



A STRONGER PLACE
FOR **COMMUNITY**

2023—A Year in Review

CHF BC Group of Social Enterprises





Land Acknowledgement

The Co-operative Housing Federation of BC (CHF BC) acknowledges and pays respect to the Indigenous keepers of the traditional and unceded lands upon which many housing co-operatives and offices are situated: **the Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, WSÁNEĆ, and Lekwungen-speaking peoples.**

We acknowledge the impact of colonialism and that our presence on these lands was paved through a system of discriminatory and racist practices. We are committed to honouring, listening, and continuously learning from the diverse perspectives of these and other Indigenous peoples.



Message from the President and CEO

At the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC (CHF BC), we work to ensure that housing co-ops are viable, sustainable communities, not only for today's members but for future generations. Working closely with members, partners and allies, we are successfully leveraging community-based assets and resources to tackle the economic and environmental challenges that continue to impact our lives and challenge our plans for the future.

We all understand the significant contribution housing co-ops can make to housing security and affordability in strong, member-led communities. As a membership association representing almost 15,000 co-op homes, our job is to support those communities by speaking up for them when they need us, and to offer the resources they need to make our mutual vision of inclusive, sustainable, and permanently affordable homes a reality for many more people.

We are also proud to be part of the larger landscape of community housing in British Columbia. Our partnership with BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA) and the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) through **Housing Central** has delivered gains for every form of community-based housing tenure in our province. And our ongoing partnership with the

Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada (CHF Canada) and the strong network of regional federations and community land trusts across the country has moved us closer to our vision of **Co-op Housing for All**.

The strength of our team is driving our success and we credit the work of our 12 directors and 140 staff for allowing us to serve our mission so effectively and give us such hope for a future in which everyone has a safe, secure, affordable place to call home.

We will continue to put our members at the center of everything we do, and we appreciate their loyalty and support as we continue to unite, represent and serve them in a thriving co-operative housing movement.



Suzann Zimmering
President



Thom Armstrong
Chief Executive Officer



Who We Are

Mission:

Unite represent and serve our members in a thriving co-operative housing movement

Vision:

Growing an inclusive community of sustainable and permanently affordable co-operative housing

We are...



A resource offering information, advice, programs and services to members.



A steward of real estate assets worth almost \$400 million.



A hub for developing and strengthening co-op communities.



A responsible employer of more than 140 staff.



A non-profit property manager for 6,000 co-op homes.



A partner in the growth of the community housing sector in BC.



A social purpose real estate developer.



A co-op breathing life into the seven international co-op principles.





In This Review

This review will share the story of our achievements and impact in 2023.

Strategic Priorities	06	Celebrating our Older Co-op Members	14
Providing Strong Support and Expert Advice to our Members	07	Preserving Existing Co-op Homes	16
Making Co-op Housing a Reality for People Who Need it Most	08	Creating More Co-op Communities	17
Group Buying Continues to Grow	09	Community Land Trust Portfolio	18
From Classroom to Community	10	Co-op Spotlight #1: Joint East Vancouver Co-op Emergency and Resilience Planning Committee	19
Preserving Existing Co-op Homes	12	Co-op Spotlight #2: Our Forever Home...At Last	20
Pathways for Youth	13		



Strategic Priorities

Our programs and services are supported by **three strategic pillars.**



Belonging

Inspire housing co-ops to be communities that promote and embody equitable access, opportunity, respect, and a sense of belonging for everyone.



Sustainability

Model and promote the principles and best practices of social, economic, and environmental sustainability in everything we do and encourage our members to do the same.



Growth

Champion the ongoing and significant development of co-op homes to expand our movement and increase the availability of co-operative housing in BC.

Providing Strong Support and Expert Advice to our Members

CHF BC creates space for our members to come together, share ideas and experiences, and learn from industry experts. These engagements support housing co-operatives in their drive to be strong and vibrant communities, no matter what challenges they face.

We held three education conferences in Vancouver and on Vancouver Island, delivered **50 workshops**, and facilitated **116 individual co-op meetings** and town halls. These services continue to be in high demand, with an **11% increase in attendance** compared to 2022.

CHF BC members have a direct line to our staff for technical advice on governance matters, such as board and director responsibilities, policies, human rights, privacy, and dispute resolution. Staff responded to more than **1,300 calls and emails** from co-op members in 2023.

Our online resources and toolkits include policy templates and step-by-step direction on critical responsibilities for co-op boards. This year, we saw **a record 69% increase** in the number of subscribers to our website resources. Our eNews, Sustainability, and Education newsletters provide targeted content to members, and our mailing list continues to increase over the year, reaching a total of **3,829 subscribers** by year end.





Making Co-op Housing a Reality for People Who Need it Most

For many, co-operative housing—or any affordable housing—continues to be out of reach. This is particularly impacting persons and families who have experienced varying levels of systemic inequities. This year, our Community Land Trust partnered with **Collective Impact TRRUST** to create opportunities for young people aging out of government care to join a co-op community. We continue to partner with the **Community Living Society** to provide homes for adults with developmental disabilities and the **BC Society of Transition Houses** for women fleeing intimate partner violence.



Group Buying Continues to Grow

Joining with other co-operatives to combine their group buying power is one of the best ways co-ops can achieve greater economies of scale in their day-to-day operations. Our program offers essential products and services to co-ops and their members. Even in the face of inflation and supply chain challenges this year, our suppliers and partners managed to deliver excellent products and services across the full range of group buying options for members.

Our group buying programs not only benefit CHF BC member co-ops, but their resident members as well, with special deals from Telus and RONA.





From Classroom to Community

We aspire as a federation of housing co-operatives to create opportunities for people to share their experience of living in thriving co-operative communities. Whether lining up for BBQ burgers, exploring the community on co-op walking tours, or piloting an online platform to help prepare for current and future challenges, our members reported that combining fun and learning is here to stay.





Co-op members enjoying the Vancouver Island BBQ at Becwith Park in Saanich on June 9, 2023



Preserving Existing Co-op Homes

The best way to grow a thriving co-operative housing sector is to **ensure that we properly maintain and manage our existing homes**. To date, **over 130 housing co-ops** have worked with CHF BC to develop asset management plans and **89 housing co-ops, comprising 6,000 homes, are using COHO Management Services** for professional property management and governance support.

When needed, the Community Land Trust is ready to step in and save the day for co-ops who may be at risk from the sale of their land and buildings to a private investor.



The Community Land Trust is not only building new co-ops but preserving existing co-op homes. There are currently **11 housing co-ops built before 1993** whose members can rest easy knowing their properties have been secured forever through the Community Land Trust.

We were saddened by the loss of Totem Housing Co-op this year—an outcome we hope never to see again.

We are working aggressively with our members in two housing co-ops in Coquitlam to ensure they do not meet the same fate.



Pathways for Youth

To support the next generation of co-operators, we awarded another **\$12,000 in post-secondary scholarships** and sponsored three youth to attend **The Youth Excellence Society (YES) Summer Camp** on Vancouver Island.



At our Spring Forum, we hosted a panel of youth leaders from **Ethos Lab**, who shared their experiences. They shared how they co-created a space where a sense of belonging is at the core of their efforts to empower youth to be creators, not just consumers.

This resonates with many housing co-ops who strive to promote inclusion and the contributions of their members.





Celebrating our Older Co-op Members

CHF BC's Aging In Place committee is a passionate group of co-operators who speak up for seniors and celebrate the contributions of older co-op members in their communities.

This year, committee members attended several public events focused on issues facing seniors and the many resources available to them. The committee also hosted its annual **Century of Cooperation awards to honour 31 individuals** who have dedicated their time and energy over many years to their co-op communities.





Co-op member enjoying the garden
at 115 Place Housing Co-op



Government Relations and Advocacy

CHF BC has maintained a robust government relations and community outreach presence. We receive regular invitations to participate in consultations with all levels of government on various housing policy issues. During the year, we continued our work with the City of Vancouver on co-op lease renewals, with a focus on co-operatives in the False Creek South area and those that have been flagged for redevelopment.



Several years of persistent advocacy and our **Housing Central** partnership with BC

Non-Profit Housing Association and the Aboriginal Housing Management Association paid off in January when the Province of BC announced an investment of \$500 million to establish the **Rental Protection Fund**.

The fund will be used to assist in the purchase of purpose-built rental housing or co-ops at risk of privatization, to maintain affordable rents, prioritize security of tenure, and offer tenants in privately-owned rental buildings the opportunity to convert to a co-op. We are proud to be part of this effort to secure housing affordability for future generations.



Creating More Co-op Communities

This year, we continued to develop new co-operative communities with our partners across the Metro Vancouver region and beyond. **As of July 31, 2023, the Community Land Trust's portfolio included 2,660 co-op homes, 628 non-profit homes, and 20 commercial retail units.** This mixed-income, mixed-use approach to housing accommodates a broad range of incomes, household types, and community partners.



The ground floor of the co-op is occupied by **411 Seniors Society**, a non-profit organization that is a community hub and service organization dedicated to the well-being of seniors in Vancouver.

In 2023, we opened **North Arm Housing Co-operative** on Fraser Street in Vancouver.

This 58-unit co-op in East Vancouver is a community created for mature adults and features studio and one-bedroom apartments.

The ground floor of the





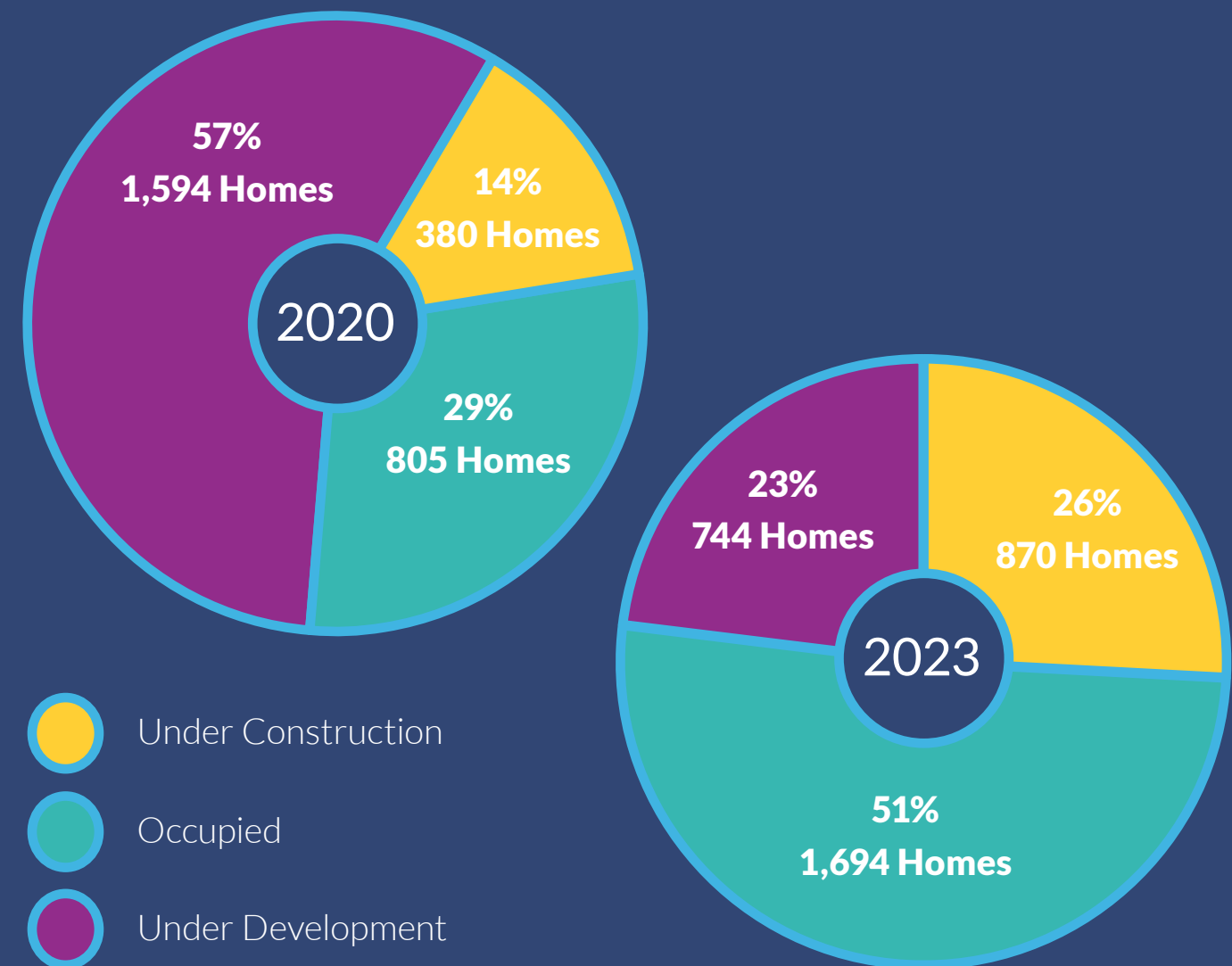
Community Land Trust Portfolio



Over the last three years, the Community Land Trust has

more than doubled the number of homes under development and construction. In October, we were proud to help launch the **Canadian Network of Community Land Trusts** to foster the growth of community land trusts across the country.

Today our operations are more complex and larger in scale than ever, but our commitment to the co-operative principles remains unchanged. Our top priority has always been, and will continue to be, supporting our members in the governance and management of their co-ops and championing the growth of our movement.



Co-op Spotlight #1: Joint East Vancouver Co-op Emergency and Resilience Planning Committee

A collaboration of neighbouring housing co-operatives has created a **shared emergency response planning committee** to share common spaces and relocation strategies in the event of emergencies.





Co-op Spotlight #2: Our Forever Home...At Last

For the members of 115 Place Housing Co-operative, 2023 has been a year of **celebrating community**.

This 244-home co-op faced an uncertain future with the looming sale of its land and buildings to a private investor. The Community Land Trust stepped in to buy the property, with a contribution from the City of Burnaby and financing through BC Housing, and now the members of 115 Place are focusing their energies on **celebrating their community**.



With new confidence in their “forever homes,” members were re-energized to **focus on governance and enriching life in their co-op community.**

They are updating their gym equipment and pool area and social engagements have increased significantly. The co-op is a member of both CHF BC and CHF Canada, benefiting from a commercial insurance pool and CHF BC’s many **group buying programs**. Members have attended workshops offered by our education program and used CHF BC’s **meeting chairing services**.





We look forward to continuing to
support housing co-ops in 2024.