



CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE

Statement in support of Bunker Housing Co-operative Ltd.

Whilst Bunker is a relatively new member of CHIBAH, joining the network in 2014, the Co-op's members have between them several years of association with other housing co-ops in the city. There is a tendency among the Brighton co-ops to engage in informal osmosis, and much of the ethos of co-op living and ways of working were already engrained in Bunker's members before they formed their new Society.

Bunker is a pioneer among CHIBAH's members in undertaking the first development of new build co-op housing for over two decade. Where all previous new builds were supported by the services of a co-operative development agency, Bunker is relying on goodwill support, the expertise of a Project Manager, and peer support from other co-ops which have recently acquired property and have become familiar with creating business plans and finance spreadsheets. This demonstrates not only the 'head for figures' necessary to conceive a new build project, but the stamina and capacity for learning such a project requires.

In tandem with this demanding work, Bunker members have found the energy and time to attend national housing co-op events, and participate in CHIBAH's general activities.

CHIBAH is able to support Bunker by having an established relationship with the council, drawing on in-house expertise in housing management and having links to national experts such as Carl Taylor, Manager of Redditch Co-operative Homes, and Blase Lambert, Chief Officer at the Confederation of Co-operative Housing. CHIBAH will

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also facilitate a network of practical support from other co-ops during the development phase and whilst on site.

Bunker members have quickly raised the bar in terms of negotiating with lenders and council housing staff, housing design, policy development and team work. It is of great importance to CHIBAH that Bunker receives as much support as members can give, in order to establish a financing and land acquisition model which other co-ops might follow.

CHIBAH firmly believes that Bunker will produce a little gem of a scheme, nestled in a tiny plot of derelict land, which will be credit to the City's foresight in enabling its creation.

Helen Russell
Secretary
CHIBAH