



**co-operative  
party**

# **annual review 2018**





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# About us

**Since it was founded in 1917 as the political party of the co-operative movement, the Co-operative Party has striven to build a society where wealth and power are shared and where the co-operative movement can flourish.**

For over 100 years the Party has worked with co-ops to empower consumers, protect the environment and champion fair trade. We have fought to ensure that there is a legislative and regulatory environment in which co-operatives old and new can grow and thrive. As defined in our rules, the Co-operative Party seeks:

*'...to promote co-operative and mutual forms of economic and social organisation which are based on the principles of mutual ownership and democratic control, and to support political action in pursuance of the Values and Principles of the Co-operative movement in the UK and internationally as defined from time to time by the International Co-operative Alliance.'*

Whether in government or opposition, for a century the Co-operative Party has been a voice for co-operative values and principles in the places where decisions are taken and laws are made. We believe that things work best when ordinary people have a voice, and when services are accountable to the people who use them. Democratic, public ownership of the services and utilities we all rely on. Tackling the housing crisis through co-operative housing. Fans having a say in their sports club. Credit unions as an alternative to rip-off payday lenders. Shops owned by their customers that give back to the community.

## What is a co-operative?

Co-operatives are businesses and organisations owned and run by their members. Whether those members are customers, employees or residents, all have an equal say in the business and receive a fair share of the profits. One billion people across the world are members of co-operatives.

# Chair's report

**In 2018, the Co-operative Party's size, visibility and impact continued to grow.**



We should be proud of our award-winning campaign to tackle the curse of modern slavery. The Co-operative Party's Local Government Charter on Modern Slavery has been adopted by more than 80 councils. Scrutiny from Co-operative MPs and peers has forced the government to strengthen enforcement of the Modern Slavery Act, and we have passionately been making the case for better support for victims.

On issues ranging from fisheries to cash machine closures, Co-operative Party MPs, MSPs and AMs have held governments to account and stood up for co-operatives through amendments, parliamentary questions and other work to influence and change policy and legislation.

The publication of the New Economics Foundation (NEF)'s report, 'Co-operatives Unleashed' provides a route map to achieving a much larger co-operative movement and lays out recommendations to successfully implement the Labour Party's commitment to double the size of the co-operative sector. This independent report, which was commissioned by the Party, has stimulated a debate about growth across the movement.

The 'Democratic Public Ownership' pamphlet gives detailed analysis of alternative models of ownership, outlining solutions for the energy, rail and water sectors.

Our 'Unleashed' Annual Conference showcased the ambition of our movement and Party. Hundreds of delegates came together to shape party policy and voted to give the Party's support for a public vote on the final Brexit deal.

Finally, following fantastic successes in May's local government elections, the Party now has more than 700 elected Co-operative Councillors in Britain, putting co-operation at the heart of local decision making.

The membership of the Party is now as large as it has ever been, and we thank every single member for their support. In difficult and uncertain times, the Co-operative Party's ambition to provide solutions to grow, to elect, to influence and to educate continues.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Gareth Thomas'.

**Gareth Thomas MP**

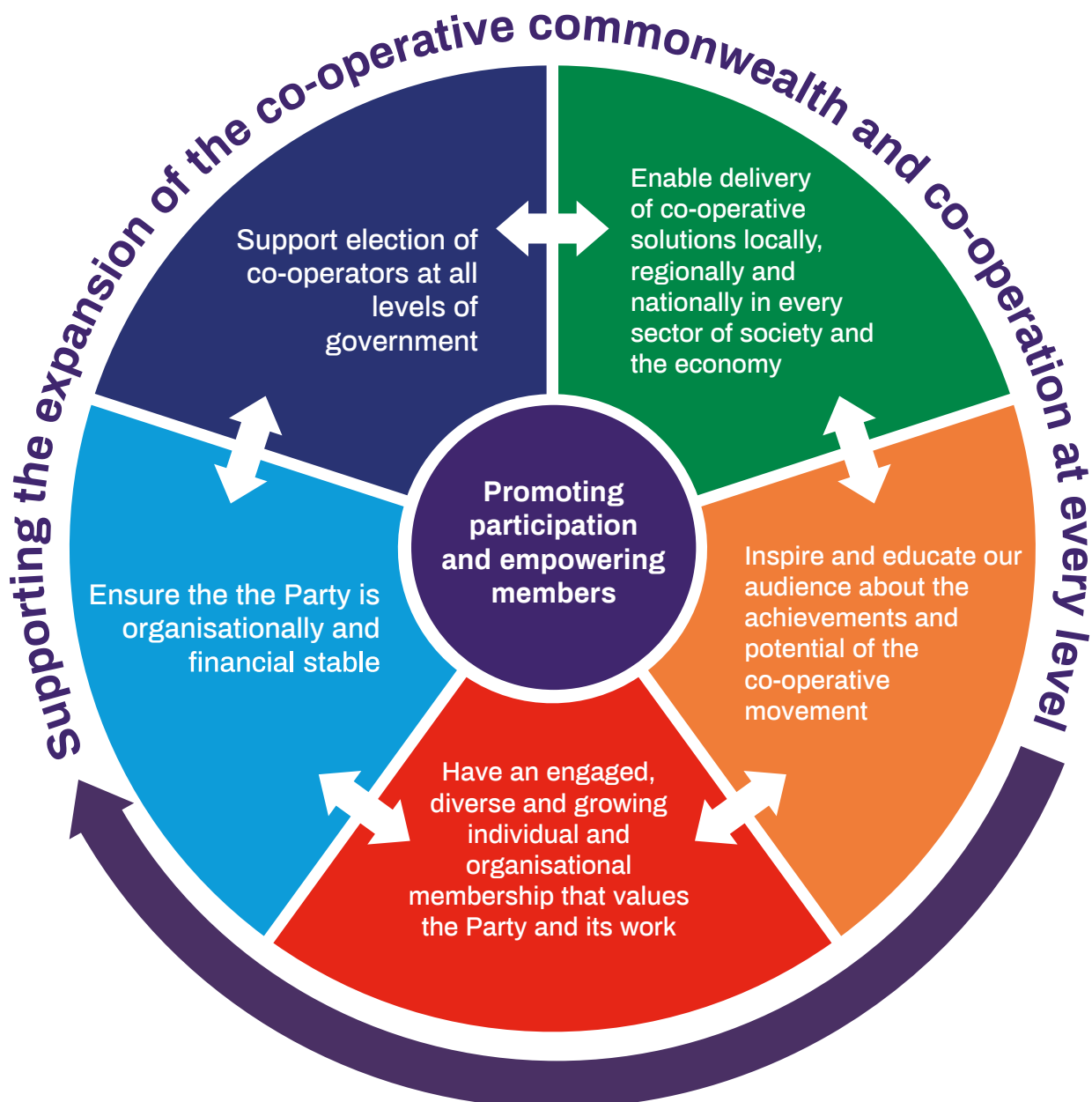
Chair, Co-operative Party National Executive Committee

# Strategic objectives 2016-18

## Promote participation and empower people

Following a comprehensive review of the Party's strategic objectives in 2015, a 'Strategic Plan for the Co-operative Party 2016-2018' was produced to direct the Party's work and priorities to the end of 2018. This is being implemented by the NEC, elected members and staff. Local parties received a guide that offered suggestions on how to support the plan.

In November 2018, the Co-operative Party NEC revised the Party's strategic objectives and these new objectives will guide our strategic plans and work for 2019-22.



# Support the election of co-operators at all levels of government

## In Westminster: 37 MPs



**Tracy Brabin**  
Batley & Spen



**Kate Osamor**  
Edmonton



**Barry Sheerman**  
Huddersfield



**Joanne Platt**  
Leigh



**Lucy Powell**  
Manchester Central



**Preet Gill**  
Birmingham Edgbaston



**Seema Malhotra**  
Feltham & Heston



**Gareth Thomas**  
Harrow West



**Louise Ellman**  
Liverpool Riverside



**Christina Rees**  
Neath



**Lloyd Russell-Moyle**  
Brighton Kemptown



**Paul Swenney**  
Glasgow North East



**Chris Evans**  
Islwyn



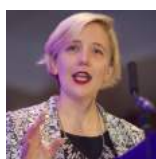
**Anna Turley**  
Redcar



**Jim McMahon**  
Oldham West & Royton



**Stephen Doughty**  
Cardiff South & Penarth



**Stella Creasy**  
Walthamstow



**Alex Sobel**  
Leeds North West



**Stephen Twigg**  
Liverpool West Derby



**Alex Norris**  
Nottingham North



**Luke Pollard**  
Plymouth Sutton & Devonport



**Ged Killen**  
Rutherglen & Haimlton West



**Mark Hendrick**  
Preston



**Meg Hillier**  
Hackney South & Shoreditch



**Rachael Maskell**  
York Central



**Anneliese Dodds**  
Oxford East



**Jonathan Reynolds**  
Stalybridge & Hyde



**Gareth Snell**  
Stoke-on-Trent Central



**Geraint Davies**  
Swansea West



**Adrian Bailey**  
West Bromwich West



**Steve Reed**  
Croydon North



**Jonathan Ashworth**  
Leicester South



**David Drew**  
Stroud



**Gavin Shuker\***  
Luton South



**Chris Leslie\***  
Nottingham East



**Mike Gapes\***  
Ilford South



**Luciana Berger\***  
Liverpool Wavertree

John Woodcock resigned the Labour Whip during 2018 and as a result no longer sits as a Labour & Co-operative MP.

\* Luciana Berger, Mike Gapes, Chris Leslie and Gavin Shuker resigned from the Labour Party in February 2019 and no longer sit as Labour & Co-operative MPs.

## In the House of Lords: 19 Peers



**Lord Bassam of Brighton**



**Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town**



**Lord Hunt of Kings Heath**



**Baroness Royall of Blaisdon**



**\*Lord McFall of Alcluith**



**\*Lord Davies of Coity**



**Lord Monks of Blackley**



**Lord Kennedy of Southwark**



**Baroness Smith of Basildon**



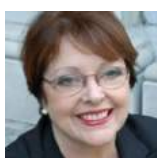
**Lord Tomlinson of Walsall**



**Lord Foulkes of Cumnock**



**\*Lord Moonie**



**Baroness Thornton**



**Lord Knight of Weymouth**



**Lord Touthig**



**\*Lord Graham of Edmonton**



**Lord Patel of Bradford**



**\*Lord Thomas of Macclesfield CBE**



**Lord McAvoy**

\*Lord McFall has taken up a role as Deputy Speaker in the House of Lords and as such no longer holds any party political affiliation.

\*Lord Thomas sadly passed away in 2018. Lord Davies also sadly passed away in March 2019.

\*Lord Moonie resigned from both the Labour Party and Co-operative Party in May 2019.

\*Lord Graham is on a leave of absence.



## In Scotland: 7 MSPs



**Claudia Beamish MSP**  
South of Scotland



**Johann Lamont MSP**  
Glasgow



**James Kelly MSP**  
Glasgow



**Kezia Dugdale MSP**  
Lothian



**Neil Bibby MSP**  
West Scotland



**David Stewart MSP**  
Highlands & Islands



**Rhoda Grant MSP**  
Highlands & Islands

Ken Macintosh MSP was elected as Labour & Co-operative but has subsequently taken the role of Presiding Officer.

## In Wales: 11 AMs



**Mick Antoniw AM**  
Pontypridd



**Rebecca Evans AM**  
Gower



**John Griffiths AM**  
Newport East



**Huw Irranca-Davies AM**  
Ogmore



**Jeremy Miles AM**  
Neath



**Alun Davies AM**  
Blaenau Gwent



**Vaughan Gething AM**  
Cardiff South & Penarth



**Lee Waters AM**  
Llanelli



**Ann Jones AM**  
Vale of Clwyd



**Lynne Neagle AM**  
Torfaen



**Rhianon Passmore AM**  
Islwyn

## Police and Crime Commissioners: 3 PCCs

**Keith Hunter**, Humber

**Jeff Cuthbert**, Gwent

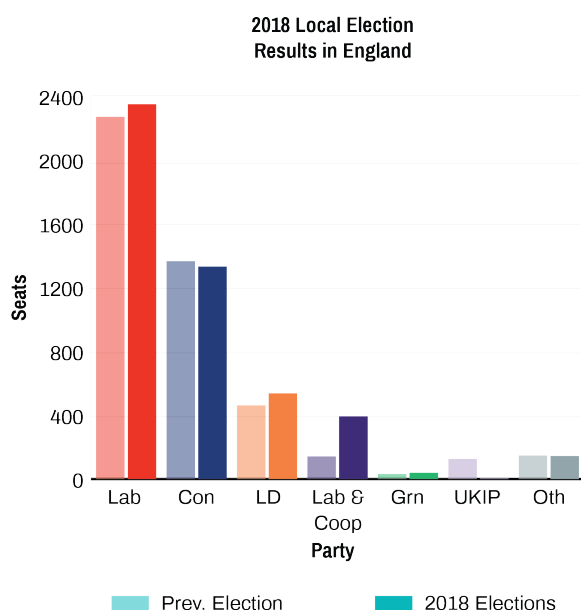
**Rt Hon Alun Michael**, South Wales

# Local government

## Local elections

Building on the success of recent years, The Co-operative Party made increasing the number of Labour & Co-operative Councillors elected in the 2018 local elections in England a priority. 543 Co-operative Party candidates stood in local government elections across the length and breadth of the country with 393 Labour & Co-operative Councillors elected. This was an increase of 270 from the last time these seats were contested.

Labour & Co-operative Councillors are represented on 26 more councils than before the May 2018 Elections. These include: Barking & Dagenham, Basildon, Barnet, Brent, Cannock Chase, Coventry, Enfield, Hackney, Hammersmith & Fulham, Haringey, Hastings, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Lewisham, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Newham, Oxford, Redbridge, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, and Wandsworth.



Party	Seats	Change
Labour	2,350	+79
Conservative	1,332	-33
Liberal Democrat	536	+75
Labour & Co-operative	393	+252
Green	39	+8
UKIP	3	-123
Other	144	-3

Graph and Table showing the results of the 2018 Local Elections in England and the seat change from the previous local elections.

## Directly elected mayors and leaders

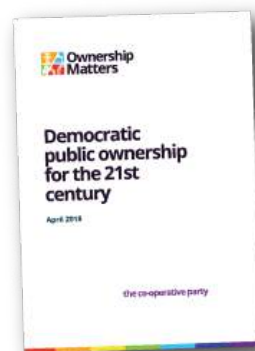
We were delighted that a number of Labour & Co-operative Mayors were elected including Damien Egan (Lewisham); Rohksana Fiaz (Newham); Philip Glanville (Hackney); Dan Jarvis MP (Sheffield City Region) as well as Council Leaders Nick Forbes (Newcastle); Sharon Taylor (Stevenage) and Danny Thorpe (Greenwich).

# Inspire, educate and inform about co-operation

## The democratic ownership alternative to privatisation

In April, the Co-operative Party published 'Democratic Public Ownership for the 21st Century', setting out detailed proposals to bring key national assets (including water, rail and parts of the energy sector) into democratic public ownership. The report calls for:

- Not-for-profit, regional water companies that are owned and run by trusts accountable to employees and consumers.
- Rail services run by not-for-profit train service providers replacing train operating companies, and a new democratic 'Guiding Mind' for the railways to take over from Network Rail.
- A new Energy Security Board, accountable to energy customers, employees and other stakeholders, and charged with securing the nation's energy future; democratic regional distribution grids owned and run by consumer and employee trusts; a new generation of community-owned and co-operative renewable generation and energy suppliers; and a publicly-owned power generation company for large-scale generation.



Retweeted over 150 times on its launch day, the report was downloaded over 2,000 times in the first 36 hours.

## Labour Party Conference, Liverpool

The Party held an extensive programme of events at the Labour Party Conference:

- '*Unfinished Business: the fight to end modern slavery*', with The Co-operative Group.
- '*Democratic Public Ownership for the 21st Century*', with the CWU.
- '*Not Part of the Job: protecting retail workers from abuse, threats and violence*', with USDAW.
- '*People and Purpose: how co-ops and social enterprises are tackling the productivity puzzle*', with social enterprise.

- ‘*Making self-employment work: co-ops, trade unions, trade associations and the self-employed*’, with IPSE.

## Scottish Trade Union Congress, Aviemore

The Scottish Co-operative Party held a stall at the conference, which was visited by many attendees including Paddy Lillis, the incoming General Secretary of USDAW.

## Mary Barbour statue unveiling, Glasgow

The Co-operative Party's Centenary Banner was displayed at the unveiling of the statue of co-operator and activist Mary Barbour in Glasgow on 10 March. Hundreds of people attended this event in Govan on International Women's Day.

## Scottish Labour Conference, Dundee

The Scottish Co-operative Party held a fringe examining ‘*Why Ownership Matters*’, putting the case for more democratic control of the economy and for alternative ownership models, with Johann Lamont MSP, Paul Sweeney MP, Dave Watson from Unison and chaired by Rita Miller.

Members and supporters visited the Scottish Co-operative Party marketplace stall to show support for the ‘*Not Part of the Job*’ campaign and for Daniel Johnson MSP's Bill to protect retail workers from violence, threats and abuse.

## Welsh Labour Conference, Llandudno

The Co-operative Party, the Wales Co-operative Centre and the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network had a joint stall at the event and co-hosted a packed fringe event on *Co-operative housing: Building homes, creating communities, changing lives*. Chaired by Karen Wilkie, speakers included Rebecca Evans, Labour & Co-operative AM, Minister for Housing & Regeneration; Huw Irranca-Davies AM, Minister for Children & Social Care; Tom Chance, Head of Grants & Development, Community Land Trusts Network and Karen Lewis, Director of Communities and Inclusion, Wales Co-operative Centre.

The Co-operative Party also submitted a motion on Modern Slavery, moved by Labour & Co-operative Police & Crime Commissioner Jeff Cuthbert, which received unanimous support.

## Durham Miners Gala

Co-operatives have played a huge role in the lives of mining communities, which is why for a second year the Party was proud to march our Centenary Banner through the streets of Durham at the ‘Big Meeting’.

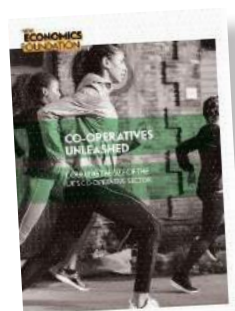
# Deliver co-operative solutions locally, regionally and nationally

## NEF 'Co-operatives Unleashed' report

The Co-operative Party is unashamedly ambitious for the future of the sector. That is why we commissioned the New Economics Foundation (NEF) to undertake an independent report, setting out the steps necessary to build a UK co-operative sector double the size it is today.

Presented at an event in Westminster on 3 July and titled 'Co-operatives Unleashed: Doubling the Size of the Co-operative Economy', NEF's independent report outlines five steps that policymakers should take to achieve this aim, including:

- A new legal framework for co-operatives.
- Finance that serves the co-operative agenda.
- Deepening co-operative capabilities through a Cooperative Development Agency.
- Transforming business ownership.
- Accelerating community wealth building initiatives.



## 'Being the Difference' Local Government Conference, London

The Party's 3rd Annual Local Government Conference took place on Saturday 9th June, at Coin Street Community Centre, London. Attended by over 150 councillors, members and supporters, highlights included panel discussions on:

- Strengthening tenant voice in the private rented housing sector.
- Local procurement for social good in a post-Carillion era.
- Turning the Big Six into the big sixty thousand through locally-owned community energy.
- Leading the way in fighting modern slavery.

We were delighted to welcome keynote addresses from the newly elected Metro Mayor of the Sheffield City Region Dan Jarvis MP; Georgia Gould, Leader of Camden Council and Jim McMahon MP, Shadow Local Government Minister.

# In Westminster

During 2018 our MPs and Peers questioned Ministers, laid amendments to legislation and instigated debates on a wide range of topics. Some highlights include:

## Financial guidance & advice bill

In January, Co-operative Party Chair Gareth Thomas MP called for high-cost lenders such as Bright House to be required to pay towards the cost of providing debt advice for hard-pressed consumers. In the debate he asked the Minister to explain what the new consumer advice body will do to promote credit unions as an affordable alternative.

## Community transport estimates day debate

The Government's announcement that it seeks to change regulation on the community transport sector was met with real shock and has placed many services under threat. In February, Co-operative Party MPs Gareth Thomas and Mark Hendrick called on the government to give not-for-profit community transport the recognition it deserves, and to do more to safeguard such routes.



## Rail franchising debate

An Opposition Day Debate was held on rail franchising and its failure to provide adequate services for passengers or value for money for taxpayers. Labour & Co-operative MP, Adrian Bailey, intervened to stress the strong case for developing models of ownership that involve the users of the railways, those who work on the railways and investors in the railways. He highlighted that forms of co-operative and collective ownership have the potential to operate effectively and efficiently, with enormous public support.

## Making the case for democratic public ownership of water

In June, at Prime Ministers Questions, Gareth Thomas MP reminded the Prime Minister that there's a better way than England's privately-owned water companies, by highlighting Welsh Water's mutual model as an alternative.



## Banking (cash machine charges and financial inclusion) bill

Labour & Co-operative MP Ged Killen MP introduced a 10-minute Rule Bill into Parliament which seeks to protect access to cash and banking services. It asks that cash and physical financial infrastructure remain, protecting those who use these services and preventing them from being



left behind by a market-led drive for online banking, despite the continued need for more traditional services. The Bill seeks to ban ATM charges and to protect access to free cash withdrawals where there remains demand for them. Further the Bill seeks to introduce an enforceable 'access to banking standard' which will ensure communities are not cut off from financial infrastructure when banks close branches and remove physical services.

## The Budget

Co-operative MPs were active in making the case for co-operatives throughout the Budget debate in the autumn. Party Chair Gareth Thomas asked why no mention of co-operative business was made in the budget. Co-operative Party Parliamentary Chair Jim McMahon highlighted the government's failures on fair tax and protecting our high streets, asserting that *"ending austerity means building a co-operative economy with businesses that pay their taxes, share profits with customers and employees and that are run democratically in the interests of the many, not just the few."*



## Co-operative models in childcare

Labour & Co-operative MP and Shadow Minister for Early Years, Tracy Brabin MP, facilitated a Westminster roundtable discussing co-operative models for nurseries and early years childcare.



Tracy visited nurseries across the UK during December, spending time learning about the co-operative alternative to private sector nurseries.

## Support for credit unions

In early December, Gareth Thomas MP pressed the UK Government to allow credit unions to provide low cost credit cards and car loans and to permit credit union investment into housing schemes and energy co-operatives.

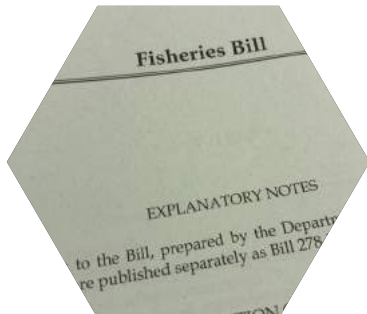


## Brexit legislation

The Co-operative Party is committed to supporting the co-operative movement through the inevitable uncertainties of the Brexit process and beyond. This includes important work seeking to influence Brexit related legislation in Parliament.

In November, David Drew, Labour & Co-operative MP and Shadow Minister, tabled an amendment to the Agriculture Bill that would require the Government to promote agricultural co-operatives. It would open up funding, practical support, advice and guidance, as well as inhibit the passage of laws in future that disadvantage co-operation in farming. The amendment would help the

140,000 farmers who are members and co-owners of more than 400 agricultural co-operatives to do business better and more fairly, enabling more farmers to come together to share the benefits of co-operation.



Luke Pollard, Labour & Co-operative MP for Plymouth Sutton and Devonport, proposed an amendment to the Fisheries Bill. It states that the Secretary of state must promote co-operatives within the fishing industry by offering financial assistance for the creation or development of fishing co-operatives within Landing; Catching and Processing. The Fisheries Bill will establish bodies to provide practical support and guidance for the development of new co-operatives.



While the Government didn't accept either amendment, Labour & Co-operative MPs will continue to push the need for support for co-operatives in the economy going forward.

## In Wales

### Co-operative assembly members in government

The Co-operative Party maintains its largest ever Assembly Group, with eleven members. The majority of these held government posts during 2018.

In the Government reshuffle following the election of Mark Drakeford AM as First Minister in December 2018, Lee Waters was the latest member of the Labour & Co-operative Group to join the government, as Deputy Minister for Economy & Transport. Other members of the Co-operative Group reappointed to the Welsh Government include Rebecca Evans, moving from the Housing & Regeneration portfolio to Minister for Finance; Jeremy Miles, who added Minister for Brexit to his role as Counsel General; and Vaughan Gething, who remained as Minister for Health and Social Services.

Huw Irranca-Davies left his post as Minister for Health and Social Care and was therefore able to take on the role of Chair of the Co-op Assembly Group.





## New first minister

Mark Drakeford AM was elected as Welsh Labour Leader and First Minister in December, on a manifesto with a range of co-operative initiatives including a national energy mutual and support for a new community bank.

Significantly, in his first government appointments, he designated a Minister with specific responsibility for the co-operative economy. The Party looks forward to working with him.



## Cross party group on co-ops and mutuals

The Co-operative Party works closely with the Cross-Party Group in the Assembly, which is supported by the Wales Co-operative Centre and chaired by Party member, Vikki Howells AM. During 2018 the Group looked at the role of co-operatives under the Well Being and Future Generations Act.

## Mutuals alliance

The Party continued to play a central role in the Mutuals Alliance, sponsoring the successful '*Building a Co-operative Country in Wales*', focused on co-operation and young people.

## Welsh Labour Deputy Leadership election

During 2018, Welsh Labour elected Co-operative Party member Carolyn Harris MP as their first Deputy Leader.



## In Scotland

The Scottish Co-operative Party MSPs, MPs and councillors regularly attend Scottish Co-operative party meetings to hear the views of members and to report on their work. Co-operative councillors meet several times during the year to discuss issues of interest including Community Wealth Building, the Charter Against Modern Slavery and Food Justice.



## Providing co-operative leadership

Co-operative MSPs continue to play a key role in relevant Cross-Party Groups in the Scottish Parliament, for example on Fairtrade and Credit Unions. James Kelly MSP continues to be the Convener of the Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Co-operatives. Throughout 2018 the CPG on Co-operatives met several times and initiated research on co-operative housing in Scotland.

## Public transport for the people

There has been a continuing focus on transport in preparation for the long-awaited transport Bill in the Scottish Parliament. Our MSPs have made the case for the People's Scotrail and for the People's Bus. Co-operative Party MSP Neil Bibby has led on much of this work and the Scottish Co-operative Party presented a joint fringe meeting with Unite Scotland at our annual conference in Bristol.



## A co-operative economy for Scotland



In November, Scottish Labour led a debate in the Scottish Parliament on the Scottish economy that contained many Scottish Co-operative Party commitments. There was a strong co-operative strand to the debate in particular from James Kelly MSP, Rhoda Grant MSP and the Scottish Labour leader Richard Leonard MSP.

Co-operative MSPs have challenged the Scottish Government to support the Fair Tax Mark. They have argued that government cannot be credible in opposing austerity and continue to give public funds through contracts to companies that do not pay their way by paying the correct rate of taxation, at the correct time and in the correct jurisdiction. In June, to celebrate Fair Tax Fortnight, the Scottish Co-op Party held an event open to all MSPs promoting the Fair Tax Mark.



Our MSPs have continued to be interested in issues around financial inclusion. Claudia Beamish serves as a Co-Convener of the Cross-Party Group on Credit Unions. Johann Lamont, Kezia Dugdale and Claudia have regularly made the case for supporting credit unions.

## The right to food

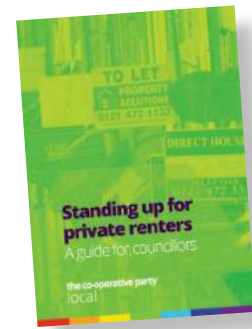
Towards the end of the year the Scottish Government published a consultation Scotland: A Good Food Nation. Rhoda Grant MSP responded immediately making clear our support for food justice and for the right to food being legislated for in Scots Law.

# Local government

## Standing up for private renters

Launched at June's Local Government Conference, 'Standing up for private renters' is our latest guide for councillors. The guide provides practical tools to improve the private rented sector locally, including:

- How to help renters understand their rights and raise concerns with the council
- Practical ideas to engage landlords, including advice on starting a landlords' co-operative to provide a fairer lettings agency for both landlords and tenants
- Advice on enforcement powers and examples of councils using them successfully
- How to set up a selective licensing scheme and case studies showing where licensing has had a positive local impact
- Tackling the high cost of energy and financial exclusion sometimes experienced by private renters



## Local election manifestos

Before the May 2018 elections, the Co-operative Party set out twelve policy ideas for candidates to incorporate into their election manifestos, ranging from housing to modern slavery, credit unions to transport. It was encouraging to see these proposals being adopted across the country, and co-operative ideas were at the forefront of many local election campaigns across England:

- Plymouth Labour Group pledged to double the size of the co-operative sector in the city and Leeds, Lambeth, Waltham Forest, Newcastle and Birmingham all plan to take forward proposals to give private rented tenants a real stake and voice in the housing, tackling the imbalance in this relationship and addressing the issue of landlords who fail to provide decent accommodation.
- Waltham Forest plan to invest in local community energy firms; and Hackney pledged to develop a publicly-owned municipal energy company to offer cheaper, cleaner energy to residents and generate income for the creation of a 'social dividend' from which all residents will benefit.
- Labour & Co-operative candidates pledged to support and create co-operatives, from schools to energy. Councils across the country are taking forward the 'Preston model' of community wealth building.

In December, the Party updated and relaunched the website for prospective councillors wishing to stand in local government elections. This contains campaign ideas, resources and information about being a Co-operative councillor for those hoping to be elected as a councillor for the first time or who are returning. You can find all the information you need at [www.party.coop/local](http://www.party.coop/local).

## Co-operative Commission for Manchester

In August, Andy Burnham, Labour & Co-op Mayor of Greater Manchester, announced the launch of a Co-operative Commission to ensure Manchester is 'the most co-operative' region of UK.

The Commission will work with the region's co-operative sector and a wider group of stakeholders to consider how Greater Manchester can support existing co-operatives in the region, create conditions that enable them to grow, and identify opportunities for the expansion of co-operative enterprise into new sectors of the region's economy.



# To be valued by our members, as indispensable

## Growing membership and getting people involved

The Party continued to grow and develop in the past year:

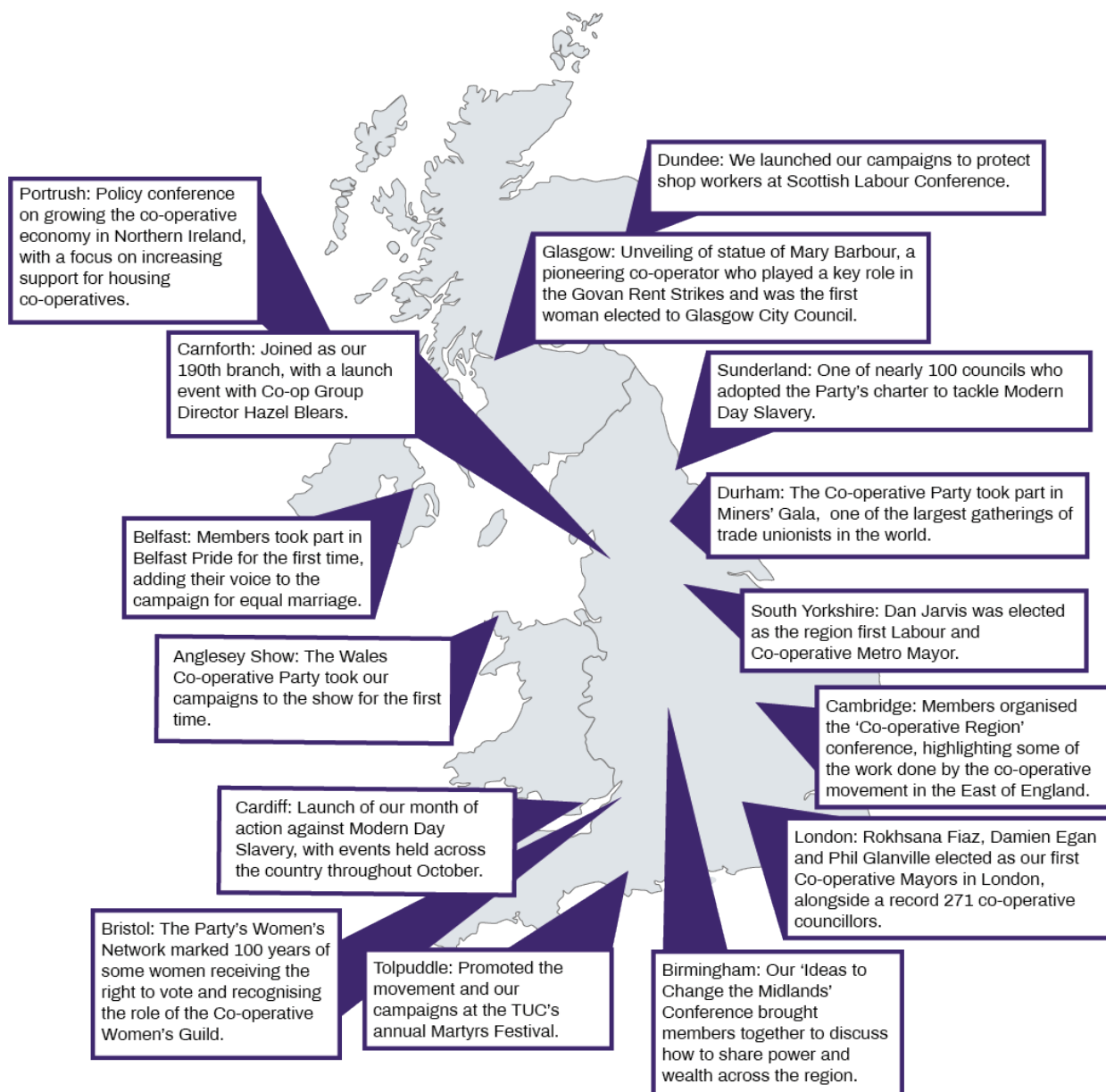
- Individual membership reached another modern-era high in 2018. Across the country, Party officers have been welcoming new members into their branches.
- Nationally the Party's online officer hub has been updated and improved. It is continuously revised to ensure it provides the advice and support that officers need.
- Our relationship with Regional Labour parties has been strengthened with delegates from the Co-operative Party being represented on every Labour Regional Board. Every Labour Party national and regional conference had a Co-operative Party presence.
- Our branches and Party Councils have supported our campaign activity in particular on Modern Day Slavery.
- Long-standing officers in several branches stood down during the year. We thank them for their hard work over many years. Support was provided to assist new officers to achieve a smooth succession.
- Several mergers of branches took place, most notably the four branches in the city of Leicester merged into one branch better able to support co-operative activity in the city and beyond.





## Local highlights

Local branches organised a diverse range of activities, including the equivalent of one local Co-op Party meeting every day across the UK in 2018. Here are some of the highlights:



In London, all 28 branches have been served by our London Development Officer Jane Cameron, who has supported them to hold meetings, and events to support our candidates in local elections.

## **“Ideas to change ... your region”**

A series of regional conferences were held for Co-operative Party members and supporters to provide an opportunity for attendees to discuss the Party policy proposals, hear from representatives from local co-operatives and have a chance to network.

### **... the North West**

Held in Liverpool on Saturday 24th February, speakers included four of our North West MPs Luciana Berger, Louise Ellman, Jo Platt and Stephen Twigg and we also heard from Cllr Matt Brown (Preston Council), Britta Werner (Unicorn Co-operative), Gareth Nash (Co-operative & Mutual Solutions), Kevin Wan (North West Housing Services) and Cllr Jim King (Salford Credit Union).

### **... the East Midlands**

Held in Arnold, Nottingham on Saturday 3rd June, speakers included Chris Leslie MP, Rory Palmer MEP, Vernon Coaker MP, Dr. Heather Peto, Cllr Emma Hoddinott (Local Government Officer), Cllr Brian Parbutt (Nottingham City Transport Bus Company), Tanya Noon (Director Central England Society & tCG NMC) and Hugh Ellis (Town and Country Planning Association).

### **... the South East**

Held in Brighton on Saturday 23rd June, speakers included Baroness Smith of Basildon (Shadow Leader of House of Lords), The Rt Hon. Lord Bassam of Brighton, Lloyd Russell Moyle MP, Cllr Tom Hayes (Oxford City Council), Cllr Julie Cattell (Brighton & Hove Council), Nick Bragger (Surrey Community Action), Warren Carter (The Bevy pub), Martin Holmes (Bunker Self-Build Housing Co-operative), Adrienne Lowe (tCG Senate & Community Space, The Co-op Shoreham) and Jennifer Tankard (Responsible Finance).

### **... the West Midlands**

Held in the Priory Rooms Birmingham on 30th June, speakers included Anna Birley (Co-op Party Policy Officer), Jo White (Co-operative Futures Development Agency), Nicola Huckerby (Co-operative Councils Innovation Network), Nick Matthews (Chair Co-ops UK and Director Heart of England Co-operative), Gareth Snell MP Stoke Central, Chris Bain (Co-op Party NEC) and Jeevan Jones.

## **Welcoming a new organisational member**

The Co-operative Party was delighted to welcome Usdaw into membership in 2018. As the recognised trade union for large parts of the co-operative sector, they decided to take the step to formalise a long-standing and positive relationship with the Party into membership. They become the second trade union that affiliates to the Co-operative Party.

# Anti-semitism

At their June meeting, the NEC discussed the Party's approach to anti-Semitism and they expressed grave concerns about the utterly unacceptable nature of the abuse and harassment that Jewish MPs including members of the Co-operative Parliamentary Group have suffered. They were united in their condemnation of this form of behaviour.

A number of actions were agreed to ensure that there is no place for anti-Semitism in the Co-operative Party, including adopting and disseminating the IHRA definition of anti-semitism.

## Networks

The Co-operative Party held a number of Women's Network events throughout the year led by volunteer organiser Ria Bernard.

The LGBT network organised and supported members to take part in Pride events across the country including London, Bristol Pride, Brighton Trans Pride, Northern Pride, Newcastle, Liverpool, Belfast, Brighton Pride, Leeds Pride, Plymouth Pride and Pride Cymru. The network also held a conference in November to plan activities for 2019.

In November our youth members met in Sheffield for a 'new generation of co-operators' weekend.

Forums for disabled members and BAME members were held at Annual Conference. The BAME network elected an interim convenor with a view to building a programme of activity in 2019.

Co-ordinating Party networks take a huge amount of time and effort and we thank our volunteer organisers for their commitment to taking these forward.





# The Pioneer

The Party produced two editions of the Party's member magazine, The Pioneer.

## Northern Ireland

The General Secretary visited Belfast, meeting with Co-operative Party members, visiting local co-operatives and presenting at a seminar facilitated by Co-op Alternatives NI.



Co-operative Party representatives attended the annual joint meeting at Labour Party Conference to discuss issues relating to Northern Ireland. The Party continues to engage with the Labour Party review on electoral representation, following a decision by the Co-operative Party NEC to support the long-standing ambition of members in Northern Ireland.

## Policy consultation process

The Co-operative Party's policy process is our members' opportunity to have a say on the Party's position on key issues. In January, the Party published two consultation papers that members considered, debated and discussed, feeding back their comments to the NEC. Two policy documents were drafted for discussion and endorsement at Annual Conference.



## Britain leaving the European Union:

Annual Conference voted to adopt the '*Britain's Relationship with the European Union*' document as the agreed policy of the Co-operative Party. The Party will do all it can to support the co-operative movement during the months and years ahead as Britain leaves the EU, working with members, Co-ops UK and our subscribing societies. Conference also made it clear that:

- We are a proudly internationalist party, part of a global movement
- We are concerned about the potential negative impact of Brexit on the co-operative movement
- We believe the best route forward would be for Government to seek continued access to the Single Market and Customs Union
- 'No deal' would be damaging and dangerous
- We believe that the final decision should be put into the hands of the people with a public vote on the final Brexit deal.

## An economy where wealth and power are shared:

Annual Conference voted to adopt the '*Economy where Wealth and Power are Shared*' document as the agreed policy of the Co-operative Party.

The Co-operative Party believes that the UK needs a more inclusive economy that distributes rewards more fairly, successfully seizes new opportunities and effectively supports communities through the inevitable changes ahead. The Party is clear that the only way to build this is to put co-operation at its heart. This means a larger co-operative sector, but it also demands the ‘hard-wiring’ of co-operative values into the DNA of the wider economy.

Conference also endorsed the following statement:

*A universal basic income is already being trialled in Scottish cities like Glasgow as a way to strengthen the social safety net, alleviate inequality and provide security in the context of changing workplaces and an uncertain economic future. The Government in Westminster should support and fund further universal basic income pilots across the UK with a view to exploring its wider application.*

## Supporting Co-operative Campaigning

### Campaign against modern slavery

At the end of March the Co-operative Party launched our Modern Slavery Charter at Islington Town Hall, with the support from of the Rt.Hon. Jeremy Corbyn MP. Councils across the UK were asked to pledge to a range of actions to ensure their supply chains are not contributing to modern slavery.

In 2018, 80 Councils signed the Charter, including several non-Labour led councils signing the charter or passing a motion embedding the Charter’s key points into their procurement policy.

This demonstrates the Party’s ability to provide and inspire cross-Party leadership on this issue.

The Party has received a huge amount of positive media exposure about the Charter and it generated activity at every level of Government from town councils upwards including at the Welsh Assembly, Scottish Parliament, Westminster and the European Parliament.

Over 13 million people now live in an area where the Charter applies. The largest council is Surrey County Council with over 1 million residents. The smallest is Patchway Town Council, in Gloucestershire which serves just over 4,000 residents.

Kevin Hyland OBE, the UK’s Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, wrote to the initial 6 Council signatories of the Charter commending their “*real leadership action which goes far beyond statutory requirements*” adding that he was “*pleased to see that it provides meaningful and*



*practicable commitments*” and that he hoped to see many other councils following their example.

As a consequence of the campaign, the Party was delighted to be presented with the ‘Del Singh Memorial Award’ at Labour Party Conference which recognises ‘Best Practice across the Labour Movement’.

## Month of action

From 13 September to 18 October (Anti-Slavery Day), the Co-operative Party held a ‘Month of Action’ highlighting the campaign against modern slavery. During the month we encouraged members to write letters to the press to raise awareness locally, to hold street stalls and present model motions to local Labour branches and Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs). One of our local branches even held a film night.

On 9 October, Co-operative MPs led a debate in Parliament on Modern Slavery with Gareth Snell MP opening the debate and Luciana Berger, Labour & Co-operative MP for Liverpool Wavertree speaking about the Charter.

In Wales, Co-operative MPs, AMs, Police & Crime Commissioners and council leaders joined an event to mark their support for the Party’s campaign.

### In Westminster

The Party worked with the Co-operative Group, non-Government Organisations and other partners to support Lord McColl’s Private Members Bill. Co-operative Peer, Lord Kennedy of Southwark, had a letter published in the Evening Standard supporting the bill.

The Permanent Secretary of the Home Office confirmed to Labour & Co-operative MP Gareth Snell, following his determined scrutiny at the Public Affairs Committee, that they will quantify and monitor business compliance with their statements on modern slavery, and will make public the list. This is a real U-turn and we will hope to be a real turning point in the fight against modern slavery.



The following amendment, signed by Labour and Co-operative MPs, was debated at the Report and Third Reading stage of the Trade Bill in the Lords : *“Assessment of slavery or servitude: The Secretary of State shall, before concluding negotiations relating to an international trade agreement, make an assessment of the steps by the other signatory to the agreement (or each other signatory) to prevent and punish activity which, if undertaken in England and Wales, would constitute an offence under section 1 of the Modern Slavery act 2015 (slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour).”*

As the McColl Bill passed its third reading, a timely Public Accounts Committee report, chaired by Labour & Co-operative MP Meg Hillier, was published that highlights *“potential victims are waiting*

*far too long for a decision on whether they will be treated as a victim of modern slavery, causing further distress and anxiety to vulnerable people.”* Co-operative MPs are looking forward to leading a cross-Party effort to ensure the McColl Bill passes successfully through the remaining Parliamentary stages and makes it on to the statute book.

## In Scotland



As part of the party's work on the issue around Modern Slavery a number of Scottish Councils signed up to a Scottish version of the Charter Against Modern Slavery which reflected Scottish legislation. Scottish councils signed up to the Charter across political boundaries and Scottish Co-operative Party councillors were instrumental in getting a wide variety of councils to support the charter.

Kezia Dugdale tabled two motions in the Scottish Parliament on our work around Modern Slavery. One praised the work of the Co-operative Group in providing employment for people who have been trafficked and secondly a motion that congratulated the City of Edinburgh Council on being the first council to sign up to the charter in Scotland. During our month of action against Modern Slavery Johann Lamont MSP tabled a motion on the month of action and the majority of Scottish Labour MSPs including the leader Richard Leonard indicated their support for our work.

## Not part of the job campaign

The Party is proud to stand in solidarity with shop workers, and their union Usdaw, to make the case for a strengthening in the law to protect shop workers from a rising tide of threats and violence. In 2018, this work included:

- Co-operative MP Alex Norris introducing a private members bill increasing the penalties for those who abuse shop workers; and associated communications activity around it including a blog for the Co-op and coverage in the Mirror.
- Commissioning new polling to demonstrate public support for action and the principle that government owes a duty of care to shopworkers when they are enforcing the law on all our behalf. The poll achieved national media coverage.
- Supporting David Hanson MP's amendment to the Offensive Weapons Bill in Westminster.
- Supporting Daniel Johnson MSP's Protection of Workers Bill in the Scottish Parliament, working with Scotmid.
- Using our social media channels to raise awareness and build support for change.
- A third of Co-operative MPs visited Co-op stores during Retail





Workers Week and showed support via their own social media channels.

- Inviting Roger Grosvenor, joint Chief Executive of East of England Co-operative to brief Co-operative Parliamentarians on crime and security issues affecting co-op retailers.

## Fairtrade Fortnight

The Party ran a campaign and petition for Fairtrade Fortnight, Don't Make the World's Poor Pay for Brexit, focussing on ensuring that future trade deals struck by the UK government do not undermine Fairtrade or the economies of countries in the global south. We had excellent feedback on the campaign from the trade justice sector and thousands of people signed the petition.



Co-operative MP Geraint Davies secured a short debate marking Fairtrade Fortnight in Parliament's Westminster Hall. Geraint won a commitment by the Minister of State for DFID, Harriet Baldwin MP, that future UK wide trade deals will not widen global inequality and ensure a fair deal for the world's poorest nations.



Labour & Co-operative MPs Adrian Bailey and Preet Gill took part in a debate discussing the future of Fairtrade and Traidcraft. Labour & Co-operative MPs emphasised the continuous growth of the Fairtrade movement and the importance of co-operatives in Fairtrade.

## Principle 6 – co-operation amongst co-operatives

The Co-operative Party has held stalls at AGMs of Midcounties and East of England Co-operative Societies and at Central England member meetings. This provided us with the chance to engage with society members, to talk about the work of the Party and hear their ideas.



Staff and Party members also attended the Co-operative Group AGM in Manchester, encouraging those eligible to vote to say 'yes' to the motion regarding political subscription. The continued positive support by the Group Board and National Members Council is welcome.

Party officers attended and exhibited at the Ways Forward Conference, the National Retail Conference and Co-operatives UK Congress.

# Co-operative Party Annual Conference

‘Unleashed’ at the Mercure Grand Hotel, Bristol

The 2018 Annual Conference focused on our ambition to double the size of the co-operative sector, putting democratic ownership at the heart of our vision of an economy where wealth and power are shared. It was a weekend of inspiring stories, practical ideas and skills for members to help begin transforming our communities to build a fairer, stronger Britain.

Speakers included:



**Rebecca Long Bailey MP**  
Shadow Secretary of State for Business,  
Energy and Industrial Strategy



**Carolyn Harris MP**  
Deputy Leader of Welsh Labour



**Vaughan Gething AM**  
Cabinet Minister for Health and Social  
Services, Welsh Government



**Paddy Lillis**  
General Secretary, USDAW



**Marvin Rees,**  
Mayor of Bristol



**Cllr Asher Craig,**  
Deputy Mayor of Bristol

Key votes by delegates included supporting a referendum on whether the UK should leave the EU on the final terms agreed between the Government and the EU; support for continued access to the UK Single Market and Customs Union; and support for seeking extension to Article 50 if no agreement was reached with the EU by 29 March 2019, rejecting the Government’s argument that no deal is better than a bad deal.

## Fringe events

Once again in 2018 we had huge support from our partner organisations, who supported a comprehensive series of fringe discussions on:

- Brexit: making the case for a final say (with Best for Britain)
- Securing our Schools: a co-operative future (with NASUWT)
- People and purpose: how co-ops and social enterprise are tackling the productivity puzzle (with Social Enterprise UK)
- Hold the People's Bus (with the Scottish Co-op Party and UNITE Scotland)
- Promoting community-led housing: a key role for local authorities (with Co-operative Councils Innovation Network/CCIN)
- A responsible energy market: price caps, community energy and smart meters (with Co-op Energy)
- Democratic public ownership for the 21st Century (with Communication Workers Union)
- Going for co-operatives' growth (with National Federation of Progressive Co-operators)



## Marketplace

Thanks to the following organisations for their support in delivering an extensive range of stalls representing the UK's co-operative, fair trade, trade union and charity sectors:

- |                                      |                                    |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Bamboo Coffee                      | • Co-ops UK                        |
| • Bristol Credit Union               | • Dying to Work (GMB)              |
| • Bristol Co-operative Party         | • Labour Action for Peace          |
| • Bristol Co-operative Gym           | • Make Votes Matter                |
| • CCIN                               | • Merthyr Valleys Homes            |
| • Chinese for Labour                 | • The Phone Co-op                  |
| • Co-op Energy                       | • Stir to Action Radical Routes    |
| • Co-operative Insurance             | • Transform Drug Policy Foundation |
| • Co-operative and Community Finance | • The Wales Co-op Centre           |



# Financially sustainable: funding and membership

**During 2018 the Party continued to make good progress in our long term goal of diversifying our income and building our sustainability.**

In 2018, income from individual members was £280,000 up from £175,000 in 2014.

Over recent years, this increase in individual membership income is helping to meet our aim to reduce our dependence on subscribing societies.

The Party **outperformed all income targets** set at the start of the year including:

- Membership
- Events income
- Income from organisational members

This sustained income growth has enabled the Party to invest additional resources in our members' priorities including additional campaigning capacity, allowed us to build on our existing work in local government and organise more events and conferences for members to participate in - such as training sessions for local government representatives.



## Membership

As at December 2018, members of the Co-operative Party included 11,868 individual members and fifteen societies and affiliates:

### Subscribing Societies

Central England Co-operative	East of England Co-operative
Co-operative and Mutual Solutions	Enabled Works
Community Union	The Midcounties Co-operative
Glenhall Housing	Revolver Co-operative



Grafton Housing Co-operative Ltd	Scottish Midland Co-operative
The Co-operative Group	United Cabbies Group
Co-operative Press	USDAW
Co-operatives UK	

Note: Chelmsford Star Co-operative did not pay a national subscription in 2018 but continued to support the local Co-operative Party.

## Fundraising clubs

We are very grateful for the continued generosity of our members in particular those who pay more than the standard membership fee in order to provide some extra support for Party activity.

As well as growing total membership, the Party has been successful in increasing the number of individuals who are making additional donations. The key element of this has been the 100 Club and 1917 Club which were launched to mark our centenary in 2017. We have since introduced a voluntary higher rate of membership fee for members who are able to make an additional contribution to the Party. The generosity of members in paying these rates helped us grow additional donations by 25% to £25,000.

We are incredibly grateful to all our members for their continued support, without which the Party could not operate.

## Subscribing co-operative societies

Our subscribing societies continue to be an absolutely critical source of support for the Party's activities – locally and nationally. We take every opportunity to engage with members of our subscribing societies to ensure they understand the work the Party is doing and the value that we bring to the whole co-operative movement.



We were delighted that once again votes on the Party's subscription passed with substantial majorities at the AGMs of the Co-operative Group, the Midcounties Co-operative and the East of England Co-operative. All of the subscribing societies sent delegations to the Co-operative Party conference.

# Operations & governance

## National Executive Committee (NEC)

Elections to the Co-operative Party National Executive Committee take place every three years. The current NEC was elected in 2017 with a one member one vote ballot for the eleven regional and national places. They will serve until 2020. Two seats are also elected by the Co-operative Group and two more from the remaining societies and affiliates. There is one Youth representative and two representatives from the Co-operative Parliamentary Group with an additional observer seat to ensure both the Commons and the Lords are represented.

At the June AGM of the NEC, Gareth Thomas MP and Chris Herries were elected as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. The NEC held meetings throughout the year.

Nation/Region	Name	Nation/Region	Name
<b>East</b>	Chris Herries	<b>Youth</b>	Nathan Burns
<b>East Midlands</b>	Jamie McMahon	<b>Northern Ireland (observer)</b>	Tony McMullan
<b>London</b>	Gareth Thomas MP	<b>Societies and affiliates</b>	Graeme Watkins
<b>North East &amp; Cumbria</b>	Janine Docherty		Jean Nunn-Price MBE
<b>North West</b>	Gary Booth	<b>The Co-operative Group</b>	John Hughes
<b>Scotland &amp; N. Ireland</b>	Jim Lee		Vacancy
<b>South East</b>	Andrew Pakes	<b>Westminster Parliamentary Group</b>	Gavin Shaker MP (until June 2018)
<b>South West</b>	Sue Milestone		Jim McMahon MP (from June 2018)
<b>West Midlands</b>	Chris Bain		Anna Turley MP
<b>Wales</b>	Rt. Hon Alun Michael		Lord Kennedy of Southwark
<b>Yorks &amp; Humber</b>	Cheryl Barrott		

## Youth Committee

The Youth Committee was elected for 2-year period in August 2017:

### 2017 – August 2019 (current)

Nathan Burns (NEC Rep)	Jeevan Jones (West Midlands)
Conal Browne (Northern Ireland)	David McKenzie (South East)
Helen Brown (East Midlands)	Eva Murray (Scotland)
Gemma Cobby (Yorks & Humber)	Thomas Renhard (South West)
James Cleverley (Wales)	Stephen Stanners (North East & North Cumbria)
Danny Filler (London)	

# Party staff

The Party now employs 13 members of staff in both full and part-time roles. We were pleased to welcome a new member of staff in 2018 – Campaigns Officer, James Butler. Jane Cameron also joined the team as London Development Officer (part-time) for the London Party Council. Jane's success in this role meant that we were able to extend her contract so she now supports the South East region (Home Counties). Caitlyn Prowle is also working for the party as Youth Organiser.

<b>General Secretary</b>	Claire McCarthy
<b>Deputy General Secretary</b>	Karen Wilkie
<b>National Political and Policy Manager</b>	Joe Fortune
<b>Digital and Communications Officer</b>	Ben West
<b>Political Officer (Scotland) - part time</b>	Richard McCready
<b>Membership Manager</b>	Shane Brogan
<b>Party Support and Principle Six Officer – part time</b>	John Boyle
<b>Local Government Officer – part time</b>	Emma Hoddinott
<b>Policy Officer – part time</b>	Anna Birley
<b>Campaigns Officer</b>	James Butler
<b>Finance and Office Manager</b>	Dorota Kseba
<b>Events Co-ordinator &amp; Executive Assistant – part time</b>	Issy Oozeerally
<b>Membership Assistant – part time</b>	Joel Northcott

## Fair tax mark

In 2018, the Party was again awarded the Fair Tax Mark and continued to be the only political party in the country to do so.

## #dyingtowork

The Co-operative Party signed up to the GMB's #DyingtoWork Charter, which protects the rights of our staff at work should they face a terminal illness. It seeks greater security to ensure they cannot be dismissed as a result of their condition.

## Compliance

As both a Political Party and a registered Co-operative Society, the Party must comply with the Political Parties, Registration and Referendums Act 2000 and the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, reporting to both the Electoral Commission and the Financial Conduct Authority.

The Party also maintained its accreditation as a Living Wage Employer in 2018.



**co-operative  
party**

📍 Unit 13, 83 Crampton Street, London, SE17 3BQ

📞 020 7367 4150

✉️ [mail@party.coop](mailto:mail@party.coop)

🏠 [party.coop](http://party.coop)

🐦 [@CoopParty](https://twitter.com/CoopParty)

Promoted by Joe Fortune on behalf of the Co-operative Party, both at Unit 13, 83 Crampton Street, London, SE17 3BQ.

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