

**London Federation of Housing Coops Forum held on 29th June 2024 -  
main discussions and decisions:**

Chair: Mick O'Sullivan

1. **Nick Avache from the Unite Housing branch welcomed** those attending in person to the London Unite Morley St offices. Nick spoke about the Sanctuary Housing Association employees strike. Several attendees asked questions about the dispute and expressed support.
2. **Martin Dumont introduced the discussion on initiatives to set up a secondary managing/maintenance and repairs coop in London.** A similar initiative took place in the north west of England in recent years where a north west secondary coop was set up and is a fully mutual co op organisation, and there are also valuable experiences in Wales from which we can learn from. The Forum discussed various aspects of these projects, including staffing, rooms at coops that can be used, raising capital, the new political landscape after the general election that might be more favourable towards coops and such an initiative, the need for a roadmap and how we can use existing secondary bodies as a stepping stone to a new service. The scale of such a project needs to be looked at realistically. The meeting agreed to establish a 'working party' to examine what steps are needed to set up a separate organisation and its viability.
3. **London Housing Panel** - Greg Robbins, London Fed Secretary, and Niall Mulholland from the Fed executive, reported on five years of LFHC participation on the London Housing Panel. The Panel says it believes "that the people most affected by these problems should have a say in how they're addressed. The London Housing Panel brings the views of its members to the table and makes sure they're heard by the people who make decisions". The panel is made up of organisations from across London, each bringing a different perspective, including LFHC and London Tenants Federation (to which the LFHC is affiliated). The Panel meets with decision-makers from the Greater London Authority (GLA) to talk about what London needs. Greg has attended the Panel on behalf of the Fed until the latter part of 2023 and Niall is now attending on behalf of the Fed. Greg said the Fed's involvement allows us to influence what can be brought to the mayor and GLA regarding housing and including our sector. It is necessary to always see what proportion of promises are seen through and how many new social housing tenants places are created. Several speakers from the floor of the forum asked questions and discussed how much new social housing has been built since the Panel has met and what is needed. It was agreed that the valuable work of the Fed representatives on the Panel can be backed up by more feedback to the Fed members and, in turn, from housing coops to the Panel.
4. **LFHC - report of work and goals for next few months.**

Fed Chair Mick reported on a recent speech he gave to the Coop Party AGM on housing. Fed executive member Niall reported on the need to develop our work across London including improving our database of housing coop contacts; a drive to get more more coops to affiliate to LFHC, which will also increase our income substantially; contacting coops, including by phone and in person, to see if they would like speakers from the Fed at MC or GMs of their coops to explain what we do and why they should be part of the Fed; encouraging wider coop participation at Forums and events; developing the Fed's social media presence; turning the Fed more outwards as a lobbying and campaigning body, as well as providing advice and forums for discussion for the housing coop movement in London; promoting the Fed as a member-led democratic body across the capital; utilising the Fed's affiliation to the London Tenants Federation and their excellent social media resources; and to look at the viability of taking on a part time worker to help spearhead all these goals.

The Forum discussed these issues. Martin said if we are able to establish a secondary coop as discussed earlier this will help focus and reorganise the Fed; John said we need to look at funding for the Fed and after a while a part time worker who can increase affiliations will pay for the position; Jane urged the Fed to find more ways to get in touch with coops and not to assume that letters that go to offices get to the coop members.

5. **Fed Chair, Mick, closed the meeting** by giving thanks to Greg Robbins, our secretary of many years, who has relocated outside Britain over the last year, for all his sterling work for the Fed over many years. Greg will continue to play a valuable role in the Fed up to the next AGM and afterwards, which is very much welcome and appreciated. Mick also expressed condolences to Greg on behalf of the Fed for the sad loss of his wife, Jackie, last year.
6. **AOB:** The next Fed meeting will be the AGM in the autumn, and members will be notified.

ENDS

*London Federation of Housing Coops - a democratically-run members' organisation - has provided training and support for the several hundred various housing co-ops in the capital and has provided a point of contact to meet with other co-ops and various tenant-controlled housing.*

**Our aims are:**

- *To provide a forum for members of co-ops to meet and exchange their experiences.*
- *To raise the profile of housing co-ops in the London region and to campaign and lobby in support of tenants controlling their own futures.*
- *To reach out to co-ops needing outside assistance.*