



2015

Corporate Social Responsibility



Co-Ownership
Housing®

Corporate Social Responsibility Report 2015

2015 has been a great year for fundraising and volunteering at Co-Ownership. Congratulations to all staff – the commitment to our CSR projects during the last 12 months has been a great achievement whilst at the same time delivering on our business objective of 700 properties purchased through Co-Ownership this year.

Our activities are based around 3 areas:

Environment – reducing the impact of our operations on the environment through encouraging behaviours and introducing initiatives that minimise waste and maximise efficiency.

Workplace – building on our existing activities that support equality of opportunity and diversity both in our dealings with clients and stakeholders and also across the organisation.

Community – encouraging and supporting our staff in volunteering and fundraising opportunities.

Environment

Our aim is to embed environmentally ethical behaviour into our culture and workforce

- We have continued our recycling partnership with Bryson House recycling paper, cardboard, cans and plastic and increased our recycling year on year. This year we recycled 5,784 kilos, the equivalent weight of 13 grand pianos!
- We have trained our staff on energy awareness.
- The Energy Saving Trust visited us giving lots of energy saving tips.
- Belfast City Council held an information session giving staff tips on how to reduce waste.
- We dedicated a month to local biodiversity in an effort to create greater awareness amongst staff. This involved a fun quiz with prizes to encourage biodiversity in our own back gardens.
- We continued to record and display recycling progress for staff.
- We have committed to reducing all waste and report these figures to the Management Team.
- We are in the process of becoming a 'paperless office' through the use of an electronic document and record management system that will be phased in over the next 3 years.

Workplace

- We continue to review our governance framework and policies for good practice in terms of meeting the needs of our various stakeholders.
- Our Equality Team continues their work internally and has submitted the Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission in August 2015.
- We continue to contribute to consultations on strategy and legislation in the housing arena.
- We continued to provide staff and materials free of charge to support home buyers advice events organised by local estate agents, financial advisers and developers.

Community

Staff voted for the charity they would most like to support and Cancer Research became our chosen charity. This year we launched a corporate responsibility year planner, with planned fundraising and volunteering events throughout the year. Packed full of activity we have raised an amazing **£1999** for Cancer Research!

- We have had coffee mornings, raffles, dress down days, sold mince pies and bacon rolls as well as running a marathon to raise money for our chosen charity.
- A donation station was set up for 4 months for Cancer Research where staff brought in bags of unwanted clothes, books, bags and household items.
- A Co-Ownership relay team took part in the Belfast Marathon raising over £700 for our chosen charity, Cancer Research.
- Cancer Research joined us for an information session 'Beating Cancer sooner in NI'
- Staff collected gifts for local children during the Christmas period again this year. We continued to support the Barnardo's Bereavement Campaign, supporting grieving children and their families. We also raised over £140 to buy vouchers for one particular family in need. This year Michelle from Barnardo's came into our office to tell us more about the service they provide and the difference our contribution at Christmas makes to the families.
- We have encouraged staff to take part in volunteering throughout the year. They volunteered in local library's helping 'silver surfers'. We helped out at a local primary school and wrapped Christmas presents in CastleCourt Shopping Centre for Clic Sargent.
- Staff continued to take part in regular blood donation sessions in Belfast.

The year ahead

We will continue our CSR activities focusing on the 3 main areas, environment, workplace and community working alongside Business in the Community. We especially want to continue our fundraising days and volunteering opportunities for staff.

We are committed to achieving CORE certification in conjunction with BITC in 2016. CORE is a framework for identifying and measuring corporate responsibility activity and performance. It is based on Business in the Community's Corporate Responsibility (CR) Model. CORE will enable us to map our entire corporate responsibility activity and benchmark it against other organisations; this is all verified by an external assessor.



NI Co-Ownership Housing Association Ltd,
Murray House, Murray Street, Belfast BT1 6DN DX 2003 NR Belfast 2
Phone (028) 9032 7276 Textphone users 18001 028 9032 7276
Website www.co-ownership.org