

## Annual Report 2008/09

Having brought our AGM forward from November to May it feels like we have only just written our last annual report. That said, there is still a lot to report on.

### Activities

#### **Co-operative Fund Project**

Co-operatives<sup>SE</sup> has received a grant from the Co-operative Fund to do some research on what co-operative enterprises in the region want from Co-operatives<sup>SE</sup>. The starting point for this work has been to look at the contact details we have for co-operative enterprises in the region and assess its accuracy. This has been a more difficult job than we had expected. We have commissioned CBA Marketing Research to carry out this work for us and they will be presenting their findings at our AGM.

The grant from the Co-operative Fund has meant that we have been able to recruit (in partnership with Co-operatives London) a Business and Communications Manager to help with the running of Co-operatives<sup>SE</sup>. We are pleased to welcome Kathy O'Keeffe to the team.

#### **Support for Cooperative Development Bodies (CDBs)** *The co-operative enterprise hub*

Co-operatives<sup>SE</sup> continues to build its relationship with South East Co-operative Support (the umbrella body for co-operative development bodies in the region). We are very pleased that the South East will be one of the pilot regions for the roll out of the Co-operative Enterprise Hub Advice and Training Programme. This programme will enable new and existing co-operative enterprises to access support from a consortium of co-operative development bodies in the region.

Co-operatives<sup>SE</sup> are delighted that as a result of their involvement in the SE<sup>2</sup> partnership we were chosen to lead one of the regional social enterprise Capacitybuilders projects. The project is called SEASON and is about the creation of a network of social enterprise advisers to help them to continually improve the services they deliver to social enterprises. If you know of anyone who may be interested in joining the network please do get in touch.



#### **South East Social Enterprise Partnership**



Co-operatives<sup>SE</sup> continue to represent the co-operative sector on this partnership. This has been a year of real change for the partnership. The original package of support from SEEDA came to an end in December but SEEDA have agreed to continue to support the partnership until the end of March 2010. The SE<sup>2</sup> partnership are also co-ordinating the three social enterprise capacity builders projects in the region. More information about the partnership can be found at [www.se2partnership.co.uk](http://www.se2partnership.co.uk).

### **Work with Co-operatives<sup>UK</sup>**

We continue to work closely with Co-operatives<sup>UK</sup> and as part of our membership drive continue to look to raise their profile in the region. We participate in the network meetings of the Regional Co-operative Councils organised by Co-operatives<sup>UK</sup>. These meetings enable the sharing of good practice and information across the country. We hope to continue to develop this relationship over the next year.

### **Marketing**

The grant from the Co-operative Fund has also enabled us to develop a Co-operatives<sup>SE</sup> newsletter which will be produced twice a year, so you have any items of interest that you want to share with co-operatives in the region please do let us know.

We have been developing the website and expect that this work will continue over the forthcoming months. You can find all of the minutes of the board meetings and membership application information on the site. The website can be found at [www.cooperatives-se.coop](http://www.cooperatives-se.coop).

### **Governance & Membership**

Following on from the discussions at the AGM last year the board has been reviewing the company's memorandum and articles in light of the clauses about membership. As a result of this there will be a special resolution at this year's AGM to change the governing document which will enable us to co-opt additional board members throughout the year.

The board are pleased to be able to report that there is still a steady growth in the membership of Co-operatives<sup>SE</sup> and look forward to further growth as result of the recent research.

### **Our Thanks.....**

**The Midcounties Co-operative**  
midcounties.coop

Once again our thanks go to the Co-operative Fund and Midcounties Co-operative who continue to provide financial support to Co-operatives<sup>SE</sup> to enable it to work on behalf of the co-operative sector across the South East region.

Many thanks also to the board who continue to work hard on behalf of Co-operatives<sup>SE</sup>. They are:

- Karen Froggatt
- Chris Funnell
- Owen Jell
- Felix Lozano
- Ann Hayes
- Andrew Syrett
- Mike Tiller
- Jo White.

We would also like to thank Co-operatives<sup>UK</sup> for the support that they provide us with throughout the year.

Jo White  
Chair  
April 2009