

The 7 Co-operative Principles

The 7 Co-operative principles are internationally recognised guidelines under which organisations like Starley Housing Co-op put their values into practice.

1st Principle: Voluntary and Open Membership

Starley Housing Co-operative is a voluntary organisation, open to all persons in housing need but subject to homes being available. All members must be willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control

We are democratic organisation controlled by our members, who actively participate in setting our policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership.

3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of Starley Housing Co-operative. Part of that capital is the common property of the Co-operative – the housing stock. Members subscribe to Starley Housing Co-operative as a condition of membership. This is a minimal amount of £1 for which a share certificate is issued. Members allocate surpluses for the following purposes: developing the Co-operative, maintaining a reserve, maintenance and repair of the housing stock, benefiting members in terms of housing and social needs and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4th Principle: Autonomy and Independence

Like all Co-operatives we are an autonomous, self-help organisation controlled by our members. When we enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, we do so on terms that ensure democratic control by our members and maintain our Co-operative autonomy.

5th Principle: Education, Training and Information

We provide education and training for our members, elected representatives and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of our Co-operative. We provide information to all our members to ensure they are not excluded from the democratic process.

6th Principle: Co-operation among Co-operatives

Starley Housing Co-operative aims to serve our members effectively and strengthen the Co-operative movement by working together through local, regional and national structures.

7th Principle: Concern for Community

Starley Housing Co-operative seeks to work towards the sustainable development of our community through policies approved by our members. The challenge for housing co-operatives is putting these principles into action in a way that responds to the communities that they serve and that meets the legal requirements on public bodies and the regulatory requirements of the Housing Corporation. The aim for housing co-operatives must be to ensure that they provide and manage housing in a way that is open, fair and democratic and which is rooted in the community.