

Embracing the Potential of Co-operatives

Labour and Co-operative MP Gareth Thomas was the keynote speaker at this year's Members' Conference in May. Gareth used his speech to argue that co-operators should focus their efforts on those areas of the economy where co-operatives can bring real benefits to local people.

Speaking about the opportunity for co-operative and mutual models in public service provision, Gareth acknowledged that the financial challenges facing the country at the moment are big, but this means there has never been a better time to be promoting co-operatives and mutuals.

"Arguing the benefits of the co-operative model has become easier in Parliament."

As a Co-operative Party supported MP, Gareth said that he has always been less sceptical about the potential for co-operatives delivering public services than many of his Labour Party and trade union colleagues.

"Arguing the benefits of the co-operative model has become easier in Parliament," he said, and that this is thanks in big part to the success of the Co-operative Group and others across the movement.

According to Gareth, "the Government sees co-operatives as a way of breaking up the public



Gareth Thomas, Labour and Co-operative MP

sector. We need to embrace the potential of co-operatives in the public sector, but not where it is used to degrade staff benefits, pay or terms and conditions of employment."

He argued that politicians and co-operative members should now focus on those areas where co-operatives can bring real benefits to local people and he cited new energy co-operatives, such as Baywind, along with the potential for new housing co-operatives.

Closing his address Gareth explained that the Labour Party

needed to use its time in opposition to review its policies and he hoped NACO would take part in that review.

The annual Members' Conference is a focal point for NACO as a practical way of engaging with its members. As in previous years, the conference was held following the AGM and, in addition to Gareth Thomas MP, Jane Harris from President's Charity Help for Heroes addressed a packed meeting room.

See pages 3 to 5 for more news from this year's Conference and AGM.



Neil Buist, General Secretary

Welcome

Thanks must go to Gareth Thomas MP and Jane Harris from President's Charity Help for Heroes for their contributions to this year's Members' Conference. I also want to thank all the members that attended too.

NACO has a proud tradition of serving members well and never more so than when they need individual representation. As Ann Breen, our 2010 NACO President, identified in her speech at our AGM, "members are NACO's lifeblood", and over the next few months you will see a continued refocusing of our work to better reflect the needs of you, our members.

We're pleased to say that with your help through the *Member-get-Member* campaign our recruitment drive is going well. In fact, as reported on page 10, our *Member-get-Member* campaign accounts for almost a third of all new member applications in 2011. Thanks again to all those who referred a colleague to join NACO... and welcome to our new members!

The article referred to on page 10 is about our work to improve communications with members, and again we're happy to report that the changes we're making are having a positive impact. Visits to our website have increased tenfold and many more members are opening our email communications, since we started sending them out electronically in HTML format, and then clicking through to our website for more information.

"Over the next few months you will see a continued refocusing of our work to better reflect the needs of you, our members."

I want to remind members that, as reported on page 9, this is the last printed version of *co-operative official* and that in future, we will be emailing an online version to members instead. Please do make sure we've got your latest email address! Of course, the newsletter will also be available 24 hours a day for you to read on our website.

I hope you will enjoy some of the other fascinating articles in this edition of *co-operative official*, including all the latest on Co-operatives Fortnight, the amazing work of the Kuleana Centre in Tanzania, which provides a safe haven for homeless children in Tanzania and, on the back page, the latest on the Co-operative Heritage Trust's work to transform the facilities and services offered by the National Co-operative Archive and the Rochdale Pioneers Museum.

Finally, I would just like to thank Ann Breen, on behalf of NACO members and officials, for her fantastic work as President over the past year, and to welcome Karen Froggatt, our new President. Ann has been a breath of fresh air and has played a key role in pushing through some of the changes we have implemented recently – we have all enjoyed working with her. Many of you will already know Karen, not only because of her dedicated service to NACO over many years, but as a previous NACO President. We're looking forward to working with Karen in the coming 12 months and I know that members will wish her well.

Happy reading!

Highlights

- MEMBERS' CONFERENCE AND AGM
- GENERAL COUNCIL ELECTION RESULTS
- CO-OPERATIVES FORTNIGHT IS YOURS TO SHARE
- GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF EMPLOYMENT LAW
- A SAFE HAVEN FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN IN TANZANIA

Help for Heroes – Fundraising Thank You



President Ann Breen (right) presents a cheque for £5,500 to Jane Harris of Help for Heroes.

Over £5,500 has been raised for President's Charity Help for Heroes over the last 12 months. Help for Heroes' Jane Harris thanked members at this year's Members' Conference and told us about the success of the charity to date.

Jane, a former serving soldier and wife of a soldier serving in Afghanistan, is the regional volunteer fundraiser for Help for Heroes. As well as accepting

the £5,500 raised by Ann Breen during her NACO Presidency, Jane reported on the success of Help for Heroes over its short four year life as the charity for wounded service men and women.

Jane explained that the charity never considered the rights or wrongs of any particular conflict, but focused all its energy and fundraising solely on helping the wounded. Using her own experiences and videos she outlined the work of the charity and, in particular, showed a number of service personnel speaking about their experience of the charity.

During her year as President, Ann Breen organised a Golf Day at Morley Hayes Golf Club near Derby, which raised over £4,000. A 'Race Night' held at the President's Dinner also helped boost the total.

Ann Breen says: "On behalf of NACO, I would like to thank all those who have given so generously to Help for Heroes and, as those of us who were at the Members' Conference found out, the charity really does do amazing work."

Karen Froggatt, NACO's incoming President, has decided to retain Help for Heroes as her charity in 2011 and Karen is aiming to raise just as much money to support their work in the coming year. This year's Golf Day takes place on Wednesday 29 June.

www.helpforheroes.org.uk

Travel Transfer Update

The Competition Commission is in the process of reviewing the proposed merger between Thomas Cook and the Co-operative Travel and will issue its report by 16 August.

According to the Competition Commission, it is investigating four possible ways that the proposed merger could potentially reduce competition. Potential damage to competition could be caused by:

- 1 A loss of rivalry in local markets between agents
- 2 A loss of rivalry nationally or regionally
- 3 The joint venture's agents favouring Thomas Cook's holidays
- 4 Thomas Cook limiting the access of other agents to its holidays.

The Commission is now in the process of holding hearings with Thomas Cook, the Co-operative Travel and other interested parties. If the enquiry concludes that competition will be reduced, it will issue a statement of remedies to be taken. NACO will provide members with an update when it knows more.



Before the referral to the Competition Commission, Mike Greenacre, Managing Director of the Co-operative Travel, said: "We and Thomas Cook are totally committed to the joint venture and will co-operate fully with the regulatory process in order to get clearance for the merger as soon as possible."

Also before the referral, Chief Executive of Midlands Co-operative Society Martyn Cheattle said: "The benefits of the joint venture are as compelling as ever, so we remain fully committed to seeing it through to a successful conclusion."

Members' Conference and AGM 2011



At this year's Members' Conference, members were given the opportunity to feed into the strategy review currently being carried out by NACO.

Breaking into three groups, focusing on member recruitment and retention, services and benefits and communications, members discussed some of the key issues facing NACO at present. A wide ranging and thought provoking discussion raised key issues such as the importance of new digital communications such as Twitter and Facebook, improving the visibility and brand of NACO amongst co-operative employers and how do you show the relevance of trade union membership to employees who benefit from all the hard work of the union, without joining themselves? All of the members' comments will be fed back to the NACO Executive (formerly General Council – see page 5) to help define strategies for the future.

Speaking about the Members' Conference, Neil Buist said: "This year's meeting offered members a chance to help shape the future strategy of their union as well as hearing two inspirational speakers. I'd like to encourage more members to come along next year and to take part in all the unions' activities."

At the AGM in the morning before the Members' Conference, members voted to accept a new Rule Book for NACO and to adopt this year's annual report. You can see both documents on the NACO website www.naco.coop.

The Kevin Yorath Award for Service went to Simon Fisher from Midcounties Co-operative, but

unfortunately Simon was unable to collect his award in person on the day. Delma-Rose Yorath will be presenting the award to Simon later in the year and NACO will bring you more news about it then.

The new award replaced the former NACO "For Service" Award and the former Kevin Yorath Memorial Award and is made in recognition of a current or former member's support of NACO during their time in the co-operative movement. Nominations for the award are reviewed by the NACO Executive and the criteria considered in making a presentation includes supporting NACO committees, individual support and developing member involvement in NACO.

In her speech at the AGM, President Ann Breen said her focus for the past year had been on 'being there for you'. She drew attention to the fact that over the past 12 months some 10% of members had benefited from individual representation. She said that she hoped members would never need this service from the Association, but reminded members (and those not in membership) that one day they may need representation if problems arise in the workplace.

"We want to still be there for you in the future," said Ann, highlighting the importance of recruiting new members to keep the Association alive. "Many co-operative managers are unaware of NACO and the importance of membership but membership is our lifeblood. We all have a role to play in getting more members."

General Council Election Results

NACO is pleased to announce the results of this year's elections to General Council (now the NACO Executive – see below).

The 2011 General Council elections required the sitting candidates in General Council Group B to seek re-election, in accordance with the NACO Rule Book.

"We were delighted that so many of our General Council members sought, and were successful in, their re-election to the General Council."

Nominations were sought for both classes of membership, with five seats for the Co-operative Group Class and three seats for the All Others Class open for election. The nomination process closed on Wednesday 9 March and five nominations were received in the Co-operative Group Class and three in the All Others Class.

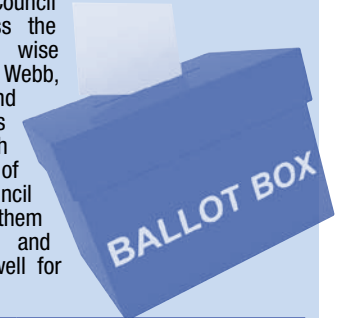
As a consequence, there was no need for a contested election as the number of nominations

matched the number of vacancies in both classes of membership. The successful nominees are shown in the tables below.

The election results were announced by NACO General Secretary Neil Buist at the AGM. Neil said: "We were delighted that so many of our General Council members sought, and were successful in, their re-election to the General Council. We are also very pleased to welcome some new blood in Amanda and Simon and look forward to working with them in the coming months."

Neil also took the opportunity to thank those members of the General Council who have stepped down from office in 2011.

"The General Council will sorely miss the experience and wise counsel of Jayne Webb, Andrew North and Colin Downes and I join with the members of the General Council in thanking them for their input and wishing them well for the future."



Co-operative Group Class – 5 Seats		All Others Class – 3 Seats	
Nominee	Group Division	Nominee	Co-operative
Mark Alexander	Co-operative Funeralcare	Ann Breen	Midlands Co-operative Society
Amanda Craske	Co-operative Retail Logistics	Maria McGettigan	East of England Co-operative Society
Simon Hay	Co-operative Healthcare	Roger Myddelton	Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society
Darren Leverington	Food Retail		
Jas Sandhu	Co-operative Retail Logistics		

New Name for General Council

Following the adoption of the new NACO Rule Book at our AGM, the General Council has been retitled as the NACO Executive.

Karen Froggatt, the new NACO President, said: "In reviewing the NACO Rule Book it became very clear that we needed to ensure that there was clarity of the responsibilities of the democratic structures within NACO and the title of General Council did not fully capture the role of the committee. The term Executive demonstrates the level of responsibility that sits with this body of elected NACO members."



Co-operatives Fortnight is Yours to Share



Co-operatives Fortnight is the co-operative sector's national campaign. From 25 June to 9 July 2011, with the theme 'Yours to Share', it will highlight how co-operative businesses share their profits, give people an equal say and help build a better world.

2010 saw the co-operative sector come together to celebrate the first ever Co-operatives Fortnight, and demonstrate that there is an alternative way of doing business where profits and ownership are shared.

Co-operatives Fortnight 2010 not only engaged with 2.3 million people through events and activities, but there were also 70,000 people active online and media coverage reached over 43 million people!

For Co-operatives Fortnight 2011, through the activity of co-operatives up and down the country, the sector aims to spread the word even further about the benefits of co-operation.

Chief Executive of Midlands Co-operative Society, Martyn Cheate, explains: "As this year's Fortnight focuses on the theme of sharing, we will be calling upon our customers, members and colleagues to think about ways to share that will tackle the concerns of wealth and fairness. It is vital that as a successful Society we support Co-operatives UK and work alongside them in raising awareness of the importance and relevance of co-operatives."

Peter Marks, Group Chief Executive of the Co-operative Group, agrees: "Co-operatives Fortnight is the only campaign that brings the entire sector together."

"The Fortnight provides a strong platform on which to highlight co-operative achievements and show how we are making a real difference to UK society. The movement has a great story to tell and we look forward to helping to tell it as part of this year's events."

Narrowing the gap between rich and poor

At the heart of Co-operatives Fortnight is a petition calling for Government action to narrow the gap between rich and poor through co-operative action.

An alliance of representatives of co-operatives and other organisations supporting the petition launched the campaign outside the Bank of England in April.

At the launch, leading figures from co-operative retail societies, community owned shops, supporters' trusts, housing and worker co-operatives, jostled alongside young people from co-operative schools and the Woodcraft Folk, to show their support for the Co-operatives Fortnight petition.



Len Wardle, Chair of the Co-operative Group, signs the petition.

There were also representatives from amongst the 30 organisations that have so far signed up as supporters of the petition. These include organisations which support co-operatives but rarely do so publicly, including Friends of the Earth, Mother's Union, Equality Trust, National Association for Voluntary and Community Action, National Council for Voluntary Organisations and the National Union of Students amongst others.

Ed Mayo, Secretary General of Co-operatives UK, has dubbed it 'the spirit level petition' in recognition of the important work done on inequality by The Equality Trust, saying: "We are only just beginning this campaign, but already there is incredible energy to make this work and bring about change."

The Co-operatives Fortnight petition aims to get 100,000 supporters calling for Government to take action to narrow the gap between rich and poor through action to share ownership and wealth in a co-operative way. With the gap between rich and poor at its widest since records began, this has never been more pressing.

Sign and share the co-operative petition at
www.uk.coop/yourstoshare/petition



Co-operative Web, one of the many co-operatives across the UK supporting Co-operatives Fortnight 2011.

Ways to get involved

If you are passionate about co-operatives, Co-operatives Fortnight is the perfect opportunity to promote their benefits – sharing profits, giving everyone an equal say, helping to narrow the gap between rich and poor.

Additionally there are so many creative ways to get involved in Co-operatives Fortnight this year. The materials available focus on three core activities.

1. Share and sign the petition

For Co-operatives Fortnight, why not support the co-operative petition?

This could be as simple as signing the petition and sharing it on Facebook or Twitter. Or you could go further – put up a display at events, put it on websites or take postcards and sign-up forms to meetings to get people to sign the petition.

2. Show how you share

Co-operatives are different. They share their profits, they are owned by customers, employees or residents and they work together to help build a better world.

Why not use Co-operatives Fortnight as an opportunity to showcase how co-operatives share? Whether it is by spreading the word online or holding an event, there are plenty of ways to promote co-operation.

3. Invite your politician

It's time all politicians knew the benefits that co-operatives bring, both to local communities and to the wider economy.

For Co-operatives Fortnight, why not join co-operatives across the UK in inviting your local elected representative, on Friday 1 July, to find out what makes your co-operative business different? You could also invite your local newspaper along to get a few photographs.

Stay in touch

Whether it's petitions or posters, on Twitter or in-store, Co-operatives Fortnight will be a celebration of businesses that are 'Yours to Share'. With over 4,990 co-operatives across the UK owned by nearly 13 million members, it is set to have a huge impact.

Tell everyone what you are doing on the online events map at www.uk.coop/yourstoshare

Sign up for the fortnightly e-bulletin at www.uk.coop/yourstoshare

Join Co-operatives Fortnight on Facebook at www.facebook.com/coops14

If you're on Twitter follow @CoopsFortnight and use the hashtag #coops14

Co-operatives Fortnight is co-ordinated by Co-operatives UK, the trade association for co-operative enterprises, and generously supported by ten founding sponsors: The Co-operative Group, Midcounties Co-operative, Midlands Co-operative Society, The Southern Co-operative, East of England Co-operative Society, Benenden Healthcare, Lincolnshire Co-operative, Anglia Co-operative Society, Chelmsford Star Co-operative and Channel Islands Co-operative Society. HF Holidays and CDS Co-operatives have also joined as supporting sponsors.

Download your Co-operatives Fortnight materials at:
www.uk.coop/yourstoshare

Government Review of Employment Law

By Neil Todd, Thompsons

The Government has announced areas of employment law that it will be reviewing as “priorities for employers....to make it easier for businesses to take on staff and grow”. We are told that “...fairness for individuals will not be compromised” and that the objective is to make the legislation “easier to understand” and “to reduce bureaucracy”. The areas for review are set out below.

Compensation for discrimination

The Government says employers are concerned about the “high levels of compensation sometimes awarded by employment tribunals” and the “lack of certainty” about how much they may have to pay because compensation is unlimited. It is claimed people take weak, speculative or vexatious cases because of the absence of a cap on awards, which employers may be settling before they reach a tribunal.

“...does the Government really think that it is fair to try to shave time off the consultation process which might lead to the jobs being saved?”

As with the employment tribunal reform consultation, employers’ “concerns” are being given a central role in policy formation without any empirical evidence to support them. We are not aware of any published evidence to the effect that high discrimination awards lead to weak, speculative or vexatious cases. High discrimination awards are not generally available to the overwhelming majority of the workforce. They are only made in cases of extreme discrimination or where the claimant is very highly paid and has large financial losses.

The Government’s own employment tribunal statistics do not bear out the claims. In the period from April 2009 to April 2010 the median award for sex discrimination was £6,275, for race £5,392 and for disability £8,553. Quite what the government thinks it can do about unlimited compensation is not clear. The EU Equal Treatment Directive (Article 17) provides that sanctions must be “effective, proportionate and dissuasive”. When discrimination compensation was capped, the cap was successfully challenged in the European Court of Justice.

Collective redundancies

Ministers claim that employers are concerned that the requirement that consultation over collective redundancy runs for a minimum of 90 days is



hindering their ability to restructure efficiently and retain a flexible workforce. Employers in financial difficulty apparently worry about how long they need to keep paying staff after they have decided to let them go. And they also claim it is not clear from the legislation at what point consultation on redundancies should start or end.

It is simply wrong to say that consultation has to run for 90 days. Where the employer is proposing to dismiss as redundant 20 or more employees, s.188 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (TULRCA) says that the consultation must begin in good time, and in any event at least 30 days before the first dismissal takes effect. Where the employer is proposing to dismiss over 100 employees that consultation must begin in good time, and in any event at least 90 days before the first dismissal takes effect. So while TULRCA does not dictate how long consultation has to last it is clear at what stages it starts and ends. Furthermore the effect of the European Court of Justice’s decision in the Junk case is that consultation has to be completed before notice of dismissal is issued.

Where 20 or more workers are likely to lose their jobs, does the Government really think that it is fair to try to shave time off the consultation process which might lead to the jobs being saved? Again, it should also be noted the Government does not have a free hand and is restricted by the EU Collective Redundancies Directive.

TUPE

The Government acknowledges that TUPE offers important protections but says some businesses believe that they are “gold plated” and “overly bureaucratic”. No evidence of this belief has been offered. Exactly what is “bureaucratic” about providing for the automatic transfer of employment? Surely anyone’s immediate sense of fairness would tell them that, if the business they worked for was being transferred to a new owner, their existing employment terms should be protected. That is what TUPE does. It’s fair, not bureaucratic.

The reference to “gold-plating” is usually about the “service provision change” definition of a TUPE transfer added by the Labour Government. This was not required by the Directive but was done in response to the widespread uncertainty then prevailing as to the application of TUPE / the Directive. The “service provision change” has gone a long way to reducing the uncertainty as to when TUPE applies. This is demonstrated by the dramatic reduction in litigation in the UK since 2006 over when TUPE applies.

“The reference to ‘gold-plating’ is usually about the ‘service provision change’ definition of a TUPE transfer added by the Labour Government.”

The Acquired Rights Directive / TUPE is not just a social policy measure. It is also a competition measure. It ensures, for example, that those bidding for public sector contracts do so on the same footing. As much certainty as possible as to when TUPE applies is desirable for business. That is what the alternative “service provision change” definition of a transfer provides. It is also what most reputable businesses seem to want.

The Government says that it will start reviewing these areas this year, but that legislation will not necessarily be the route to implement changes if there is a case for reform. Perhaps that is because each of the areas is already regulated by EU law. We wait to hear further announcements.



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Reminder: *co-operative official* Moving to Electronic Format

Just a reminder that, as reported previously, this will be the last printed edition of *co-operative official*, and in future the publication will be available in an online-only format.

We took the decision to move away from a printed magazine in response to our 2010 member survey. From the Autumn 2011 issue onwards, *co-operative official* will be delivered by email and available on our website www.naco.coop.

Going online-only will allow us to provide more information more easily about articles featured in the newsletter and we’ll be linking to other sources for current news and multimedia content. There will be financial and environmental benefits from the change too of course.

To ensure you continue to receive your copy of *co-operative official* it is important that you make sure we have a valid and current email address listed for you. If you haven’t done so already, please email info@naco.coop or contact us at head office.



You could save your annual NACO subs by switching!

Union Energy’s free 100% impartial energy price comparison service will find the most competitively-priced gas and electricity providers in your area to help keep your home energy bills as low as possible. And if you register for our Lifetime Energy 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 and many customers have already saved more than their annual union subs. Go on, give it a try!

Call 0800 094 9039

(Mon-Thurs 9am-6pm; Fri 9am-4pm; Sat 9am-1pm)
NB: Union Energy’s service can be used by households in England, Scotland and Wales (mainland only).

Communications Changes Make an Impact

Our new approach to communications has been very well received, with members offering their feedback by email as well as speaking directly with Matt Arrowsmith, our Membership Development Officer, and others at NACO.

Our website has benefited from a dramatic upsurge in visits since the relaunch, with over 1,000 unique visits in March alone, compared with around 80 visits per month to the old website. The average time spent on the website since the relaunch has also risen suggesting that the time and resources invested by NACO in providing fresh, compelling content is engaging visitors.

“Our website has benefited from a dramatic upsurge in visits since the relaunch.”

Matt Arrowsmith says: “The idea is that if visitors are more engaged they are recognising the value of NACO’s service to members and will ultimately maintain their membership and become more active participants in the union – like through our *Member-get-Member* initiative.”

Since we started sending mail electronically in HTML format, our statistics show more clicks per email, suggesting the new email format is more engaging too. As members get used to the new style, more content is being read and members are investigating further by referring through to www.naco.coop.

Although the ‘open rates’ (i.e. the percentage of recipients who open the mail) of our email communications to members vary – on average the open rate currently stands at between 35% and 40% – you may not be surprised to know that ‘Pay Review 2011’, sent to all members at the Co-operative Group, was opened by well over 50% of recipients!

Of course outbound electronic communications should not be viewed in isolation, as much of the content refers back to our new website. As an example, many of the communications have had short articles about

our member recruitment campaign, *Member-get-Member*, which have resulted in good levels of ‘click thru’ to our website.

Matt adds: “We’re pleased to say that there have been over 500 visits to the *Member-get-Member* webpage since the new site launched and, in fact, *Member-get-Member* applications account for 28% of all new member applications in 2011. This demonstrates the direct impact that effective communications can have.”

NACO will continue to develop its new approach to communications over the coming months and we welcome all feedback – good or bad – and any suggestions for further improvement. Please feel free to email Matt with your thoughts: MA@naco.coop.

GET THE LATEST NEWS FROM OUR WEBSITE...

For the latest information on the Co-operative Travel situation - and lots more news about NACO - visit our website www.naco.coop.

As well as regularly updated news, the site contains a wealth of information about the Association and what it can do for you.

www.naco.coop

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...



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A Safe Haven for Homeless Children in Tanzania



From left to right: Belinda Peck (volunteer), Hamis age 4, Liz Hill and Kalamagi age 5. This photo was taken at the local primary school which is next to the centre. It has a large playground and the kids are taken there at around 5pm in the evening to have a run around and let off steam.

NACO member Liz Hill of Co-operative Funeralcare has been involved with the Kuleana Centre in Mwanza, Tanzania, for some time now. In the December edition of *co-operative official* we touched briefly on Liz’s work with the Kuleana Centre in an article about the CFSMA Conference, but we thought such a worthy cause deserved a dedicated article.

Many of you may know Liz. In June 2009 she had the good fortune to spend the month at the Kuleana Centre working as a volunteer teacher. The centre currently houses 45 boys aged 5-18, sadly all the boys have lived on the streets at one time in their lives, often as a result of sexual or physical abuse at home, extreme poverty, or in some cases the boys have been orphaned. The following words are Liz’s.

Too many young boys and girls in Tanzania find themselves homeless. Through luck and great fortune, the boys of Mwanza have found their way to the Kuleana Centre. The centre provides a safe haven from the horrors of living on the street. The boys are given three meals a day, albeit a very basic diet, they are being educated either by volunteer teachers or at local schools, they are all given necessary medical attention, but most of all they are given the chance to be children without the worries of wondering which doorway to sleep in, or when they will get their next meal.

In many African countries the threat of HIV/AIDS is never too far away, and so every boy that arrives at the centre is tested for HIV. Sadly one of the boys is HIV positive and another boy has full-blown AIDS, however, with the right medication and a good nutritional diet the boys are currently fit and healthy and leading as normal a life as possible.

The Kuleana Centre currently receives no money from the Tanzanian Government and is fully funded by the volunteers and ex-volunteers who have worked at the centre.

For the centre to continue to provide its invaluable service, funding is desperately needed. The centre is in serious need of renovation – 45 boys share one shower, the kitchen is in a very bad state with very basic facilities, only one classroom has electricity and the boys’ bedroom is extremely overcrowded with the little boys having to share beds. Furthermore, school fees, books and uniforms have to be bought for each new school year, the food bill is ever increasing, medication needs to be paid for daily and the need for basics, such as mosquito nets to reduce the risk of malaria, is ongoing.

The boys are such an inspiration – they are great fun, loving, so keen to learn, respectful and grateful for everything they receive. They have experienced situations that we cannot even begin to imagine and with care, love and encouragement they will have a great chance of moving on to a bright future.

In 2010 CFSMA, NACO’s Co-operative Funeral Service Managers’ Association, raised £2,500 for the Kuleana Centre to provide much needed equipment and cash to help meet the ongoing costs of the centre.

If you would like to know more about the centre, and donate towards its invaluable work, please contact Liz Hill (elizabeth.hill@letsco-operate.com) in the first instance.

The Kuleana Centre is supported worldwide but there’s not yet a UK-based website. To find out more (from an Australian perspective!) take a look here: www.kuleanakids.org.au.



Heritage Developments

By Gillian Loneragan
Head of Heritage Resources, Co-operative College



2011 is a busy year for co-operative heritage, as the profiles of the National Co-operative Archive and Rochdale Pioneers rise and work on the ROCHDALE Project (Renewing Our Co-operative Heritage, Developing the Archive and Learning Experiences) accelerates.

The Archive receives researchers and enquiries from all over the world and helps those looking at a range of subjects, from co-operation to local history and genealogy to the history of adult education. A new project has brought in another archivist for a year to catalogue the Robert Owen Correspondence collection, to make the papers of the man known as the "Father of Co-operation" more accessible.

The ROCHDALE project is causing a great deal of activity at the Rochdale Pioneers Museum, the building where the modern co-operative movement began in 1844. Builders went on site at the beginning of March to start work on conserving the historic building, adding a new education space and improving access through the addition of a new staircase and very useful lift.

This is the second time that the Museum has been closed for a period since it first opened to the public in 1931. Structural work was carried out during the 1970s, to stabilise and strengthen the building to ensure that it will be there for future generations. The partitions added in the 1970s have been removed as the building is stripped ready for renovations to the roof and walls and the installation of the top floor. Outside the Museum, the paving stones at the side have been taken into storage while the base of the new access tower is prepared.

The Museum Designers are also hard at work on the exhibitions for the reopened Museum. The exhibitions will not only use new ways of telling the story of the Rochdale Pioneers and the co-operative movement,

but will also include material that has only come to light in the last few years.

The ground floor will show the co-operative story through the objectives of the Pioneers and the values of the co-operative movement. The first floor will include themed exhibitions that trace subjects like agriculture and finance from the early movement through to the present day, making sure that visitors find out about the diverse modern co-operative movement as well as its history.

The new second floor will be a mezzanine over three quarters of the building, giving an education space to the Museum for the first time. It will be a multi-purpose space, where co-operators, community groups and school groups can get involved in workshops, talks and events – using the Rochdale Pioneers' approach to education that it is for everyone, of all ages.

Conservators are carrying out surveys of collections including banners and Archive materials to identify items that need work to ensure that they continue to be accessible to researchers and able to be displayed in the future.

Alongside this work, three Outreach Officers are working with co-operative and community groups, schools and colleges on the development of activities and resources. This work will continue to the end of 2013 and will enable the collections to be used by as many people as possible, with resources being made accessible through the new websites that are being developed. More information about the outreach activity can be obtained by emailing outreach@co-op.ac.uk.

Progress on the project is going according to schedule, and the Museum will be reopening in time to welcome in 2012 and the UN International Year of Cooperatives.