

# Our Survey Says...

**The initial results of NACO's membership survey have been published and a good deal of valuable feedback has been gained.**

In December 2009 NACO commissioned a survey of members and potential members in the co-operative movement to find out more about their awareness and understanding of the Association, what it does and how it can help them. The detailed results will be used in preparing a plan for membership development, but in the meantime, here are some of the top-line findings...

The survey, which closed on 29 January, was undertaken using an internet survey site, which is a quick, effective and low-cost method of capturing

survey data. There were 838 respondents in total, at least 770 of whom were Co-operative Group employees. Interestingly, several managers in the Group considered themselves part of other organisations. There are roughly 3,000 managers in scope within the Group. Allowing for a small number of managers not in scope, who may have responded to the survey, this is a response rate of roughly 24%, a good figure for a survey of this type.

Of those who responded, 345 indicated they were NACO members by completing the members' section in the survey. This indicates similar participation between existing members and non-members.

*Continued on page 3.*

## Reward for Recruitment!

**NACO ran a successful Recruitment Campaign at Co-operative Financial Services (CFS) in August, September and October 2009 and, following a prize draw of new members, Sue Bland, Reward Manager at CFS, was the lucky winner.**

During the initiative, staff were invited to attend a half hour session to learn and find out about how NACO works and how it can support managers in the workplace with day to day issues as well as more complex situations. As a result, NACO saw a 30% increase in its membership within CFS.

As part of the campaign, the names of all new members, together with any member who encouraged another colleague



*Sue Bland, Reward Manager at CFS, receives her prize from NACO Assistant Secretary Bob Lister.*

to join, were put into the draw to win £300 of Co-operative Travel vouchers, and Sue's was the first to be pulled out.

The prize came in very handy for Sue, as she was just in the process

of arranging her 2010 holiday through Co-operative Travel.

Sue said: "This was a lovely surprise, just at the right time. I've been meaning to join NACO for a while as I'm aware of the important part they play whilst doing my own role. Joining NACO is like having another insurance policy; you hope you never need to use it, but it's great to know it's there."

NACO Assistant Secretary Bob Lister added: "We were extremely pleased with the response to the CFS recruitment campaign and I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome all our new members on board. It's also good to know that the Co-operative Travel vouchers came at just the right time for Sue."



Neil Buist, General Secretary

# Welcome

As this is the first issue of *co-operative official* in the new decade, we've decided to freshen it up a bit. Nothing too drastic as you can see, but I hope some of the changes we've made will enhance your reading experience. We've also made some changes to our website – why not take a look?

There's a lot going on at NACO at the moment, so this issue provides an excellent opportunity to update you on the most important initiatives taking place. As you can see from our lead story, our membership survey has thrown up some fascinating initial findings. The survey is an important part of the strategic review we undertook last year and is key to helping us serve our members effectively and helping us to deliver what members – and potential members – want from the Association. We will cover the results of the survey in more detail at our AGM in May and there will be more about it in the next issue of *co-operative official*.

We were also delighted with the response to our diversity survey (see page 5), which saw a return rate of 26% – far higher than would normally be expected for this sort of survey. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who responded – we very much appreciate you taking the time. The results are vital in that they will help to shape our diversity policy and ensure that diversity takes centre stage in the work we do on your behalf.

As you will see from the review of the Association's performance in 2009 (page 4), the last twelve months have been challenging for NACO. However, we have had some significant success in recruiting new members and in securing compensation for members in need. Compensation was achieved for 82 members in 2009, compared with 54 in 2008 – an increase of over 50% in the numbers we helped – and the amount of compensation rose to £4.72 million in 2009 compared with £3.2 million in 2008 – an increase of 48%. These sums would generally not have been paid without the input of NACO and illustrate the benefit of membership.

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to urge you to come along to our AGM and Members' Meeting in Derbyshire on 18 and 19 May. We always try to make it as relaxed and enjoyable as possible and we've already got some great speakers lined up. For those of you who've never been, we're sure you would find it informative and worthwhile, with some great networking opportunities. For those who have been before, there will be lots new to interest you, so we're keen to welcome you back. Above all, the AGM is a chance for you to get directly involved in the democracy of your Association. Our recent surveys show that many members have views they wish to express – the AGM is a perfect opportunity to get your voice heard and for you to help shape NACO for years to come. We look forward to welcoming you.

Happy reading!

## Highlights

- 2009 REVIEW
- DIVERSITY SURVEY RESULTS
- CO-OPERATIVE PROJECT AIMS TO EMPOWER TEA FARMERS IN KENYA
- NEW LOOK NACO WEBSITE
- EMPLOYMENT LAW UPDATE: "FIT NOTES"

## Our Survey Says... continued from front page

Unsurprisingly, the age profile of respondents to the survey was relatively mature, reflecting the seniority of these roles (see table).

Your age?			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Under 25	11.1%	93	
26-35	29.6%	248	
36-45	33.9%	284	
46-55	20.8%	174	
56-65	4.4%	37	
Over 65	0.2%	2	
Answered question	838	Skipped question	0

56% of respondents were male, which attests well to the Group's and the movement's equality of opportunity.

The majority of responses came from Co-operative Group Food and Co-operative Financial Services. However, there were responses from all parts of the movement.

Although one third of the managers surveyed had worked in the movement for between one and four years, another third have been in the movement for 10 years or more. Respondents were less likely to have been NACO members for 10 years, which indicates that many NACO members have progressed in their co-operative careers from junior positions.

Overall, awareness of NACO could be improved, as over 200 respondents (24%) had not heard of NACO before taking part in the survey. The most common method of learning about NACO was from colleagues at work (34%), with 28% finding out about NACO at their induction.

Although a significant proportion (11.5% of those who responded to the question) of NACO members joined to seek specific guidance in employment matters, the majority

(58.5%) could see clear benefits from becoming a member.

For members, it is clear that NACO scores highly in terms of the support it provides, particularly in terms of guidance and representation on an individual basis. For example, in response to how well NACO provides support and guidance to individual members, 36% said "very well" and a further 56% said "acceptable".

NACO performed less well in providing member benefits such as reduced rate utilities, although even here 77% of members rated NACO's performance "very well" or "acceptable".

Members did feel it was easy to get in touch, with only 3.8% of respondents experiencing difficulty in contacting the Association, although 38% have never had the need to contact.

"The survey has thrown up some very useful information," explains NACO President, Jack Devers. "Most respondents were very forthcoming with positive suggestions for improvements for NACO and these will be considered carefully and actioned if possible. We would like to thank all those who participated – both members and non-members."

## Date for Your Diary NACO AGM

**WHERE**  
Thistle East Midlands Airport Hotel  
Castle Donington, Derbyshire

**WHEN**  
Tuesday 18 to  
Wednesday 19 May 2010



The NACO Annual General Meeting returns to the Thistle East Midlands Airport Hotel on Wednesday 19 May, and all delegates are invited to attend the President's Dinner on Tuesday 18 May with guest speaker Iain MacDonald, Director General of the International Co-operative Alliance.

The Members' Meeting will include two fascinating presentations. The first will be given by Ed Mayo, Secretary General of Co-operativesUK, who will discuss the future role and activity of the co-operative movement. The second will be by motivational speaker Steve Cunningham.



Steve Cunningham and Ed Mayo.

To find out more and to reserve your place, contact NACO.

More information about Steve Cunningham can be found at: [www.blindvision.tv/index.htm](http://www.blindvision.tv/index.htm)

# 2009 Review



Jack Devers

**As for many organisations, 2009 was a challenging year. The economic downturn, the continued consolidation of the co-operative movement and the demise of Dairy Farmers of Britain all had a negative impact on the Association's performance. However, the hard work of NACO officials helped to constrain the effect of these issues.**

The sudden demise of Dairy Farmers of Britain led to the swift departure of 76 members from the Association. Although 391 people in total left during the year (compared with 393 in 2008), 288 members joined, resulting in a net reduction of 103.

However, the revised structure of the Association, to provide a greater focus on recruitment, has delivered positive results since its implementation at the beginning of 2007. In the three years since then, NACO has recruited over 1,086 new members. It should also be noted that in the same period we have lost 1,102 members – a net reduction of only 16 in three years.

While it may appear that NACO has worked hard to stand still, the reality is that without the commitment to recruitment demonstrated in these figures, the Association would have witnessed a significant fall in membership over the last few years.

The volume of work undertaken by NACO officials has once again been extremely high, although they've still managed to respond to members' requests in the usual manner, as well as having proactive and involved dialogue with co-operative societies regarding collective issues.

With regard to individual cases pursued by NACO, 82 cases were concluded in 2009, resulting in over £4.72 million compensation being received by the members concerned (see page 8).

Turning to the finances of the Association, for the year-ending 31 December 2009 a deficit of £23,211 was posted. This compares to a deficit of £72,050 in 2008 and a surplus of £59,128 in 2007.

Expenditure in 2009 was 0.75% under budget following strong control by the officials and the General Council during the year. However, the economic downturn and the fall in membership figures meant that income was 9% under budget.

Despite the deficit reported, the Association remains financially strong, with net assets well in excess of one million pounds. NACO's auditors have also confirmed that the Association is well placed to see out the economic downturn and remains a financially sound organisation.

Total Investment Income and Bank Interest was £40,364 in 2009, compared to £51,893 in 2008. This was severely affected by interest rates, with bank interest falling from £5,488 in 2008 to only £107 for the last 12 months. The economic downturn also impacted on the Association's potential for profit on stock market activity,

with no shares sold during the year.

In the review of 2008 we reported that the General Council had agreed measures to recognise the impact that the economic downturn has had on the Association's investment portfolio. This proved to be a prudent exercise and in November the General Council reviewed the portfolio in light of recommendations presented by the General Secretary following discussions with investment advisors. As a result, the year-end valuation of the portfolio is 5.5% higher than the cost of the investments, demonstrating the strength of the investment portfolio.

As reported in the last issue of *co-operative official*, the General Council undertook a wide ranging review of NACO's strategic priorities in 2009, including our structures, finances and future opportunities. This will bear fruit in 2010.

Looking ahead, we hope that the ongoing integration of the Somerfield estate with the Co-operative Group will lead to a period of stability in the movement. The nature of mergers and integrations in the co-operative movement is such that the majority of role reductions impact at the NACO level of management. A period of stability would enable NACO officials to focus efforts on membership growth in the co-operative and mutual sectors.

In the meantime, we are committed to continuing to ensure that NACO effectively represent its members' interests – both individually and collectively.

**Jack Devers  
President**

# Diversity Survey Results

**One of the first actions of the new NACO Diversity Committee was to develop and circulate a questionnaire to the NACO membership seeking its views and opinions. The response exceeded expectations with a return rate of over 26%. This compares to a return rate for similar initiatives of between 4-8%, so clearly the NACO membership wants to have its voice heard on this important topic.**

This response means that the sample of returned questionnaires is representative and of a size that enables NACO to draw realistic conclusions. It also mandates General Council to plan NACO's approach and negotiating stance on diversity.

Each questionnaire was independently analysed and the following key issues were identified, in order of priority:

- Improving diversity related benefits and working conditions
- Developing an effective NACO

- communications strategy
- Providing diversity and related training to members
- Encouraging co-operative societies to adopt and implement cutting edge diversity policies and practices.

## Key statistics

The responses from members are shown in the tables below. Wherever possible they have been compared to figures from the general population, calculated by the Office for National Statistics. However, it should be remembered that NACO does not draw its membership from the general population but from those managers who are employed by co-operative societies.

## Important step

"This questionnaire is an important step for the NACO General Council which is now in a position to formulate effective policy," says NACO President, Jack Devers.

In a recent analysis of the importance of diversity, the

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) emphasised that organisations that fail to effectively address diversity are putting themselves at significant reputational risk.

Jack Devers explains: "Diversity should be playing an essential role in helping co-operatives tackle skills shortages, retain knowledge and experience, widen the recruitment base, attract more customers and enhance profits. NACO, in partnership with co-operatives, has an important role in ensuring that diversity is skilfully managed and implemented across its member organisations."

Dianah Worman of the CIPD adds: "Diversity is about valuing everyone as an individual, and managing diversity is central to good people management and it is relevant to the way organisations do business in all sorts of ways. The challenge is to create a culture in which everyone feels valued so they give their best in their jobs."

Gender		NACO %	ONS %	Sexual Orientation		NACO %	ONS %
Male	409	64.41	49.09	Heterosexual/Straight	607	95.59	93-95
Female	224	35.28	50.91	Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual	22	3.456	5-7
				No Answer	6	0.944	
Age		NACO %	ONS %	Disability		NACO %	ONS %
22-30	35	5.51	7.96				
31-40	153	24.10	12.03	Disability	93	14.65	19
41-50	235	37.01	13.80	No disability	535		
51-60	185	29.14	14.53				
60+	26	4.09	5.63				

Religious Belief		NACO %	ONS %	Ethnicity		NACO %	ONS %
Christian	459	72.26	71.6	White	613	96.53	90
No religion	141	22.20	15.5	Asian/Asian British	14	2.20	5
Muslim	9	1.41	2.7	Mixed	3	0.473	1
Sikh	4	0.62	0.6	Other	2	0.315	
Jewish	4	0.62	0.5	Chinese	1	0.157	1
Hindu	4	0.62	1.0	Black/Black British	1	0.157	3
Buddhist	1	0.15	0.3				
Other religions	3	0.46	7.8				
Prefer not to say	9	1.41					

*Note: Where figures do not total 100% this is because some questions were not completed.*

## Co-operative Project Aims to Empower Tea Farmers in Kenya



*Dr Samantha Lacey with one of the tea-farming families.*

**The Co-operative Group and the Co-operative College are partners in a unique project designed to empower small-scale tea farmers in Kenya, which aims to help 8,000 smallholder tea farmers to form into co-operatives, achieve Fairtrade certification and to diversify into other products. It is hoped that the smallholders will eventually be able to supply the Co-operative Group with tea for the 99 Tea blend and perhaps other products as well.**

Small-scale tea farmers face numerous challenges. The global price of tea is highly unstable and with only a small farm, individual growers have no bargaining power to negotiate decent terms of trade. They work six days a week picking the tea from their family farms and taking it to the local buying shed where it is weighed, sometimes with biased scales, and sold for about 15p per kilo of fresh leaf - if they're lucky. This money is often just enough to buy food for the family but then hard decisions have to be made about what to do with the rest - send the children to secondary school so they can get a job or buy fertilisers to help assure a decent crop next year.

The first stage of the project is to help the farmers form into five producer co-operatives. This will help to give them more control over their livelihoods, a bigger voice in negotiations, more local jobs and the ability to build a business that they own and share the profits from. Once they achieve Fairtrade certification, they will also benefit from a guaranteed minimum price for their tea as well as a premium that can be used for

community projects such as digging wells or setting up a school fund. Additionally, diversifying into other crops will give them greater income stability and, by helping them to grow more of their own food, will enable them to save more of their income for other things such as school fees.

The project, co-funded by DFID's Food Retail Industry Challenge fund, brings together the expertise of five partners: Finlays tea, who supply the Co-operative Group with the Fairtrade tea for its 99 Tea blend and have existing good relationships with the growers; the Co-operative College UK, who are designing the training necessary to help the farmers to establish their own co-operatives and are co-managing the project; the Co-operative College of Kenya, who will be delivering the co-operative training on the ground; and the Co-operative Group, who are co-funding the project using members' donated dividend money, and will hopefully buy tea and maybe other products from the farmers when they become available.



*Co-operative members learn about the supply chain.*



*The first co-operative receiving membership training from the Co-operative College of Kenya.*

The aspect of this project that really differentiates it from other Fairtrade or development projects is the co-operative to co-operative trade. Combining a development project with trade between co-operatives creates benefits at both ends of the value chain. The Co-operative Group has a unique story that really goes beyond normal supermarket Fairtrade to share with its members, who are already engaged in the project due to donating some of their dividend. The tea growers are assured of Fairtrade tea sales for at least some of their tea and get extensive support to set up their own business and achieve Fairtrade certification. Most individual smallholders cannot get Fairtrade certified because in order to do so you have to be part of a democratically run farmer organisation and most farmers wouldn't know how to go about setting one up without support. That means that in this project, the capacity and opportunities of the farmers are really increasing and the benefits of Fairtrade are going to farmers that would not otherwise have been able to sell to the Fairtrade market. This is a good example of Co-operative Social Responsibility.

Since an initial trip to Kenya by the Co-operative College in July 2009 to co-design the member and board

training materials with the Co-operative College of Kenya, the project has really started to gain momentum. Dr Samantha Lacey who manages the project at the Co-operative College says: "Over the past six months it has gone from being an idea on paper to a growing reality fired by the enthusiasm and hope of the community. It was amazing to talk to the interim committee of the first co-operative in December and to hear all their ideas for what they want to achieve with their co-operative."

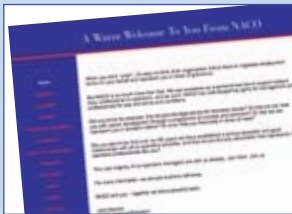
The Interim Committee of the "Chebchep Tea Outgrowers Co-operative Society" are currently planning their first general meeting to elect a board, which they have agreed will comprise equal numbers of male and female representatives from each area as well as a reserved seat for a youth member. Once elected, the new Board will receive training from the Co-operative College of Kenya and will start to recruit staff who will weigh and transport the members' tea. Once they are up and running they can start working towards Fairtrade certification and eventually to supplying the Co-operative 99 Tea blend. The Co-operative College of Kenya can then start training potential members in the second and third areas to set up their own co-operatives. The aim is to have five Fairtrade certified co-operatives up and running by early 2012.

Brad Hill, Fairtrade Strategy Manager at the Co-operative Group, says: "This really is co-operation in action. Having established the basic idea with our tea supply partner Finlays, project development is being progressed by The Co-operative College UK and counterparts in Kenya. We believe this to be the largest Fairtrade project ever instigated by a supermarket from scratch and look forward to delivering benefits to the newly created co-operatives through Fairtrade certification and market access."



*Potential members of the first co-operative learn about co-operative history after initial training.*

## New Look Website!



Have you ever visited the NACO website? If not - or if you haven't visited for a while - then why not log on and check out the new design!

In addition to lots of information about the Association and what it can do for you, the website now contains regularly updated news, details of member benefits and profiles of the NACO team. There are regular bulletins on our diversity work (including the latest on the survey conducted last year), you can access information on our subscription rates and methods of payment and, if you're really keen, you can even download a copy of our rulebook!

From holiday offers to financial advice, legal assistance to saving money on phone calls, being a member of NACO is about more than just representation and negotiation. Bookmark the website and click back often for all the latest from your Association...

■ [www.naco.coop](http://www.naco.coop)



## Are You Due to Start Maternity Leave?



As a NACO member, are you aware that if you are expecting a baby and are due to commence Maternity Leave that you will not be required to pay any subscription to NACO from the time your leave starts until you resume your position within the Society that you work for?

You will still be entitled to the full range of NACO benefits and advice during this time, all that is asked is

that you contact the Association when you have returned to work. By getting in contact, NACO can also check if there have been any changes to your working hours or patterns. For example, if you return to work on a part-time basis and work less than 25 hours a week, you would be entitled to Part-time Membership which is offered at a reduced rate with no change to the level of benefit and support that is provided.

Emma Wilder, Head of Finance & Corporate Services at the Co-operative College, has been a member of NACO since 2003 and suspended her payments to NACO whilst on maternity absence on three occasions. "I simply spoke to the NACO office and they arranged to suspend my subscriptions whilst on Maternity Leave," says Emma. "On my return a single call is all it took to reinstate the payments - a completely painless exercise."

## Representing Members' Individual Concerns (Part 2!)

Following the article in the last edition of *co-operative official*, NACO has now collated the details of the full year's compensation amount received for members during 2009, and this equates to a staggering £4.72 million.

As was reported in the December issue, £3.42 million was earned until the end of September, so we have seen an increase of over 38% in the last quarter alone.

Bob Lister, Assistant Secretary, says: "These amounts are negotiated by NACO officials on behalf of members on a regular basis and are sums that would not generally be paid to individuals without the input of the Association.

"It must be pointed out that it is only a minority of cases taken by the officials that receive compensatory awards, but once again it demonstrates the fact that membership of NACO is a benefit that cannot to be ignored."

## Employment Law Update: "Fit Notes"



**The Social Security (Medical Evidence) and Statutory Sick Pay (Medical Evidence) (Amendment) Regulations 2010 are to be introduced in the spring of this year, heralding what may be a fundamental change in how workplace absence is dealt with.**

Last summer, the Government began a consultation on the introduction of "fit notes" to replace the current sick note regime. The move was recommended by Dame Carol Black, whose Government-commissioned review of the health of Britain's working age population was published in 2008.

Currently, a GP must certify either that an employee need not refrain from work, or that the employee need refrain from work for a specified period. The new fit notes, in contrast, will have three categories of ability to work: "fit for work", "not fit for work" and "may be fit for some work now".

The draft regulations have within them a copy of the proposed form that will be used by the doctor. They are very specific about what information will be required, that is: the patient's name; the date of the assessment on which the doctor's statement is based; the condition in respect of which the doctor advises the patient; a statement, where the doctor considers it appropriate, that the patient may be fit for some work now; a statement that the doctor will or, as the case may be, will not need to assess the patient's fitness for work again; the date on which the doctor's statement is given and the address of the doctor. This information goes some way further than the typical GP sick note that can, if legible, tell the employer very little about what an employee's current ailments are.

Where a doctor considers that a patient may be fit for some work the doctor shall state the reasons for that advice and where this is considered appropriate, the arrangements which the patient might make, with their employer's agreement, to return to work. The doctor is also given the option of indicating

appropriate arrangements to help the employee back into work: a phased return, altered hours, amended duties or workplace adaptations.

The patient's condition may be specified less precisely where, in the doctor's opinion, disclosure of the precise condition would be prejudicial to the patient's well-being, or to the patient's position with their employer. Where, in the doctor's opinion, the patient will become fit for work within 14 days of the date of the assessment, the doctor's statement shall specify that day. Alternatively, the doctor's statement should normally specify the minimum period for which, in the doctor's opinion, the patient will not be fit for work or, as the case may be, may be fit for some work. The doctor can state the patient will be unfit for the "foreseeable future" if in their opinion that is the case and the patient has at the date of the assessment already refrained from work on their advice for at least six months.

There is a concern that although a GP can give an accurate statement of an individual's symptoms, the extent of their incapacity and a prognosis for how long the condition is likely to last, he or she will often have little idea of the impact that these have on the employee's role which is more properly the domain of an occupational health professional.

The fit notes may well raise some interesting questions about their relationship with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. A doctor's recommendations in a fit note will not be binding but if an employee can satisfy the definition of "disabled" set out in the Disability Discrimination Act, they may wish to argue that the doctor's recommendations are reasonable adjustments under the Act.

Difficulties will also probably arise where the doctor states the employee may be fit for some work but the employee disagrees with the doctor. Will tribunals consider employers as acting reasonably if they dismiss an employee if they refuse to return to work in these circumstances? Time will tell, but a prudent employer will obtain their own medical advice in any event.

 **THOMPSONS**  
SOLICITORS

# CFS Pay Review 2010

Members of NACO have voted overwhelmingly to accept the 2010 CFS pay deal.

A ballot of members resulted in 89.8% accepting the offer and, with effect from 1 April 2010, the following proposals will be implemented for colleagues in CFS contribution levels Implementing Activities, Leading & Advising and Delivery Business Plans.

1. Pay increase (excluding colleagues in Customer Adviser Pay Progression):

Heritage CFS Performance Ratings	Pay Increase Percentage
Distinguished	3.00%
Valued Exceeded	2.75%
Valued Meets	2.50%
Valued Striving	2.00%
Unacceptable	0.00%

2. A common annual pay review date of 1 April for heritage CFS and heritage Britannia colleagues from 2011

3. A proposal to remain with the current pay bands subject to a full review later this year when developing the Single Employee Proposition

4. Individuals whose salary is at the top of the band will receive their full pay rise even if this takes them above the pay band maximum

5. IS Market Supplement will remain in place and no reduction will be applied for 2010.

Customer Advisor Pay Progression (CAPP) will remain unchanged for those staff that are subject to it and those staff that are subject to specialist pay arrangements will be briefed separately.

Neil Buist says: "We believe the proposals reflect the best available outcome in the current economic climate and we are delighted that members have wholeheartedly accepted the deal."

## co-operative official

co-operative official is published by National Association of Co-operative Officials, 6a Clarendon Place, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 2QZ.

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NACO has made every effort to ensure that the information in this magazine is correct, but we cannot accept responsibility for any omissions or errors. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of NACO.

Editorial co-ordination by Ethos public relations - www.ethos-pr.com  
co-operative official is printed on 25% recycled paper with the remainder coming from sustainable sources.  
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## Channel 4 Programmes Seek Contributors



**Relocation, Relocation is on the lookout for property hunters and Kirstie's Homemade Homes wants to help people create their dream interiors.**

Relocation, Relocation is looking for first time buyers and people who would like to expand their portfolio by purchasing two properties with, for example, one to be used as a second home, for business purposes or even as a holiday getaway. Channel 4 programmers are also interested in anyone who is considering leaving the familiar behind to relocate within or outside the UK and attempt life anew.

Participation in the show is not exclusive to NACO members and should be extended to friends, relatives and work colleagues, should they wish to discuss a forthcoming property venture.

For more information about how you can get involved visit: <http://channel4.com/4homes/on-tv/relocation-relocation/> or email [relocation@iwcmmedia.co.uk](mailto:relocation@iwcmmedia.co.uk).

Kirstie's Homemade Homes is back for a second series and Kirstie Allsopp wants to help people create their own dream interiors using reclaimed and restored second hand furniture and handmade objects from craftsmen and women around the country.

For more information about the programme visit <http://www.channel4.com/4homes/on-tv/kirstie-s-homemade-home/>. If you would like to apply, email [siobhan.smith@iwcmmedia.co.uk](mailto:siobhan.smith@iwcmmedia.co.uk) and describe your home, your budget and why you think it needs Kirstie's help to turn it into a homemade home.

## Recruitment Update

Elsewhere in this edition, you will have read about the survey NACO asked members and non-members to complete prior to Christmas and which had a very positive response. However the survey did highlight one issue in that some non-members were not really aware of what NACO did and how it helps individuals from time to time in their workplace.

Traditionally, one of the best and most effective ways in which non-members could see the benefits of union membership would be as a recommendation from people they work with - their colleagues - who are already NACO members or have had reason to use the Association's services. Like most things in life, "word of mouth" is always a strong influence on people's opinions.

Consequently, as part of our overall recruitment strategy, we'd like to ask you - our members - to help us in recruiting the person you sit next to, or anyone you know who isn't presently a NACO member.

Application forms can be provided by the NACO Registered Office, or more simply, via the NACO website at [www.naco.coop](http://www.naco.coop) and clicking on the "Join NACO" link.

If you don't feel able to approach anyone directly about NACO, please feel free to contact either Bob Lister or Stefan Szymczak at Registered Office, who are more than happy to speak to anyone you're able to identify. Remember, NACO offers all members protection and up to date information, and is the only recognised trade union for managers within the co-operative movement.

To support members in their endeavours, here's a list of the 10 most important reasons to become a NACO member:

- Negotiation with your society for ongoing improvements in your terms and conditions
- Advice on individual contracts of employment
- Representation at grievance and disciplinary cases
- Support for members' specific requirements during the ongoing changing business climate
- Provision of expert legal advice and representation
- Cost-free personal injury service with no deductions from any compensation awards
- Training courses and career development opportunities
- Detailed up-to-date employment advice
- Financial support in times of need
- Access to a range of optional benefits where NACO has relationships with a variety of providers, including reduced rate utility and phone providers, tax advice, conveyancing and will-writing services.



## Switch & save!

You could save an average of £251 and up to £700 on your energy bills\*

Union Energy's free 100% impartial energy price comparison service will find the most competitively-priced gas and electricity providers in your area for cheaper energy bills. And if you register for our Ongoing Monitoring Programme we'll contact you again when energy prices change to ensure that you continue to save money in the long term.

It only takes a couple of minutes to find out how much you could save. Go on, give it a try!

**Don't forget to check out our great range of energy-saving products to save even more money!**

**Visit [www.unionenergy.co.uk](http://www.unionenergy.co.uk) or call 0800 094 9039** (Mon-Thurs 9am-6pm; Fri 9am-4pm; Sat 9am-1pm)

\*From 12 Dec 2009 - 9 Feb 2010 customers using our service saved an average of £251.26. The biggest saving during this period was £700!  
NB: Union Energy's service can be used by households in England, Scotland and Wales (mainland only).

# You need your employees to be as healthy and productive as possible

## So we've developed a wide range of health plans that can help



Best  
Healthcare  
Cash Plan  
Provider



Best  
Individual  
Cash Plan  
Provider

Your people are, of course, your most important asset, and keeping them happy and healthy is critical to keeping them at their most productive.

That's why we have created one of the widest ranges of corporate health plans on the market – from first class private medical insurance to innovative dental and cash plans.

By giving you the ability to create a package of benefits that meets your needs, this highly flexible offering can deliver everything your business needs to help look after the health of its employees.

As a result, you could find that Simplyhealth is good for your employees, good for you and good for your profits, too.

If you would like to find out more, please feel free to email us at [forbusiness@simplyhealth.co.uk](mailto:forbusiness@simplyhealth.co.uk) or bother us on **0845 075 0063**.

We enjoy talking to people about making the world a healthier place.



[www.simplyhealth.co.uk/forbusiness](http://www.simplyhealth.co.uk/forbusiness)

