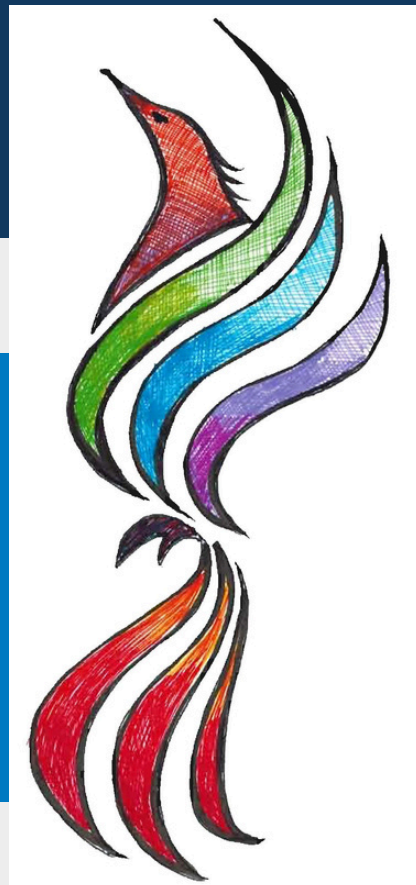
Through the years that Claire has been a member of the co-op she reflects on witnessing first-hand the power of democracy and having a vote. The introduction of NRS reporting impacted ISIS heavily as many members felt the new requirements were overwhelming and too much to manage. Subsequently the notion of 'winding-up' was explored, with some members wanting the co-op to disperse. 8 core members of ISIS however used their vote to achieve the majority vote to remain a co-op, with other members disbanding to community housing providers or alternative housing. It was around this time that ISIS not only renamed themselves to Phoenix to symbolise them rising from the ashes of the disbanded ISIS co-op, but they also came under the umbrella of Common Equity to help alleviate the concerns and workload around the NRS reporting.

Claire explains that without the co-op and Common Equity there are many opportunities she would not have been able to have. By removing the financial stress and housing instability she has the energy and ability to seek opportunities even outside of the co-op.

Claire also noted that she was able to conduct her volunteer hours for her Centrelink Newstart payment by working for Common Equity. During her volunteering she had the opportunity to assist on updating policies, having the chance to have a voice and influence on Common Equity policies.

While Claire acknowledges that co-op housing may not be the model suitable for everyone, she feels her personality and commitment to see things through have been fundamental to her thriving within the co-op. She explains the journey as self-enriching, and the lifelong relationships formed with her co-op members as one built on respect and understanding where they've had the power to support one another through many of lives phases and milestones. In summary Claire describes co-op living as a mutually beneficial relationship that she is extremely grateful to have the opportunity to be a part of.

“Claire describes co-op living as a mutually beneficial relationship...”



R U OK Day

A lot can happen in a year, a month, a week. Whether it's your friend, family member, colleague, partner, or teammate, the people you care about go through life's ups and downs every day.

By having regular meaningful conversations, you build trust and normalise talking about what's really going on, so when the people in your world find themselves struggling they know you're someone they can talk to.

So whilst R U OK? Day on Thursday September 12 is our National Day of Action, we encourage you to Ask R U OK? any Day of the year, because a conversation could change a life.

Ask R U OK? ANY DAY

Have a conversation using these 4 steps

- 1 Ask R U OK?**
Illustration: Two cartoon figures, one with a question mark above their head.
Speech bubbles: "How are you travelling?" and "You don't seem yourself lately - want to talk about it?"
- 2 Listen**
Illustration: One cartoon figure listening to another.
Speech bubbles: "I'm here to listen if you want to talk more." and "Have you been feeling this way for a while?"
- 3 Encourage action**
Illustration: One cartoon figure pointing towards another who is holding a dog on a leash.
Speech bubbles: "What do you think is a first step that might help you?" and "Have you spoken to your doctor about this?"
- 4 Check in**
Illustration: Two cartoon figures sitting at a table with a bowl of food.
Speech bubbles: "Just wanted to check in and see how you're doing?" and "Have things improved for you since our last chat?"

Learn more at ruok.org.au

Find the best man in you!

MONDAYS

CHRISTIES DOWNS (FULL)
CHRISTIES DOWNS COMMUNITY HOUSE

WEDNESDAYS

ELIZABETH EAST
10:30AM TILL 12:30PM
THE SALVATION ARMY, PLAYFORD

MITCHAM
7PM TILL 9PM
MITCHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE

THURSDAYS

ADELAIDE CITY
7PM TILL 9PM
MINOR WORKS BUILDING

GAWLER
7PM TILL 9PM
GAWLER & DISTRICT COLLEGE B-12
CHILDRENS CENTRE

No judgement.
No criticism.
No advice.



Open Men's Groups - Where are they?

Open Men's Group offer safe spaces where men can share, support, and grow together. These groups are crucial for mental health and community strength. If you or someone you know is struggling—with purpose, relationships, anger, or isolation—join them.

- ❌ No judgment
- ❌ No advice
- ❌ No criticism

Just a space where men can be real, connect, and support each other.

Wednesday: Elizabeth East, 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM & Mitcham, 7 PM to 9 PM

Thursday: Gawler and Adelaide City, 7 PM to 9 PM

Inaugural Gardening Competition – Winners!

This year was the first year that Common Equity have participated in the Inaugural Garden Competition. The competition was open to all Common Equity Co-op Members and Direct Tenants, and it aimed to recognise the hard work and pride our Co-op Members and Direct Tenants take in their home gardens.

We are proud to announce the winners of each category below. The winners of each category have automatically gone into the running for the SA Community Housing Growing Together Gardening Awards!

- Best Garden (Front or Back) - Yvonne Waller (Phoenix Housing Co-op)
- Most creative/unique garden - Claire Mackenzie (Phoenix Housing Co-op)
- Best small garden (Balcony, vertical, indoor, courtyard) – Joint entry of communal area submitted by Virginia Barratt (ACRE Housing Co-op)
- Most improved garden - Amanda Morony (Paris Flat Housing Co-operative)
- Best neat and tidy garden - Shannon Taylor (Paris Flat Housing Co-operative)

Well done to our winners and thank you to everyone that submitted an entry.



OzHarvest – FREE supermarket in Hindmarsh

In August Adelaide's first free supermarket opened in Hindmarsh. In response to the skyrocketing demand for food relief amidst the cost-of-living crisis, the supermarket model 'Take what you need, give if you can' will provide fresh produce, pantry items and cooked meals to those in need. The model is based off of OzHarvest's successful models in Sydney where anyone in need can come and be served by dedicated volunteers with dignity and respect.

Where

OzHarvest Adelaide Warehouse
25 Manton Street, Hindmarsh SA 5007

Opening Hours

10 am - 2 pm Tuesday
3 pm - 7 pm Wednesday
10 am - 2 pm Thursday



Grow It Local

Grow It Local is a free community initiative that offers workshops and information both online and in person for anyone interested in gardening or sustainability. By signing up you'll gain access to videos on growing from seed, edible natives and learning to pickle and more! Be sure to check out their website for upcoming workshops: www.growitlocal.com



Appliance Rebate

Have you recently purchase (or plan to purchase) a fridge, freezer or dryer? Thanks to the Retailer Energy Productivity Scheme (REPS), you may be eligible to receive a rebate for an energy efficient purchase (conditions apply). Visit www.yess.net.au/our-services/appliance-rebate or call 1300 894 745 to find out more.



Adelaide Sustainability Centre

Are you aware that there are nine Environment Centres in the greater Adelaide region? These Centres are community owned and operated groups supported by Green Adelaide and run by volunteers and part-time staff.

Environment Centres provide free information and media on all aspects of the environment and sustainable living, and they work with the community to provide engaging lessons about the natural world and sustainable living. Check out their website to find your nearest Centre <https://www.adelaidesustainabilitycentre.org.au/>



We'd love to hear from you!

Common Equity recognises that our members come from a variety of backgrounds, and each have their own unique stories to tell. We'd love to hear your story! We'd like to encourage all of our members to stop and reflect on how your life may have changed since joining your co-op. Has having secure and affordable housing opened doors to further studies? Enabled you to raise families in tough housing conditions? Provided community connections and support? Would your story be different if you had to navigate the private rental market?

Common Equity is only as successful as the outcomes of our members, so celebrating those outcomes needs to be at the forefront of what we do. We'd love to feature your story in our newsletter.

Call 8354 2790 to book in a time to have a cuppa and have a chat (we can come to you!). Stories can remain anonymous if preferred.



