

Press Release: Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative Opens!

For immediate release

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The members of Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative in front of their new property. Left to right, Back row: Aidan Ferrier, Rachel Lyndon, Amrou Motawa. Front row: Emil Carr-Ross, Chris Fleming, May Armstrong



Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative have moved into their new home in Ibrox, Glasgow, in July 2025. The students have worked for years to arrange the purchase of a property to provide cooperative rental accommodation to students, an affordable alternative to private rents with stable tenancies and democratic control.

The student housing they provide contrasts with what's on offer on the private rental and purpose built student accommodation markets. After Glasgow City Council's declaration of a "housing emergency" in 2024, tenant organisers must deliver solutions to Glasgow's renters.

Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative will provide a home to 5 students in a shared flat. The accommodation is well below market rate in price, is democratically controlled through a cooperative structure, and has a community mindset, which typical student accommodation often lacks.

The purchase of their property was undertaken by Student Co-op Homes, which acts as a federation of other student housing cooperatives across the UK and Ireland. The purchase was graciously financed by Scotmid Cooperative [1], as a celebration of the 160th anniversary since its founding [2]. The sixth cooperative principle of the International Cooperative Alliance's cooperative principles [3] dictates that cooperatives should work together to better serve their members and create solidarity economies democratically controlled by their members, rather than shareholders.

Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative is delighted to be the second student housing cooperative in Scotland, after Edinburgh Student Housing Cooperative. The two Scottish student housing cooperatives have been working together to lobby for better student housing, tenants' rights and cooperative-friendly legislation within the Scottish parliament. They have worked together to push for cooperative-friendly legislation in the current housing bill in the Scottish parliament.

Students who are interested in living at the cooperative can apply online at glasgowstudenthousingcoop.org

Other cooperatives local to Glasgow have offered their solidarity and congratulate Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative on securing their property -

"Edinburgh Student Housing Cooperative is delighted that Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative has opened its doors and joined us as the second student housing cooperative in Scotland. In light of the ongoing housing crisis for both students and the wider population, this is an important development for student-led housing. We are happy to be able to support Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative financially through a small loan to help them move into their new building, and are proud to stand in solidarity with Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative in the fight for Scottish housing legislation that puts people first and allows cooperative housing to flourish across the country."

- The membership of Edinburgh Student Housing Cooperative (Edinburgh)

"Redcurrant Housing Co-operative, a mutually owned and democratically run housing co-operative based in Glasgow, welcomes and celebrates the beginning of the Glasgow Student Housing Co-operative based in Ibrox!

Housing co-operatives are alternative institutions for ways of living in a city which increasingly sees people being priced out of their neighbourhoods due to ever increasing house prices. This is a trend that is incredibly unlikely to stop.

Usually your choices as a student studying in Scotland is staying with your parents, under a private landlord or living in purpose built student accommodation. All of these take autonomy

and choice away from the individual in how to live their life to the fullest. Being a student shouldn't mean going without the essentials or worrying about when the landlord will come and fix your boiler in the winter. Being a student should be a time to learn new skills, make connections and be part of something bigger than what you had before. Running and living in housing co-operatives like Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative are part of that puzzle and we look forward to working with them to develop more co-operatives and members in the future.

It's been a pleasure for our members to get to know the members of the Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative over the last two years and we look forward to seeing it thrive and grow.

Stay radical, stay true to yourselves"

- The membership of Redcurrant Housing Co-operative (Glasgow).

"I am delighted to hear that Glasgow Student Housing Co-operative has purchased a house to provide accommodation for students. Given the cost of privately renting in the city, this looks a really positive way forward which I hope is the first of many."

- Colin Turnbull (Director, Hawthorn Housing Co-operative, Glasgow)

"Securing affordable, safe & attractive accommodation for students can be extremely challenging yet is key to their well-being and success with their studies.

All too often, students can feel isolated, invisible, exploited even, when it comes to their need for a home.

The Glasgow Student Housing Co-operative is a remarkable demonstration of what can be achieved through the co-operative model.

Their resilience and efforts to make this happen should not only be applauded but mark the way for others to follow.

Not only have they provided themselves with affordable housing, they have embodied both the values and principles of working together, as a co-operative.

In the midst of our current housing crisis, support at a national level to set up more co-operatives, should be available and accessible to all. These young people are our future and we need to be doing more.

I personally wish to congratulate the Glasgow Student Housing Co-operative on their new purchase: a place they can call home"

- Larke Adger (CEO of West Granton Housing Cooperative, Edinburgh)

"Student housing cooperatives are key to addressing the shortage of student housing in Glasgow, offering democratic control and fairer rents for students.

I am delighted that Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative have purchased their first property

and will now move to secure an HMO license from Glasgow City Council so that students can move in for the coming academic year.

Cooperatives are key to tackling the housing emergency, and it is essential that local and national governments work with cooperatives to remove the unnecessary regulatory blocks on their growth and in doing so help solve the housing crisis in our cities.”

- Paul Sweeney MSP (Labour and Co-operative Party, Glasgow)

“We’re delighted to support Student Co-op Homes and help bring GSHC’s vision to life. This investment reflects our belief in long-term, value-driven partnerships and in the ability of young people to lead meaningful change through the cooperative model”

- Craig Strachan (CFO of Scotmid Co-operative)

“Scotmid’s support is a game-changer. It not only helps secure our first property in Glasgow but also sets an inspiring example of how established co-ops can empower new ones”

- Dr Scott Jennings (Chair of Student Co-op Homes)

“In a period when complaints about the infantilisation of our universities and students seem to leave little hope for the survival of critical action in higher education, the acquisition of a home for the Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative comes as a wondrous lightning bolt that proves the opposite. Another step in the right direction toward truly more equitable student housing, and another step in the trajectory of the cooperative movement: long live the cooperators!”

- Francesco Zuddas (Architect and Housing and Urbanism Lecturer, Architectural Association School of Architecture, London)

“Greencity Wholefoods is delighted to see the establishment of the first Student Housing Cooperative in Glasgow. Student housing is one of Glasgow’s fastest developing markets and is often subject to predatory and extractive landlord practices. By flipping the ownership model into the hands of the students, this will ensure a fairer and more sustainable approach to housing, which will empower the next generation of co-operators. We need more co-operative student housing for the city and the rest of the country.’

- Scott Ewrin (Member Director, Greencity Wholefoods, Glasgow) and Babs Nicgriogair (Worker at Greencity Wholefoods and supporter of Glasgow Co-ops Meet Up)

“I am delighted that we have purchased a property after years of organising. It has been a great experience for us as young people to have the backing of experienced cooperators at Student Co-op Homes and in the Glasgow cooperative movement, such as Greencity Wholefoods and the Media Co-op. We would also like to thank the support we have received from within Glasgow City Council and from Paul Sweeney MSP, who is doing a lot to support and revive cooperatives in Glasgow.

The local cooperative community has been so supportive of us and given us invaluable advice over the years. It is wonderful to see retail cooperatives come together with housing

cooperatives to develop a more equitable and sustainable cooperative local economy through trading with each other and supporting the growth of new cooperatives.

We would be keen to see more engagement from Glasgow based universities and colleges with student housing cooperatives and our federation body, Student Co-op Homes. The student housing crisis is not going away. In our opinion, along with The National Union of Students, housing is one of the biggest issues students face due to the cost and unavailability, therefore that student associations and unions should be doing more to support student led cooperative housing, such as Nottingham Student Union have been doing. Edinburgh Student Housing Cooperative has the support of Edinburgh University Students' Association and The University of Edinburgh, which helped them set up their property of 106 beds. We call on Glasgow's universities to do the same.

We refuse to believe that enduring housing horror stories should be an accepted part of student life. Cooperatives are our alternatives, which teach skills for the future to build just and sustainable alternative economies. I am grateful that I was able to study my housing cooperative as part of writing my undergraduate dissertation on forming alternative economies through cooperative housing. I wish to thank my fellow cooperators for this opportunity, and look forward to celebrating in our new home!"

- May Armstrong (secretary of Glasgow Student Housing Cooperative, student board member of Student Co-op Homes)

"I've attended a few meetings with Glasgow Student Housing Co-op, and it's been inspiring to see students from across the city organizing inclusively, effectively, and passionately to tackle student housing issues. This first property is just the start and universities and government could do more to support these grassroots, student-led initiatives. Universities have a key role to play and should consider offering more recognition, endorsement, and funding to student-led housing co-ops as part of their housing strategy, while the government should support with proper investment and legal frameworks that make it easier for student housing co-ops to access property and self-manage sustainably"

- Oluwatomisin 'Tom Tom' Osinubi (Student President, Glasgow Caledonian University)

References

- [1] Glasgow student housing co-operative secured first property. Retrieved 22-07-2025, from <https://www.glasgowtimes.co.uk/news/25314312.glasgow-student-housing-co-operative-secured-first-property/>
- [2] Scottish Midland Co-operative Society Limited. (n.d.). Scotmid Celebrates 160th Anniversary. Retrieved 22-07-2025, from <https://scotmid.coop/2019/11/scotmid-celebrates-160th-anniversary/>

[3] International Cooperative Alliance. (n.d.). Cooperative identity, values & principles | ICA.
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