

THE ECONOMICS OF BUILDING SOCIETIES

Also by T. J. Gough

FUNDAMENTALS OF MANAGERIAL ECONOMICS
(with S. Hill)

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T. J. Gough

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Preface

The aim of this book is to examine the economic operation of building societies in the United Kingdom. Its theme is largely 'microeconomic', analysing the actions of the societies as firms, but also deals with their wider role in the economy. It is a highly individualised interpretation and brings together published work of the author which has appeared in various journals over recent years. It also presents new features which have not been published previously – notably on interest rates, efficiency and house prices.

Recent years have been characterised by the building societies being subject to increased criticism. This adverse commentary has largely been fragmented and lacking an overall dimension. This book attempts to deal fairly with such criticism, putting the comments in the words of the commentators and providing the societies' response. An overall evaluation is then made in the light of the economic framework within which the societies operate. A sense of perspective is therefore added, and hopefully a degree of objective appraisal.

The aim of the book is that it should be able to be understood by a wide cross-section of people – e.g. those in the building societies themselves, investing and borrowing members, interested persons in related industries or financial institutions, as well as professional economists, financial experts and politicians who will be actively involved in the future of the building societies.

The author offers this as a platform for constructive and objective debate over the future economic role of this major British financial institution. It is much to the credit of the societies, and the Building Societies Association, that such a debate can be conducted with the aid of the mass of reliable information which is readily available.

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T. J. G.