

the scottish
co-operative party

the co-operative party
politics for people

SCOTTISH MANIFESTO

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Key Elements of the Scottish Co-op Party Manifesto

The Scottish Executive should:

- Consider setting up a Scottish Co-operative Fund
- Offer communities in Scotland the opportunity to seek co-op solutions to renewable energy
- Support a mutual model for Scottish Water
- Develop a new model of delivery in healthcare which is enterprising but not driven by profit maximisation
- Continue to encourage the development of credit unions
- Encourage local authorities to work in partnership with co-operative enterprises
- Use housing co-ops as the basis of its regeneration work
- Invest massively in rural communities
- Continue to support Supporters Direct and consider extending it to other sports
- Work in partnership with CETS to promote co-operative education
- Explore support for alternative business models, including co-operatives, in its international development work

Introduction

At the 2005 General Election the Co-op Party presented a Manifesto entitled *Politics for People* which used a number of key themes including promoting social and responsible enterprise and developing people-based public services. This Scottish manifesto follows though with these themes in a Scottish context and includes the additional theme of community empowerment. It is worth stating at the outset who we are and what we stand for. The Co-operative Movement includes co-operatives and mutuals that operate in all sectors of the economy and society. It covers a wide range of businesses and services to meet diverse economic, social and cultural needs. From food production and retailing to banking and financial services, co-operation in the 21st century has moved into areas as diverse as housing and care provision and leisure and sport. Unlike our capitalist competitors, co-operatives are driven by more than the pursuit of profit. Whilst we strive to be successful co-operatives businesses, we are run according to a set of values and principles (see page 5) and are grounded in the communities we serve.

Ethical values and a deep sense of social and environmental responsibilities are reflected in the way we conduct our business. The consumer co-ops pioneered the concept of responsible retailing and have always campaigned for greater consumer protection. Today co-ops champion fair-trade products and offer a solution in the fight against exploitative labour practices, the Co-operative Bank offers an alternative to profit-based financial services, and the Co-operative College aims to provide adult and lifelong learning programmes that emphasise co-op values and principles.

Co-operatives are open to all, democratic, voluntary and are controlled by their members. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner. Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. Members allocate surpluses for any of the following purposes: developing their co-operative; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership. Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or

raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy. Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operative. Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the Co-operative Movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures. Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

The Co-operative Movement would argue that it is wrong to assume that there is one group of people in Scotland who are driving the economy while another is using up the resources. Most people in Scotland play an active part in the economy and use the resources provided by the economy. We believe that the co-operative model enables people in all circumstances to take advantage of economic opportunities and that co-operation can provide the link between the Communities Agenda and the Enterprise Agenda. The Co-operative Movement is primarily about promoting social and responsible enterprise. There are many aspects of this which we outline in this manifesto. We are encouraged by the early successes of Co-operative Development Scotland (CDS) which is leading the way in co-operative development in Scotland and which will have a great deal more to do after May 2007. One area in which we expect to see significant progress is on the environment or as we term it – our co-operative future. We highlight the work of the traditional co-operative movement in a section entitled the co-operative difference. We consider the question of financial inclusion and propose co-operative solutions.

Under the heading of empowering communities we acknowledge the role of local government and propose co-operative solutions in housing and regeneration as well as sport. We consider the special role that co-operatives can play in rural communities. In the final section we look at developing people-based public services looking particularly at health and utilities and outlining some proposals for co-operative education. The ideas outlined are informed by our values and principles.

Co-operative Values and Principles

A co-operative is defined as an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

The co-operative movement is based on a set of values and principles.

Values

Co-operatives are based on the values of:

- self-help
- self-responsibility
- democracy
- equality
- equity
- solidarity

In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.

Principles

The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1st Principle: | Voluntary and Open Membership |
| 2nd Principle: | Democratic Member Control |
| 3rd Principle: | Member Economic Participation |
| 4th Principle: | Autonomy and Independence |
| 5th Principle: | Education, Training and Information |
| 6th Principle: | Co-operation Among Co-operatives |
| 7th Principle: | Concern for Community |

Case Study 1

Boyndie Wind Farm Co-operative

The Boyndie Wind Farm Co-operative is the first wind farm co-operative for Scotland.

The seven turbine project at Boyndie airfield obtained the green light and was approved in January 2004 by Aberdeenshire Council's Banff and Buchan Area Committee. Work on the Boyndie wind farm started in June 2005 and represents an investment of £10-15 million. The 2 MW Ennercon turbines will generate enough clean, green energy to supply around 8,500 homes and stand at a height of 100m to tip. Local firm Morrisons have finished building the wind farm in conjunction with Ennercon.

Boyndie Wind Farm Co-op was established in 2005 to purchase a share of the wind farm. Five local residents have joined the board and have successfully completed the share launch, raising the target of £730,000. Profits from the sale of the green electricity produced are distributed to members through an annual payment. Preference for joining the scheme is given to people living in the area to maximise the economic benefits to the local communities around the Boyndie development.

Falck Renewables, a wind energy subsidiary of the Falck Group, is developing over 300MW of wind projects with RDC Scotland Limited (RDC) utilising the resources of West Coast Energy.

Promoting Social and Responsible Enterprise

Co-operative Development

Co-operative Development Scotland

The Scottish Co-op Party's 2003 Manifesto called for the establishment of a Scottish Co-operative Development Agency (CDA) to "develop the sector and realise its potential through the co-ordinated and focused approach of one single body". The CDA has now been established and re-branded Co-operative Development Scotland (CDS) and is still in the early stages of development. It is therefore entirely appropriate that this manifesto outlines our vision of the work that CDS will carry out after May 2007.

Many parts of the Co-operative Movement have been excluded from the remit of CDS on the basis that support exists elsewhere in government. While we accept the need for efficient government, we believe it is essential that firm links are established between CDS and those parts of the Executive and its agencies, such as Communities Scotland, which are charged with the responsibility of delivering social justice. We believe, for example, that housing co-ops not only make a significant social impact but also have the potential to make an economic impact by acting as lead agency in service delivery.

Although Scottish Enterprise has been given responsibility for CDS, it is hoped that in time CDS may be independent. CDS requires a distinct profile and role separate from Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. There is a need for a change in attitude towards co-ops by Scottish Enterprise (and its successor), Highlands and Islands Enterprise and local authorities. The trade union movement should be encouraged to take a key role in supporting the work of CDS with whom they have a shared goal of promoting common ownership.

Supporting Co-operation

CDS should provide expertise, advice, research and information on good practice and should facilitate communication between various parts of the Co-operative Movement. CDS should assist co-ops whatever their size. CDS has a crucial role to play with business start ups.

CDS will be responsible for promoting the benefits of co-operation in Scotland. There is enormous ignorance of the co-operative business model and CDS will have to ensure greater awareness within the enterprise networks and elsewhere. CDS will have a role to play in education and awareness-raising. CDS should put resources into our education system to promote co-ops. Civil servants require awareness raising and consideration should be given to secondments to and from the Co-operative Movement.

Co-operation provides a model for proper community ownership in a number of areas from renewable energy schemes to care provision. CDS should work with local authorities who should be encouraged to establish co-operative development officers within their teams. CDS will have to work with the business enterprise network and with local development organisations ensuring an awareness of co-op business models. CDS should consider how it can link with developments in community planning.

It is important that CDS works with the larger, well-established co-operative businesses. CDS should learn from experiences in other countries and should in particular consider the European dimension.

Employee Ownership

The Employee Ownership sector has the potential to enhance the rate of business start-up in the Scottish economy. CDS should support creative industries. Many people who lack the confidence or the capital to put their good business ideas into action can be supported by the co-op model.

The employee ownership model offers a particularly good alternative to workers who face their workplace being sold to multinational interests when family businesses go up for sale. Employee ownership should be promoted positively by CDS, challenging the perceived association with privatisation and financial crisis.

Investing in Communities

There is a need for CDS to address the issue of investment funding as banks will often not lend to small co-ops. Funding of new co-operative businesses will be a crucial issue for CDS which should carry out feasibility studies on funding and takes steps to ensure the availability of seedcorn funding. Consideration should be given to a Scottish Co-operative Fund.

Community co-ops provide the means for communities to take real control through ownership. The rural sector has faced many difficulties in recent years and many people in rural areas are looking to co-operative solutions not just in agriculture but to difficulties such as the closure of rural post offices and difficulties with out-of hours GP services. There is potential to develop co-operative solutions in rural Scotland on issues such as transport, energy and housing.

There is a need to talk about social enterprises rather than the social economy. The work of Stewartry Care and Highland Homecare should be viewed positively. Scottish local authorities should develop social enterprise strategies. Social enterprise is much better developed in England than in Scotland allowing the Co-operative Movement much more potential to diversify into new sectors. Greenwich Leisure in London is one of the best examples of a co-operative initiative by a local authority in the provision of leisure services while Hackney Community Transport has developed far beyond the basic service provision it was set up to provide.

Our Co-operative Future

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, has regard for others who do not have access to the same level of resources and is sustainable within the capacity of the planet.

While some aspects of energy policy are devolved and others are reserved to the UK government, the Scottish Executive, in partnership with the United Kingdom Government, is developing a framework for sustainable development. Clearly these issues impact upon the Co-op agenda. The Co-

operative Movement has a long history of running sustainable businesses and achieving economic objectives while adhering to social justice and the wider needs of society.

Renewable Energy

The Scottish Executive has set some extremely ambitious targets on renewable energy with the long-term objective of producing 40% of our electricity from renewable sources. Such targets were set against a background of predicted climate change. The Co-operative Party would argue that targets should carry a level of appropriate subsidy and measurement should include sustainability indicators.

There has been considerable difficulty with on-shore wind farm development and their impact on communities. Co-operative models, such as the Boyndie scheme in North East Scotland, demonstrate the potential the co-op option has for providing communities with ownership of such projects. The work being carried out by Energy4All Ltd, which took the lead in Boyndie, offers communities in Scotland the opportunity to seek co-op solutions. Consideration should be given to further research on public attitudes and to the environmental impact of all projects.

The Scottish Executive should make wider use of co-op models in renewable energy and encourage people to own their own energy through community involvement. Small scale developments lend themselves more readily to people power. Consideration should be given to the twinning of community renewable energy projects.

The issue of access to the grid is critical. It is important to recognise the significance of the national grid in the delivery of electricity. Communities should receive grants to generate renewable resources off grid. Price mechanisms are also crucial. Domestic renewable energy should be developed as co-operative schemes.

Given the Co-op Movement's credential on the environment, CDS should be well placed to contribute to this agenda. CDS should advise on co-operative models for renewable energy enabling communities to derive the benefits of renewable energy developments.

Consideration should also be given to the potential for community based biotechnology including investment in biomass and other renewable options such as woodchip. Energy

crops should receive the same level of grant support in Scotland as in England and CDS should support entrepreneurialism in energy technology.

Bridging the Energy Gap

The Scottish Executive has committed itself to developing and implementing a green jobs strategy intended to help deliver two of their key priorities – growing the economy and making Scotland more sustainable. The strategy is focused on the creation of new businesses and skilled jobs and on encouraging existing businesses to become more resource efficient and productive. The Scottish Executive should ensure the Green Jobs Strategy provides a just transition for those employed and environmental justice for communities involved.

The Scottish Co-op Party recognises that nuclear power provides a significant portion of current energy capacity compared to that derived from renewable sources and that nuclear power may be needed to fill the 'energy gap'. Any investment in nuclear energy should be concentrated on existing jobs and expertise. The links to nuclear weapons cannot be ignored and legislation should be introduced to prevent links between civil and military use of nuclear power.

Social housing is leading on energy conservation and regulations should be tightened to bring private house builders up to the same standards.

The Scottish Executive has made over £300,000 available for community recycling. This industry would appear to have many of the features found in the renewable energy sector and is ripe for a co-op solution. Improvements in the recycling of commercial waste should include proportionate charges for retailers.

The Scottish Executive should consider wave and solar energy as potential areas for co-operative and mutual ownership and should give consideration to co-operative models as a means of allowing communities to take advantage of solar panel and domestic turbine options. More financial help and advice should be made available to encourage people to buy into eco-friendly systems. All new-build houses should be fitted with solar panels and small wind turbines where technically appropriate and grants should be made available for older properties. There are a

number of barriers to further development in this sector including the bureaucracy which is faced by individuals and communities who wish to develop micro-generation schemes.

Community Planning

In the public sector, community planning should be extended to partner agencies especially co-operatives. Links should be made between what developers contribute in terms of sustainable jobs, opportunities for young people, support for older people and their proposals. Co-operative societies and local government, as represented by COSLA, should work more closely on enterprise issues.

The Scottish Executive should consider how to align the work of CDS with legislative initiatives around the community right to buy woodlands and water. Consideration should be given to community ownership of reservoirs including the potential for opportunities in tourism.

The Co-operative Difference

Co-operative societies are highly successful businesses. Even in a difficult trading period in the retail sector they remain a major part of the economy. Scotmid is one of the top twenty indigenous businesses in Scotland and Scottish Co-op are part of an enormous UK-wide business.

The Co-operative Movement has led on responsible retailing. The Co-op Movement have pioneered initiatives on issues such as the consumers' right to know through clear and honest labelling, helping the environment, providing diet and health information and promoting fairtrade and ethical trading.

The Co-operative Movement has also led on corporate social responsibility reporting. The Co-operative Movement leads British business on this issue. The Co-operative Group has integrated social responsibility reporting into all its corporate strategies.

Responsible behaviour should be promoted in the private and public sectors through the setting of targets. Particular consideration should be given to target setting for transport and road haulage. The Co-operative Movement and the Scottish Executive should work together to examine how to influence the food supply chain.

Recognition should be given to the way in which the Co-op can serve varying levels of populations while the larger retailers tend to encourage an ever-widening population base for their businesses. Consideration should be given to altering planning rules to encourage more locally based retailing.

Scotland can contribute to the relief of world poverty through standards for sustainable development, education and jobs. The Scottish Executive should explore support for alternative business models in its international development work.

Financial Inclusion

Credit unions are an excellent example of community action. Credit unions are financial co-operatives owned and controlled by their members. They offer savings, great value loans and other member benefits plus they are local, ethical and know what their members want.

Throughout the world, credit unions have been highly successful at extending low cost financial services to their communities, particularly to those who are not well served by mainstream providers. In Ireland, half the population are credit union members. In the United States, one in four Americans is a credit union member. In the Caribbean, penetration is over 70% on some islands. The Scottish Executive has identified financial exclusion as one of the most important aspects of a cycle of deprivation. The credit union movement provides one of the best-targeted means of addressing this, providing a solution based on self-help rather than state handout which is community-owned and community-based. Credit unions also provide a social framework as well as a financial one and a means of ensuring that money is kept within the local community.

Credit unions can provide banking and a wider range of financial services to communities including disadvantaged people. The Scottish Executive should continue to encourage the development of credit unions and supports them operationally to allow them to become established in communities. Credit unions should be encouraged by the Scottish Executive to develop a wide range of links including schools and further and higher education and should be supported in these links. Co-operative Education Trust Scotland (CETS) should be invited to become involved in the educational links. Credit union

involvement in education should be promoted as an alternative to the involvement of banks.

Although there has been support from the Scottish Executive and the Co-operative Movement, in terms of funding, the evidence suggests that without local authority support, credit union development would have been very limited. While credit unions need to achieve sustainability, funding has often been restricted to small areas whose characteristics may render the establishment of viable and sustainable credit unions a difficult and time-consuming process and few small community based credit unions have achieved self-sustainability.

It is important that community-based credit unions are seen as small co-operative businesses which need to develop by increasing and diversifying their membership. This strategy should be encouraged rather than a strategy which involves the setting up of new credit unions. Encouragement should be given to widening bonds if appropriate.

Credit unions should be part of anti poverty strategies but should not be seen purely in this context; should be linked to debt counselling services and should continue to expand into the High Street making them available to all citizens of Scotland. The Scottish Executive should ensure that Government legislation such as the Bankruptcy and Diligence Act does not adversely affect credit unions.

Case Study 2

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-op

Back in the late 1980s West Whitlawburn was a grim, grey place. The area was experiencing all the classic signs and symptoms of a local authority estate which was becoming more and more rundown, dilapidated and unattractive. Poor quality housing, poor repairs and maintenance, no money for improvements, high crime rate, problems with drug solvent abuse, high turnover, very low demand for the area were all characteristics prevalent in the area.

In 1989 the tenants decided to change this, no longer could they put up with such intolerable housing conditions. With the help of Glasgow City Council and the Housing Corporation the tenants took control and formed West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative, it was a brave and courageous decision. As one member put it, "One day we were tenants, the next we were the Landlord".

With the help of professional staff and over £12 million in grants from Scottish Homes/Communities Scotland the turnaround has been nothing short of miraculous. It has been a long, hard and sometimes frustrating road, but with a lot of hard work by voluntary tenant Committee members and committed professional staff and the support of the tenants the success has to be seen to be believed.

WWHC do more than just provide, manage and maintain quality affordable housing. In 1996 WWHC established a thriving Community Centre, the Bonus Ball (now Whitlawburn Community Centre), with the help of funding from the Lottery, South Lanarkshire Council and Communities Scotland. The Centre runs a variety of social, recreational and educational activities and events, and is in the hub of the community. The Centre also employs a number of local people bringing much needed employment to the area.

Empowering Communities

Local Government

Local government has played *the* leading role in Scotland's communities for over a century and continues to have a key role to play. Support for co-operative values is not new to local government. The regional councils in particular funded and supported co-operative development. Scotland's local authorities have an important role to play alongside CDS in supporting co-operative businesses.

Scotland's local authorities should work in partnership with co-operative enterprises to improve social services, develop anti-poverty strategies and to provide environmental justice for communities. Procurement policies designed to achieve social aims and maximise the benefits for local communities will always assist successful co-operative enterprises. There is a need to challenge the fear culture and encourage best practice. Procurement legislation should be reviewed and all local services should be considered for co-op options. The Scottish Executive should empower communities to influence local government. The Scottish Executive should consider the European model of mega cities – one urban hub working together on projects and long term planning, using co-op solutions, on health, transport, and other appropriate services. Local government should be encouraged to consider co-operative development for areas such as care, recycling, energy, community services, transport and sports facilities. The Scottish Executive and local government should hold discussions on a partnership approach to enterprise.

Housing and Regeneration

Community Ownership

Since the 1980s onwards, there have been transfers of council housing and Scottish Homes housing to more than profit landlords, such as community based housing associations. There have also been transfers to tenant management co-ops and to fully mutual and non fully mutual housing co-ops. Transfers have proceeded only after a majority of tenants in a secret ballot have voted in favour.

We recognise that stock transfer does not automatically lead to the outcomes we would wish to achieve but would support stock transfer where it will clearly lead to community empowerment.

Through its community ownership budget, the Executive provides support to councils seeking to transfer all or some of their houses, where this represents value for money. Around 100,000 council tenants have transferred as a result of the 3 whole stock transfers in the Scottish Borders, Glasgow and Dumfries & Galloway. More recently tenants in Inverclyde have chosen to go down this route. Around £2 billion will now be invested in these houses over the next 10 years. Social landlords struggle with the concept of empowerment. While most consult widely with tenants they often continue to adopt a paternalistic approach and few have taken up the challenge of how to devolve the power to make major decisions about people and resources to those people who live in the houses. Elaborate structures without training, support and willingness to live with risks will always be doomed to fail. Professionals can easily fall into the trap of assuming that social tenants cannot or will not take steps to influence their own lives and that of their communities which in turn leads to poor relationships between professionals and the communities they serve.

Housing Co-ops

A small number of housing co-ops, such as West Whitlawburn in South Lanarkshire and Rosehill in Glasgow, continue to provide a very high quality service to people in the communities they serve. Such housing co-ops are not well supported by the federal housing bodies which represent a wide range of not-for-profit housing organisations. Encouragingly, a new organisation, Co-operative Housing in Scotland, has been formed to represent housing co-ops. The growth of the co-operative housing sector would benefit from secondary transfers within the areas which have seen stock transfers. The co-op housing model should not be seen as just another set of management options which communities may wish to view with a degree of cynicism. The co-op model is underlined by the belief that increasing the empowerment of

tenants and the wider community will bring real benefits, better quality management, more cohesive communities and increased opportunities especially for those people who have been traditionally disempowered.

In 2002 the Executive launched its community regeneration statement, "Better Communities in Scotland: Closing the Gap" which set out how the Executive intends to turn around deprived communities and create a better life for those living in them. It signalled a shift away from funding isolated, project-based regeneration initiatives towards regeneration within a wider strategic framework, which the community planning process provides, with the aim of creating more cohesion between national, regional and local priorities, better targeting of resources, better quality of services in deprived areas, and more effective community involvement.

The Executive sought to place a higher priority on providing individuals and communities with the skills and confidence necessary to take advantage of opportunities and to play a full part in the life of their communities. There are clear opportunities for co-ops to play a significant part in empowering communities to engage with the regeneration process. Successful housing co-ops could form the basis of such regeneration working with other agencies and partners. Through use of the co-op model communities could participate on a more equitable basis. The co-op model would also enable links to be made between economic activity and social support.

Community Development

Resources are needed to support an ideal housing co-op model which should be ambitious in scale. The 'Rosehill' model started small and expanded. The Scottish Executive needs to explore how this can be expanded in Scotland and the appropriate forum or vehicle needed. To grow successfully there needs to be an emphasis on the development of such things as instruction, guidance and resources. The time commitment from volunteers is significant and this should be recognised and expenses paid appropriately by government and employers. Communities Scotland should change its attitude towards co-operatives, favour the co-operative model for regeneration and consider how it and other government agencies can use the co-operative model to make tenant participation meaningful. Expertise between professionals and communities needs to be shared to build

the skills of new and future members. A phased approach could be promoted by local authorities to support management reduction, volunteer development and tenant involvement. There is too much cramming by housing associations of information and training and this prevents recruitment of young people and families especially. A Loan Guarantee Fund to help the most disadvantaged should be considered. Co-ops can offer a strategic framework to address local issues and to help communities grow. Co-ops can also contribute to umbrella groups such as community councils when they address environmental and lifestyle issues and encourage, support and resource collective action. Co-op businesses and community businesses in deprived local areas should be encouraged to seek community solutions. Housing co-ops should be given a stronger political voice and be given the resources to expand. The Scottish Executive should provide financial support for the development of a Scotland wide body for housing co-ops which would determine policy and influence government. The Co-op Agenda can help meet needs and build social networks and communities.

Delivering Services

Housing co-ops could be used to pull together local initiatives such as healthcare, transportation, leisure, conservation, environmental projects, planning and recycling. Co-ops should be used to develop the skills and confidence of local communities, empowering local people to make a contribution to local decision making processes. Community ownership should be used to address issues such as redundancy, skills renewal and transport.

The Community Gateway model is possibly a way forward and the Scottish Executive should look at how it is working in England. Scotland should perhaps look at how other countries deal with regeneration. CDS should support co-op businesses in promoting regeneration. Credit unions should be encouraged to participate. There is a crisis in housing facing students and young people in general. Consideration should be given to co-op solutions including models being developed at UMIST in Manchester, Belfast and Berkeley University in the United States. Support should be provided from Communities Scotland for housing co-ops as a mechanism to provide housing to young people and families. Consideration should be given to the results of

the feasibility study carried out by the National Union of Students. Communities Scotland should address the issue of affordability and challenge the power of private landlords through use of alternative models such as the co-operative model.

Sport

The success of football supporters trusts are one of the best examples of co-operation at work that we have seen in recent years. The initiative for much of this was the publication of the Co-op Party pamphlet 'Mutualism - a Golden Goal' which led to the setting up of Supporters Direct in England followed later by Supporters Direct in Scotland. The aim of Supporters Direct is to promote and support the concept of democratic supporter ownership and representation through mutual, more than profit structures and to promote football clubs as civic and community institutions. Supporters Direct have set up Supporters' Trusts as Industrial and Provident Societies to ensure democratic, transparent representative bodies for supporters at their clubs. Over 100 Supporters' Trusts have been set up across England, Wales and Scotland. Fifty nine Supporters' Trusts hold equity within their football clubs while 38 Football clubs have supporter representation within the boards of their football clubs. There is now supporter ownership at 2 English Football League clubs and at 6 UK non-league clubs, including the reformed Clydebank FC.

The Scottish Executive should continue to support this excellent example of community engagement, self help and responsibility and consider extending it to other sports which are community based. It should be recognised that sport is organised at a number of levels including at a "non managed" level. Rugby clubs are wholly owned by members. Community amateur sports clubs could be converted into co-ops or mutuals. The Scottish Executive should promote a co-operative approach to a range of sports including rugby, cricket, angling and golf. Consideration should be given to creating tax advantages to support the development of community control of sports and leisure assets. Greenwich Leisure remains one of the best examples of a co-operative approach to sport and leisure. Users should have the opportunity to take over control of facilities through democratic structures and there should be a presumption in favour of that approach. The Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games bid should provide opportunities for co-operative development.

Rural Communities

Rural communities have a wide range of challenges which make them particularly ripe for co-operative development. Co-operation is a long established and proven business activity for primary producers throughout the world. As subsidy of agricultural production gradually recedes, so co-operation is expanding in the UK, catching up with the scale and dominance of primary producer co-ops in other parts of the world. Examples of agricultural co-operation range from beef, lamb and pig marketing, to machinery and labour rings and from soft fruit processing to timber marketing. Co-operation allows for lower costs and higher value. Rural communities will only prosper if the Scottish Executive creates new, viable jobs for young people, invest massively in rural communities and improve transport. Employment opportunities are limited by housing shortages. The need for adequate ferry provision is another issue as is planning. There is a need to build small, sustainable communities which give people the choice to live in the area in which they were born and bred. Sector specialisation such as the West Kilbride craft town and Wigton book town developments present a way forward.

Crofting could provide opportunities for co-operation. Co-operative principles can be used not only to support agriculture but also to support rural communities in terms of public services and development of non-agricultural enterprises. The Scottish Executive should continue to work with SAOS, the co-operative agricultural organisation, and encourage their move into wider rural development. The 'dead hand' of the supermarkets is a significant factor in agriculture and farmers need to combine if they are to challenge current trends. SAOS should be commended for their promotion of bio-diversity products. Rural sports such as angling have potential for community ownership. The mutual ownership of rivers would give anglers more control. The rural agenda includes community ownership and control of facilities such as village halls, transport and housing provision. Legislation should be introduced to allow communities the right to own part of renewable energy projects. There are estate management issues arising from overseas ownership of Scottish land – which is permitted in a more extensive form than most other countries. The feudal legacy is still a problem and feudal landlords should be replaced by a modern system of land and property management.

Case Study 3

South East London Doctors Co-op

The best example of a health co-operative is not in Scotland but in England. South East London Doctors Co-op (SELDOC) was set up in April 1996 as a GP Co-operative providing out of hours General Medical Services to its GP members from a base leased within Dulwich Hospital.

From the outset SELDOC was designed to be operationally self-sufficient, providing all aspects of the service from within the organisation, under the values of being Co-operative. SELDOC is owned, managed and financed by its GP members and local location partners, who hold a share equivalent to £1.00. The GP membership is drawn from Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham, as reflected in the name South East London Doctors Co-operation.

The call centre, cars and mobile doctors all operate from the Dulwich Hospital site. When a surgery is closed a GP will make sure that patients can get advice and, if necessary, treatment when they become unwell. This is known traditionally as the 'on call' service.

GPs meet this commitment by working in association with more than 430 other local GPs to share the care and treatment of patients. This co-operative approach to 'on call' services enables better care for patients and includes communication with GPs when surgery re-opens. It also means that NHS resources for local people can be used more effectively.

Developing People-Based Public Services

Health

The Co-operative View

The Co-op Party at a United Kingdom level has been associated for some time with the concept of a mutual and co-operative health service. The Co-op Party acknowledges this is a sensitive area. The health service should continue to be provided universally and free at the point of need and responsibility for health care should always be a responsibility of the state. The National Health Service is probably the British Labour Movement's greatest single achievement and enjoys iconic status both with Labour activists and the British public. It has also ceased to deliver in the way that it was envisaged it would deliver by those who were involved in founding the NHS and struggles to cope with the demands placed upon it. If the original dream of universal health care is to be maintained then it will have to be reformed to suit the needs of the 21st century.

The Scottish Co-op Party views healthcare much in the same way we see every issue that confronts people, their families and communities – we believe that power should rest with the people. Communities have to take responsibility for health provision and we believe co-operative and mutual models of healthcare provide them with the best opportunity to do this.

A key challenge for the provision of health services is to connect them with people – the users, employees, patients and the wider community. It is essential to engender a type of ownership that enables stakeholders to feel that these services are run on their behalf and not for someone else's vested interests. There is a need for people to be involved in their own healthcare.

The Scottish Co-op Party will watch carefully the evolution of Community Health Partnerships and will continue to promote the advantages of developing care co-ops in both rural and urban settings. There is a need to look at how community health partnership can generate resources and promote good practice. The co-op model could readily lend itself to Area Health Partnerships, Nurse Multi Skilled Teams and Community Casualty Facilities.

The Scottish Executive must work in partnership with the trade union movement if our co-operative and mutual ideas are to succeed. The Scottish Co-op Party believes our solutions offer trade unions – as major stakeholders – an opportunity to share power.

The Co-operative Model

The Scottish Co-op Party would argue that the key issue for government is to develop a new model of delivery which is enterprising in the broadest sense but which is not driven by profit maximisation or payment of investors. Such a model should still be run as a business, free from the perceived inertia of the public sector but should not distribute profits to capital investors and should have a structure which recognises the different stakeholders in the business – providers, consumers and government. Crucially, it would have to be accountable to the public.

While there are a number of areas of development which would not require significant capital investment, at the high value end of the health sector employee ownership models can face barriers such as those presented by the need to own intellectual properties.

The case for mutualism in the Scottish Health Service is very strong. Through the Health Service we all insure each other against risk. We do this through general taxation. The idea of a relationship between money paid in and service received is particularly prevalent in public attitudes to healthcare. People feel they "own" the health service. Therefore when a proposal to close a local hospital is made – even if this is part of a plan to improve overall provision in the area – there is often a strong and emotive negative reaction. There is a feeling that something that belongs to you and your community is being taken away from you. This means that people need to develop their power relationship with the Health Service. We would argue that they need to develop their mutuality.

While people place a high value on the principles of the NHS their actual experience of receiving services and the way in which

they are organised is often less than satisfactory. Having paid for the service in a spirit of mutuality, the NHS then delivers in a hierarchical and old-fashioned way. People's experience of the NHS is that it is organised and owned by somebody else. For individuals, living in a highly consumerist 21st century, this raises the question of "why pay"? If we don't own it then who does? And why do we go on paying for it? There is a need for accountability. As co-operators we would argue the case for involving people in the ownership and running of the services.

Delivering Services

Organising out-of-hours GP services on a co-operative basis has a number of advantages. Co-operatives have existed in GP services for some time. Of course, these are producer co-ops and most of them do not include any form of ownership. The challenge is to involve consumers, as patients and citizens, in the decision-making which supports primary care. The Scottish Executive should work with professionals and trade unions to create change and involve all sections including staff and users. GPs and other health providers could be involved in Health Boards. The Scottish Executive should introduce expert patient status and should give them support. The NHS consults badly and should consider using co-op models to consult. Cleaners' comments are as important as the consultants. Consultants need to consider how they respond to community needs.

Decision-making within the health service should be devolved so that services are more responsive to community needs. The NHS requires proper patient and staff representation with democratically appointed representatives of local authorities and greater accountability and democracy within the NHS. Consultants need to talk to politicians and communities through public involvement partnerships.

New build hospitals and health centres could be developed along co-operative and mutual lines especially when the community is already heavily involved. A mutual structure would encourage more progressive doctors to develop specialist provision such as management of diabetes, epilepsy and other conditions. The Scottish Executive should encourage more co-op doctors' surgeries to offer more services such as day surgery within community facilities without the need to travel to an acute hospital.

The provision of dentistry in Scotland – and indeed across the UK – is one of the most acute problems facing the health service. The Scottish Executive would suggest that a co-operative model would provide a solution to this problem by giving communities more power to address this issue. Dentistry and pharmacies can easily adopt co-op models. The Scottish Executive should consider one stop shops to include dentistry, pharmacy, optical, GP, well people and childcare. The financing of dentistry should make use of mutual models. We are encouraged by the emergence of "Genesis", an industrial and provident society providing dental care on a mutual basis.

Working Together

The distinctions made between various parts of the health service are not always helpful and indeed some of the difficulties reflect a lack of integration. The Scottish Co-op Party believes that co-operative models would produce greater integration and would suggest that the evidence of co-operative healthcare provision overseas supports this contention. There is no part of the health service which cannot be mutualised although there is a need to prioritise. Aspects of care provision could be mutualised including geriatric and psycho-geriatric services. A more co-operative approach should be taken to mental health issues. This is particularly true in penal institutions.

The Scottish Executive should consider the relationship between health boards and provision of housing and social work services. Community health and care packages provide the ability to carry out a range of sustainable, multi-agency work. It should be recognized that a number of health issues impact on local authority care and social work budgets. The Scottish Executive should encourage health boards and local authorities with specific identifiable needs to develop a single provision of services in areas such as occupational therapy where both the health board and local authority have a role therefore providing a better service and a saving to the community.

The Scottish Co-op Party believes that there are opportunities for health care professionals in all fields of provision to come together in the co-op model and offer services to health boards and other health agencies and to provide specific services with profits being returned to provide more and better provision in an area.

Scotland's Health

Scotland suffers from very poor health indeed with one of the poorest health profiles in the developed world. Although many of Scotland's health indicators suggest that the Scottish Executive and the NHS in Scotland have been reasonably successful in dealing with some of the more challenging health issues such as coronary heart disease and cancer, massive challenges remain. These challenges derive from both the continuing background of deprivation which persist and the new challenges presented by modern lifestyles such as obesity.

It should be remembered that healthcare is not the same as health and that health is part of the wider issue of well-being. The co-op, as an ethical food retailer, plays a major part in supporting health and well-being. Breakfast clubs and walk to school projects can improve health. The Scottish Executive should consider pre five fit clubs and walking groups. In schools, Home Economics has an important role to play in developing shopping for good value and health. The Scottish Executive should look at not for profit health transport and other opportunities and CDS could be involved in such initiatives possibly with trade union involvement.

There are a number of issues facing the NHS which the co-op model could address. Our approach is informed by the co-op values and principles outlined in an earlier part of this document. Such issues include democratic accountability and responsibility and patient, public and staff involvement. The Scottish Executive should let communities make decisions through community health partnerships and should consider how co-ops could empower less articulate communities to deal with the 'postcode lottery' in healthcare.

There are a number of specific areas where the community agenda and the health agenda overlap such as transport links – both urban and rural – for both patients and visitors. The Scottish Co-op Party believes that both communities and healthcare providers should work together through community partnerships to provide solutions. Health boards intending to provide new services should be encouraged to utilise existing local authority facilities rather than build a new facility or indeed jointly build community facilities providing both health and local authority provision.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Scottish Water

Scotland's utilities should be owned by Scotland's people. Water remains in public ownership in Scotland while it has been fully privatised in England. Wales is served by a form of mutually owned water provision which enables people in Wales to take advantage of guarantees of public ownership and the freedoms offered by the market. Scotland would benefit from a mutually owned Water and Sewerage industry. Once again our case is informed by our values and principles. The Scottish Executive should recognise that the economics of the Scottish water industry will inevitably force change. A mutual model would be best placed to carry out the necessary borrowing. Consideration should be given to the impact of water regulation on rural development

Other Opportunities

Another area with potential for co-operative and mutual ownership and control is broadband. There are already examples, such as in the Netherlands, of communities taking ownership of broadband provision. Fibre to the home will be a significant issue in the next few years. Through co-operation and mutuality, communities will be able to take control rather than the major suppliers in the industry who hope to take advantage of this developing need. Broadband can only be properly developed through partnership working. Co-operative broadband models should be considered in all communities from the most affluent to the most deprived.

CDS should play a major role in developing co-op options on utilities. The ethical provision of gas and electricity should be encouraged. Utilities could use the Phone Co-op as a model. Co-operative models should be considered in public transport. Bus services should be re-regulated to improve service to those areas. While free travel for elderly people is good, subsidised bus services still leaves areas without an adequate service. Utilities should be developed on a co-operative or mutual basis with full encouragement for shareholder democracy and member benefit. Legislative power should be taken to prevent large companies monopolising public sector procurement

Education

The Co-operative Movement has an excellent record in education. Many in our Movement have been able to develop intellectually and vocationally through their involvement with the Co-operative College. At a grassroots level, many co-operative societies rightly considered education provision an integral part of meeting the needs of their members. In recent years, education has become the prerogative of the state and co-operative education has been largely lost as a result. Many co-operative projects have been stillborn because business advisors in the public and private sectors have been ignorant of co-operative business models. Scottish schools have always enjoyed an ethos which includes co-operation with a small 'c'. They also touch on some co-operative issues within the curriculum, such as Fairtrade, often with support from local government.

Co-operation offers solutions to many of the challenges of public service provision but co-operative solutions have been ignored because civil servants and politicians have no background knowledge of co-operation. Scottish higher education, almost without exception, completely ignores co-op business models.

Teachers are unaware of co-ops and therefore our society's ignorance perpetuates itself. For this reason, the Co-operative Movement in Scotland has set up a Co-operative Education Trust Scotland (CETS). The Scottish Executive and CDS should work in partnership with CETS to promote co-operative education. It is extremely important that co-operative ideas are taught and promoted in Scottish universities. The most significant barrier to introducing co-operation into the Scottish schools' curriculum on an equal basis is that Scottish teachers have been given no knowledge of, or training in, the delivery of co-operative values and principles or the opportunity to experience co-operative enterprise in action.

The co-operative movement should feature in history courses. The Fenwick Weavers are one of the earliest recorded examples of a co-operative enterprise anywhere in the world.

While the objective is to ensure co-operative education enters the mainstream, there may be potential to use co-operative education with those young people who becomes marginalised and possibly excluded from school.

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