

**Co-operative
Developments
June 2013**



SCS CIC is proud to be helping The Energy Saving Co-operative raise finance to scale up their pioneering work in the West and East Midlands.

TESC brings together local trades, membership organisations and householders to deliver 'bundles' of energy saving home improvements - like this one in Lichfield. Their share issue (using our 'Co-op Angels' network) will raise £300,000 of working capital and makes use of Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme - maybe a first for a co-op. TESC uses Somerset Rules to create a hybrid consumer and worker co-op.

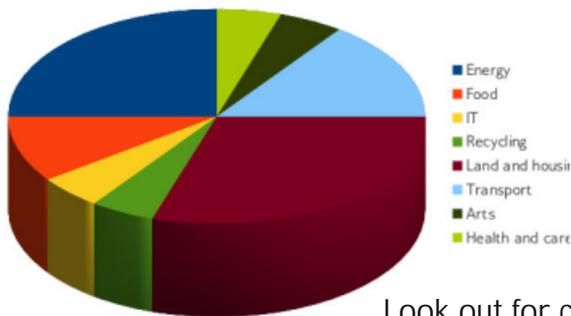
Inside: the spread of Somerset Rules multistakeholder co-ops; planning success for the Ecological Land Co-op; the Co-op Enterprise Hub around Somerset; Co-ops Fortnight 2013 in Somerset

The Somerset Rules are now used by twenty different co-operatives in a range of different sectors

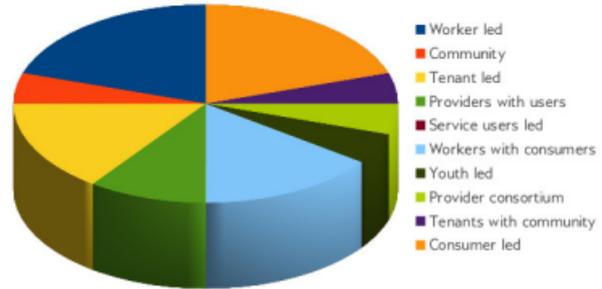
The Somerset Rules were developed by us in 2009 to meet the needs of co-operatives that:

- served distinct, different stakeholder groups
- have a strong social mission
- want to issue share capital to social investors

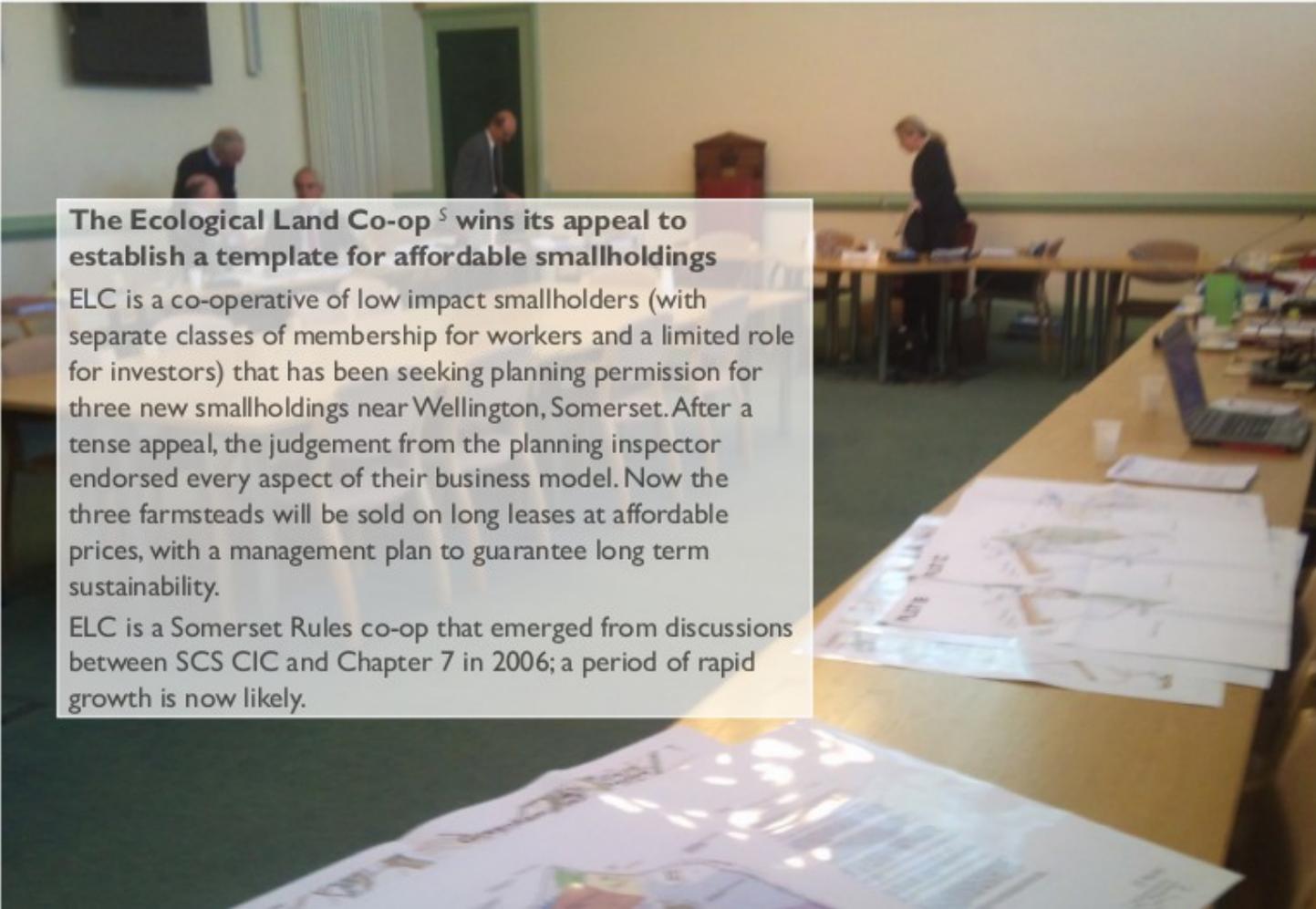
In 2012 we made various improvements to the rules to ensure that they are clear, work consistently and are fully compatible with the latest legislation. We're recommending that co-ops with earlier rules update them to the 2012 model.



Look out for co-ops with an ^s following their name - they use our rules!



Somerset rules co-ops have raised over £400,000 of share capital, and have hundreds of members. In response to demand, we have created a CIC version for co-ops that want a regulated asset lock (however, the original society version is necessary for share issues). More information is available from our website, www.somerset.coop. Follow the link to 'registrations' and you will find flyers, briefings, model policies and of course the rules themselves.



The Ecological Land Co-op^s wins its appeal to establish a template for affordable smallholdings

ELC is a co-operative of low impact smallholders (with separate classes of membership for workers and a limited role for investors) that has been seeking planning permission for three new smallholdings near Wellington, Somerset. After a tense appeal, the judgement from the planning inspector endorsed every aspect of their business model. Now the three farmsteads will be sold on long leases at affordable prices, with a management plan to guarantee long term sustainability.

ELC is a Somerset Rules co-op that emerged from discussions between SCS CIC and Chapter 7 in 2006; a period of rapid growth is now likely.

The **co-operative** enterprise hub

Delivering advice and support around Somerset - and beyond

We have been busy the last few months working with the other co-operative development bodies in South West Co-operative Support (SWCS) to provide the advice and support that new and growing co-operatives require - all paid for by the Co-operative Group as part of their Enterprise Hub (see www.co-operative.coop/enterprisehub). Just a few examples...

- Avalon Community Energy^s (ACE) received a day of intensive training in community share issues as they prepare for a pioneer share issue and a feasibility study.
- Co-Cars^s had some help from us last year overhauling their rules in preparation for a share issue of their own. Now they are introducing a high-tech new smartcard booking system for users of their pool cars - expect to hear more about this fast growing co-op.
- Feed Avalon is a new project being developed by some of the people who brought you Somerset Community Food's popular training and events. They plan to get their hands dirtier yet by designing and implementing sustainable food systems around Somerset, and needed us to help them work out the right legal structures.
- Brendon Energy needed facilitation of an awayday for their board, to help them focus on strategic objectives and build participation among their members.

As we go to press, Somerset Co-op Community Land Trust ⁵ seems poised to buy its first property in the centre of Taunton.

Its first attempt last year ended in defeat after six months of struggling to get lenders agreement on a complex renovation project. This time the team are working with different lenders and a much simpler plan: a property in good order, but never previously used for housing. The aim is to create four affordable flats, as well as a shop front for community enterprise downstairs. Local people have invested funds, and have been supported by social investors from across the UK. By the time of their joint AGM with SCS CIC on the 27th, they should be owners of this fine listed building in a prominent location.

This is just the start - SCCLT has aspirations to house many more people.





**CO-OPERATIVES
FORTNIGHT**
22 JUNE – 6 JULY 2013



Now in its fourth year, the fortnight celebrates the 5,900 enterprises across the UK that are owned by and run for members and not shareholders.

Businesses like Brendon Energy, Moorvale Credit Union, Seavington Village Shop and Glastonbury Assembly Rooms are part of a Co-operative Sector that contributes £36bn to the UK economy. Where trust is low, like energy and food, co-operatives are thriving. Co-operatives have grown by 20% since the start of the credit crunch.

In a recent poll, 52% of people who expressed a view described co-operative businesses as trusted, compared to just 7% for PLCs.

Join us in Taunton on the 27th June to celebrate Co-operatives Fortnight

Co-operators from around Somerset will come together at 12 noon on the 27th June to share a co-operative lunch and discuss the latest developments in the social economy. Some of the events planned:

- a presentation on Somerset CCLT's plans for 10 East Reach; could this be a shop window for co-operative and credit union services in Taunton?
- the AGMs of Somerset Co-operative Services CIC and Somerset CCLT
- new developments in the world of community shares: learning from les Cigales in France, finance using alternative currencies and new tax reliefs from the government
- news from Brendon Energy about their growing network of village based solar power stations

It's all taking place at St James Hall in Taunton between 12noon and 3pm - please contact alex@somerset.coop for a full agenda.



For more Co-operatives Fortnight resources, go to uk.coop/choosecoop. You can also download a handy app for your phone that will help you locate the co-op you need!

Our mission: " Promoting the application of international co-operative principles, to help people establish new social enterprises and to enable social enterprises to work together to be financially, environmentally and socially sustainable."

Somerset Co-operative Services CIC is a co-operative itself. We are open to new members, provided that applicants are either

- current or recent clients (individuals, agencies or social enterprises) that are based in the South West; or
- co-operatives (which includes credit unions, LETS and most democratic social enterprises) that either make use of our services or hope to make use of our services in the future

Whether you need help with legal structures for the not-for-private-profit sector, business planning advice, financial services including accountancy and payroll, business planning support or group work and facilitation - check our website, and give us a call.

A Community Interest Company no 6018662



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