

THE



**co-operative
party**

Members' Magazine Spring/Summer 2021

PIONEER

[LOCAL LEADERSHIP LOCAL ACTION]



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new co-operative
foundations

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'Times of crisis require us to be imaginative, far-sighted and driven from the bottom-up.'

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Letter from the General Secretary



Welcome to your latest edition of The Pioneer

I am delighted to be able to kick off this edition of 'The Pioneer' and start with a heartfelt thank you to our supporters, members, activists, officers, elected representatives, and staff team. All of whom continue to show the Party and movement amazing dedication and support.

While we hope for better days ahead, there is little doubt that there will be further times to endure. Both collectively and individually we continue to face uncertainty and challenge. I am proud that our movement has the values which provide the template for a better future. It is this better future that this edition focusses on.

The ideas and zeal within this edition captures some of the best of the possible future politics and demonstrates co-operative local action, local leadership. The Rt Hon Gordon Brown writes for us

about the way in which he believes greater accountability and quality political decision making can be achieved in page 10. From the campaign trail we catch up with new West Yorkshire Mayoral Candidate Tracy Brabin MP, (pg 8), Sarah Murphy Co-op MS candidate and London GLA Candidate Sem Moema (pg 16). We have a focus on the future with pieces about our Party's support for Votes at 16 (pg 23) and news from around the country.

I hope you enjoy it and I hope our collective values and principles continue to inspire us to co-operate and be a positive force in politics, community and at home.

Joe Fortune

Joe Fortune, General Secretary

THE PIONEER

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2021 ELECTIONS: HOW WE'RE PREPARING FOR CO-OPERATION



Emma Hoddinott
Local Government Officer,
Co-operative Party

As lockdown eased this summer, the hoped-for economic uptick did not happen. In August, Britain officially entered its deepest recession since records began. While the pandemic has had global economic impacts, the UK has fared particularly badly. The worst excess death rate in Europe coupled with the worst recession in Europe and largest drop in GDP of all G7 countries is a triple tragedy.

Our Co-operative Party representatives in local government have made our movement proud. When the first restrictions came into place in March last year, it was co-operators that used our principles of self-help and solidarity to step in where the UK government was failing to serve our communities. We got to know our neighbours, organised foodbanks, made welfare calls, fundraised for home schooling packs, care kits and laptops and showed leadership in the community co-

operation we helped facilitate.

We must not lose this spirit of togetherness and community co-operation; nor can we return to crippling cuts and further erosion of vital public services. So in the forthcoming elections we must get co-operators elected, so they can take forward our ideas and bring about change.

This year we launched the Co-operative Candidate Development Programme, alongside new NEC guidelines to make it simpler for our members to gain the nomination to stand for the Co-operative Party. Members can join the programme through an online form, and it



provides the route through to being nominated as well as associated training and support. In just four months we have held over 15 different training sessions as well as virtual coffee mornings attended by over 150 candidates.

The programme is also open to those who are just interested in finding out more about being a candidate, and we are running taster sessions with our member networks to ensure our candidates reflect the diversity of our movement.

Already we have 100s of Labour and Co-operative candidates standing for parish, district, county, unitary and metropolitan councils. They will join our record team of candidates for the Senedd, Scottish Parliament, London Assembly and Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales. There are also five mayoral candidates including Tracy Brabin in West Yorkshire, Andy Burnham in Greater Manchester, Liam Byrne in West Midlands, Jesse Joe Jacobs in Tees Valley and Nik Johnson in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

This is our opportunity to take our ideas forward. Our campaign for Food Justice has highlighted the existing inequalities that have come to the fore during the

pandemic. We have campaigned on free school meals, clearer rules for foodbanks and promoted Healthy Start Vouchers. With our Food Justice Finder (<https://foodjusticefinder.com>) people have been able to find out what their local council has been doing to act, and we have already seen the number of known food champions in councils nearly double.

Mayoral and Parliamentary candidates will be able to shape what the economic recovery looks like, using our principles of sharing power and wealth and ensuring all parts of the UK are getting a fair deal.

Now is our chance to bring about change, as for the majority of the country this year, co-operation will be on the ballot paper. ●

POLICING FOR THE PEOPLE



Lola Oyewusi

Labour & Co-operative candidate for Kent Police and Crime Commissioner

I am proud to be the first black female to be selected as a Labour and Co-operative police and crime commissioner candidate.

Kent has been my home for the past twenty years and I saw what policing was like back then. In my own little village, we had our own police station and we knew who our police officer was. People felt more secure with a visible local policing system that worked for them. Unfortunately, that is not the case twenty years down the line, we have seen drastic cuts in policing. Kent is short of five hundred police officers, and our little village police station has been sold off. People feel that safety in their community is now bottom of the agenda.

My goal as Police and Crime Commissioner is to go back to basics and bring back that original idea of community policing and social responsibility. Policing

that involved the community, where the people they are serving have a say. And that is why I am standing for the Co-operative Party too, when I look at co-operative values, they are close to my values.

I have a wealth of community experience to bring to the role, as I am a community activist. I run a faith community group and run a community food project that has given out around 5000 food parcels. I also work full time for a housing association, am a school governor, a Parish Councillor, Vice-Chair of Medway Trades Council and an

ordained minister. I have a heart for the people, for the community, that's what I want to bring to this role.

Starting off a campaign in the pandemic has not been easy, but I have a campaign team that helps get my message out. We have been very pro-active on social media, as it is key, alongside regular phone-banking, where we are using the Labour Party's tool Dialogue.

I even managed to launch my campaign during lockdown, which was successful with video endorsements from people like David Lammy, local Labour leaders and senior figures from UNISON too.

The Co-operative Party means a lot to me, it has

been actively campaigning during the pandemic, such as the recent Scottish bill for protection of retail workers.

My priority is to get more resources into the police, and make sure rural and coastal communities are engaged. I will be the PCC on the ground, that people would know, making sure all local areas and community groups are engaged. Policing powered by the people and for the people. ●

MY CO-OPERATIVE VISION FOR WEST YORKSHIRE



Tracy Brabin MP

Labour & Co-operative candidate for
West Midlands Metro Mayor

The Government's response to the pandemic has fallen woefully short, with inadequate support across our economy leaving gaping holes through which too many people have fallen due to no fault of their own.

Some three million people have gone without financial support from the start of the Covid-19 crisis, for instance. Food insecurity and hunger have grown as families struggle to make ends meet. And many parents have been expected to make do with scandalous standards of free school meals.

As the Labour and Co-operative MP for Batley and Spen, I've been working hard to address these shortfalls for people in my community and others across the country. And as the proud Labour and Co-operative candidate for West Yorkshire Mayor, it's the co-operative movement that I'll be looking

to for the solutions to these challenges and the many others we now face.

Because whilst it won't be easy, the devolved powers the West Yorkshire Mayor will take on in investment, housing, transport and other areas will give us the opportunity to put co-operative ideas and values at the very core of how we rebuild.

There are policies that we can adopt in the short term to make an immediate difference. We have seen from our local councils signing up to the Co-operative Party's Charter Against Modern

Slavery how we can crack down on those profiting from human trafficking, and we can promote Credit Union membership to provide affordable and accessible banking for all.

And there is so much we can do in the longer term, too. We have seen in Manchester and its Co-operative Commission, for example, how we can best hardwire co-operation into our local economy, to ensure a more just and equitable system that works for us all – a plan we can replicate as we forge a co-operative path in West Yorkshire.

I want to make West Yorkshire a co-operative enterprise friendly zone, where co-operative initiatives in housing, nurseries, community transport and other areas have the financial support they need to flourish with our communities at their heart.

And in our co-operative values of equality, democracy, community, and sharing power and wealth more fairly, we have the blueprint not just for what we'll do in West Yorkshire, but how we'll do it.

Because simply returning to the way things were would be a missed opportunity. It is only by creating the conditions for co-operation to thrive in West Yorkshire and in communities right across the country that we give ourselves the best possible chance of owning the future we now look to build. ●



BUILDING NEW SHARED FOUNDATIONS



Rt Hon Gordon Brown
Former Prime Minister

In a crisis the country needs to come together. The desire to do so was shown by the way in every region and nation people applauded the NHS and its dedicated staff every Thursday. But around the country people are fed up, feel they have not been listened to or consulted when decisions about lockdowns, tiers, quarantines, and furloughs have been made. Too often we have seen local lockdowns imposed without local consultation, communities discovering their Christmas has been cancelled

through leaks to the press, letters from the Welsh First Minister left unanswered and regional tiers announced without even the courtesy of a phone call in advance to regional leaders.

And the pandemic – and now the recession – have brutally exposed many divisions in our country – with insensitivity on the Government's part pitting the UK's regions and nations against an inflexible and dismissive centre, widening the economic divide within our country and communities, laying bare the gaps in living standards and even life expectancy between the rich and poor.

These divisions tell us what we have long known to be true: either we reform and renew, creating something fairer and more inclusive, or we resist

and refuse and return to a broken status quo. It is abundantly clear that not to act will risk the jobs and futures of too many people in this country. And inaction also risks the unity of our United Kingdom.

Times of crisis require us to be imaginative, far-sighted and driven from the bottom-up, drawing on the best practice and insight of local leaders rather than imposed by an out-of-touch and over-centralised Whitehall.

And the devolution – to the nations and to the regions – we have is all too often undermined by too centralist a mindset, with ministers often paying only lip-service to localism. If we are to deal with pandemics, pollution and poverty, the voices of the regions and nations have to be listened to and the centre has to show it will work with them.

To build belief that we are all in this together, we must develop solutions together. Our co-operative movement offers up many of the answers, and that we

achieve more through co-operation than we achieve alone. That shared values are the foundation of strong communities and that sustainable economies require a fair distribution of wealth and power. Mobilising the resources and campaigning power of the co-operative movement, which has always believed in community power, devolution and creative solutions to the challenges which face us, will be crucial in rebuilding trust and turning the tide of recession.

Citizens' assemblies were a unifying force in Ireland, and more recently are being deployed by co-operative councillors to address the difficult choices that will be



required in tackling climate change with the urgency it requires. Convening citizens' assemblies to be part of a post-Covid resolution of our future will have this same unifying effect.

Where co-operation between the centre and localities has been exposed as wholly deficient, we need to take steps to rebuild a stronger United Kingdom and consider changes which will unite our divided country.

First, we need to consider how to deliver a redistribution of resources, opportunities and power, based on needs – and whether there is a case for a new Barnett-style needs-based formula for allocating resources across the regions of England. What's clear is that the era of one-size-fits-all is over, and there can be no unity without recognition of diversity.

Secondly, we need to consider how we can improve co-operation between all layers of government. It is extraordinary that, to this day, there is no body that

brings together the leaders of the regions and nations in one forum. The Joint Ministerial Committee that was to be the bridge between the centre and Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland has now broken down. Not once has it met, other than on Brexit, during Johnson's 16-month premiership. 'Devolve and forget' should be replaced by 'devolve and include' with a robust process for bringing metro mayors and local councils into national decision-making.

Thirdly, we should consider how to advance national integration through greater political inclusion. For example, we need to consider whether the outdated House of

Lords should be replaced by a Senate of the Nations and Regions.

But one thing we know for sure: any new settlement must be built on the foundations of shared values. Britain cannot have a shared future without setting out what we agree on. Indeed, we must forge a modern story about the values we have in common, the shared experiences of people and communities in every part of the country, and the diverse cultural bonds that bind us together.

The co-operative movement has always been about the best of human values. It is through a focus on the sentiments that inspire co-operation and reciprocity – solidarity and empathy – that we expose narrow nationalism for what it truly is: an ideology that sees the world in terms of a never-ending struggle between 'us', the insiders, and 'them', the outsiders. Rather than a nationalism which seeks to divide us, we can demonstrate that our future lies in empathy across

nations, not enmity, and that we succeed through solidarity and sharing. ●

CO-OPERATIVE CAMPAIGNING THROUGH LOCKDOWN

With local and devolved elections now confirmed to be taking place this May, Co-operative Party candidates and campaigners will have to find new ways to make an impact on the electorate. Here are a few ways we're working to support our hundreds of candidates in this crucial year.



Download resources from our Candidate Hub

We've collated all the digital resources we've produced for our candidates into one handy page - including Twibbons and Facebook profile picture frames, Labour and Co-operative logos and branding, social media graphics and more.

Access the Candidate Hub at party.coop/local/candidates

Look out for our digital campaigning training

With most physical campaign activity called off, the digital campaign is going to be more important than ever.

We've already held one training session - on using online surveys to engage your constituents - which is available on our Candidate Hub. More written and video content will follow in the coming weeks to help you make the most of your online presence - check back for updates.



Order our postal vote leaflets

For the first time in many years we have agreed a joint national leaflet design with the Labour Party. The joint postal vote leaflet encourages constituents to sign up to vote safely from home, as well as giving them information about the Co-operative Party and what we stand for.

Visit our candidate hub at party.coop/local/candidates for links to buy the leaflets from Labour or to download the artwork to send to your preferred printers.

The leaflet is also available in a direct mail version. You can download selections on Contact Creator and send them out via the post. This costs around £125 per 250 printed, stuffed and sent out for you in the post. Contact local@party.coop to place your order.



Join our candidate training sessions

The Co-operative Candidate Development Programme is underway, hosting regular training sessions online for Labour and Co-operative candidates across the UK.

We've recently run sessions on panel interviews, how to get the Co-operative Party nomination, and preparing for selections, but it's not just work - we also hold regular coffee mornings via Zoom for participants to get to know one another and have some downtime from this year's unusual campaigns.

To find out more about the Co-operative Candidate Development Programme and apply to be a candidate, visit party.coop/ccdp

SEM MOEMA

Sem Moema is a Mayoral Advisor to the Mayor of Hackney and Labour & Co-operative candidate for North East London in the London Assembly elections.



What got you involved in politics?

After I moved to Hackney in the early 2000s, I got involved in local politics. I'd been working in international development and wanted to become politically active in the community I lived in. I went from grassroots activism, campaigning for my local MP, Meg Hillier, which led me to apply to be a councillor. I was first elected in 2006, and after a break, was elected again in 2016. I've been a ward councillor for eight years, as well as having the privilege of chairing my Hackney South and Shoreditch CLP, and now standing to be a London Assembly member to represent North East.

But I was always political – my parents left South

Africa in the 1970s to find a fairer society in Britain. My mother believed that London would provide her working opportunities not available to her as a young black woman with ambition. My father came to London as a political asylum seeker, after speaking out against apartheid and being restricted in his career in a racially segregated society.

What are your priorities for London if elected?

The housing crisis and private renting is an area I have really championed as a Hackney councillor. I've been the Mayoral Advisor for the Private Rented Sector and Affordability, a part time cabinet role, since 2016. In that time I've introduced landlord licensing to extend renters' rights to 34,000 households in privately-rented homes, persuading three large housing associations to give 3-year tenancies to their tenants and stabilise rents and offer families stability and security without the fear of becoming homeless. I've also been working with leaseholders and shared owners affected by the cladding scandal in our borough, and have supported CLTs and housing co-ops when developing genuinely affordable new homes for Hackney residents. I want to bring this experience to City Hall, to support Sadiq's ambitions to build social housing and also to encourage the establishment of mutual models, such as housing co-operatives, where possible.

Sadly, politics remains a very white and male dominated world – what would your advice be to other young women and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic members considering standing for election in the future?

Growing up in North London, there was the sense that things were improving for Black and Minority Ethnic communities. Like many Londoners, I feel we're losing that progress and things have stalled. In areas like housing, the environment, education, policing and political decision making locally, regionally and nationally, the voices of women and of Black and Minority Ethnic communities

is underrepresented and sometimes not heard. That much is evident over the last ten years of Tory austerity in the decisions made, whether it's funding local government services, investment in policing or making sure people's homes are safe and affordable. The EU referendum and the summer of Black Lives Matter following George Floyd's death have in different ways brought the idea of tolerance to the foreground in what I believe will ultimately be positive in the future.

Being a part of the co-operative movement, as a Labour councillor and local activist as a Black woman is something that I welcome. We need to build a society based on our shared co-operative values, especially equality, equity, and participation. My advice to young people wanting to make a change in the world, to people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities and to women, is simply: do it. Go for it. I know I try to make sure that I can support others who were in the same situation as me back in 2006, and support them in how to get involved and achieve for themselves and for their communities. Being involved in my community is rewarding and important to me, and those are the voices we need more of if our advocacy and the way we live and work in our city is to meet a diverse range of needs. ●

CAI PARRY

Cai Parry is an A-Level student and Labour activist in Cardiff. He is co-leader of Students 4 Safe Studies, a grassroots campaign by students, fighting for students to get safe studies and fair assessments in 2021, for a fairer deal in education. At 17, he will be among the cohort of first-time 16 and 17 year old voters in the upcoming Welsh elections.



You're 17 and voting for the first time in the Senedd elections in May. What does it mean to you, to be part of the first cohort of 16 and 17 year old voters ever in the UK?

It's a huge privilege to be able to contribute to democracy for the first time. It feels like I'm a part of history and that young people are finally at the table to discuss how the country is run.

At 16 in the UK, people can join the military, become parents, buy a lottery ticket, start one of the most crucial chapters in their education, get a job and pay tax. Yet the right to vote on how government affects them has only just been granted. It's a great relief that we can see that society is progressing in this way.

What are the issues you'll be considering when you cast your vote?

For young people in Wales, the issues on our minds are the environment, the union, education, rising house prices and mental health funding. We need to take the climate emergency very seriously, and if nobody else will, Wales should lead the way on this with decisive and radical action. With the rise of populist movements like YesCymru and the Abolish the Assembly Party, it's important that we take a modest approach that extends devolution, and we should work with UK Labour to push for a federal UK.

How do you think Labour and Co-operative activists and politicians can engage young and first-time voters better? Do we need to change the way that we campaign?

Young people in the past couple of years have become far more politically active with rising economic inequality and the attention given to the climate crisis. It's crucial that youth lead groups like UKSCN, Teach the Future, and my own Students 4 Safe Studies, are listened to by policy makers to ensure that young voters are engaged and play an active role in how their futures are decided.

We've long campaigned for votes at 16, with our Party Chair Jim McMahon proposing a bill in Westminster to change the law – and we're really excited that Wales' Labour Government have led the way here. What can we learn from the Welsh experience as we campaign elsewhere to extend the franchise?

Obviously, it helps to be in government, and the extension of the franchise is a great example of the progress Labour can make when elected, but I think the best thing we can do at any time is to combat the idea that young people will be corrupted by caring about politics or that young people aren't mature enough to make these decisions. All of us 16-17 year olds are yet to be allowed to vote in general elections, and we can use Wales as one in a whole library of examples of young people making mature decisions about our futures. ●

'the best thing we can do at any time is to combat the idea that young people will be corrupted by caring about politics'

WESTMINSTER: OUR ROLE AS YOUR VOICE



Preet Kaur Gill MP
Chair, Co-operative
Parliamentary Party

I've long been proud to champion our co-operative values and solutions as a co-operative Member of Parliament, and following my friend Jim McMahon MP's election as Chair of the Co-operative Party it was truly an honour to follow him in becoming the Chair of the Co-operative Parliamentary Group in Westminster.

The Co-operative Party has been a voice for co-operative values in the places where decisions are made for over a century, and

I am delighted to play a part in this proud history by building on Jim's leadership and vision and leading our movement's representation in Westminster.

But we know here in Westminster that we are only a part of what makes the Co-operative Party such a force for good.

Because the strength in our movement has always been found in our ability to put our values into practice in our communities and make a real difference on the ground.

So as we look ahead to the upcoming elections, it's more important than ever that we're able to work alongside passionate and effective co-operators at all levels to do just that. ●

NORTHERN IRELAND: WHY YOUNG LEADERSHIP IS VITAL



Olivia Fletcher
Co-operative Party
National Youth Committee

Local action requires local leaders. And it's important that young people are filling those leadership roles.

As the co-chair of the Co-operative Party Youth Network, and Northern Ireland Youth Representative, I know this. Throughout the pandemic, young people have borne the brunt of immense social upheaval. But they've also been key leaders in fighting back against the pandemic within the Cooperative movement.

The Co-operative Party Youth Network is nourishing that leadership, because I want young people to feel empowered in changing their local communities for the better, with co-operation

at the core. That's why the Youth Network is holding Young Candidates Training, where young members can hear from some of the Co-operative Party's best and youngest councillors, encouraging them to take on leadership roles.

The Youth Network has also held an online event on how co-operation is preventing climate change.

The role of young leadership is especially vital in Northern Ireland, where I represent young Co-operative Party members. When young people in the region work together, instead of working against each other with the sectarian politics of the past, they are building a co-operative future. And as the Northern Ireland youth representative, I encourage that. ●

SCOTLAND: A MODEL FOR US ALL TO FOLLOW



Cllr Kirsteen Sullivan
Scottish Labour & Co-operative Councillor in West Lothian

I am proud to be standing as a Scottish Labour and Co-operative candidate in Linlithgow. I have been impressed by the practical approach of the Co-operative Party.

I am proud to have worked to promote food justice in West Lothian and to have taken on board the Co-operative Party's campaign for the Right to Food. This is a campaign that demonstrates the best of the Co-operative Party. It combines local action, for example supporting food banks, with local leadership, for example campaigning for the right to food to be enshrined in law.

Co-operative politics is about taking action and showing a concern for our communities. The concern about food justice has demonstrated this.

During the lockdown we have seen our retail workers going above and beyond the call of duty to keep



us all fed. Sadly, many of these workers have had to face violence, threats, and abuse.

In Scotland, the co-operative movement has shown leadership in calling for legislation to protect retail workers. Co-operative politicians in councils and in the Scottish Parliament have responded to the plight of retail workers by campaigning for greater protection of retail workers.

Leadership and action by Co-operative Party politicians like Daniel Johnson MSP has led to the Scottish Parliament passing legislation which will offer greater protection to retail workers. This was a campaign that demonstrated that local action and local leadership can make a real difference to our communities.

Protecting retail workers was a policy supported by Co-operative retail societies and by trade unions such as Usdaw. It was a policy delivered in part by campaigns by Co-operative Party members and MSPs in the Scottish Parliament. I am looking for the UK Government to follow our example and deliver more protection to retail workers.

The Protection of Retail Workers Act demonstrates what Scottish Co-operative Party politicians can achieve if we listen to our communities, it is a model for us all to follow. ●

WALES: WHY 16 YEAR OLDS NEED TO USE THEIR VOTE



Sarah Murphy
Welsh Labour & Co-operative Senedd candidate for Bridgend

In February 2020, with overwhelming support from our Welsh Labour and Co-operative Party Members of the Senedd, our Welsh Government passed the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act that lowered the minimum voting age of National Assembly elections to 16. This momentous decision came after a passionate and determined campaign by young people across the UK, along with the Votes at 16 Coalition and our Co-operative Party members. It means that 100,000 new voters have the opportunity to vote in our Senedd election this year, which is very exciting.

When speaking to young and

first-time voters, there are an array of policies that you are engaged with. In particular, you want to talk to me about access to professional mental health and wellbeing provision; your education, lifelong learning and job opportunities; and the climate emergency and zero-waste strategy for Wales. I'm confident that our Co-operative Party will always stand shoulder to shoulder with you, because we believe that cooperative politics is about sharing power and giving a voice to ordinary people. Ultimately, as more decisions are being made about your lives, it is vital that you have your say via the ballot box over your future and the future of our nation. ●

'Our Co-operative Party will always stand shoulder to shoulder with you, because we believe that cooperative politics is about sharing power and giving a voice to ordinary people'



EQUALITIES



Chantal Lee
Equalities Officer,
Co-operative Party

In its most basic form, equality is the idea of all being equal, regardless of the characteristics we may hold. But as co-operators our idea of equalities goes further, not just wanting all to be equal but being willing to work to level the playing field and fighting for all to be able to enjoy and reap the benefits of social and economic development.

Our member-led networks play an important role in making sure our Party is open, accessible and represents the diversity and talent of society. There are five networks, each with a steering committee elected by members. If you would like to receive updates, make sure to update your membership to opt-in at: party.coop/equalities

Co-operators have been at the forefront of equalities since the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers opened its doors to all those over 16, giving each member a vote, regardless of their shareholding and explicitly stating that men and women would enjoy equal voting. This move set the standard for what we expect from political parties and societies today, and it is in that vein that I hope to carry out my role as Equalities Officer. By being willing as a party to pioneer, be at the forefront and, where necessary, to fight for greater equality for all who face barriers and disadvantages within society.

Whilst this new role builds on a strong heritage of championing equalities in our Party and movement, from gender balance on our NEC to networks to empower diverse members and amplify their voices, I am aware that there remain challenges ahead and I hope you'll join me in tackling them so that we, as a movement, are the very best we can be. ●

EVENTS



Issy Oozeerally
Events Co-ordinator,
Co-operative Party

The ongoing restrictions mean we're not able to meet face to face, but Coronavirus can't stop us co-operating!

Our programme of online events brings members together to discuss our policies and campaigns, listen to speakers from across the co-op and labour movements, and share your ideas – all from the comfort and safety of your own home!

Here are some of our upcoming events – they are free, online and open to all members – find out more at party.coop/events

Remember, you don't need to have a computer to take part in many of these events – you can dial in from your phone instead!

Co-operation Live

Our weekly Co-operation Live sessions are a chance to hear from interesting speakers, learn something new and find out how communities are organising in response to the pandemic.

Conferences

There will be online conferences in every region and nation this year, where you'll hear from Co-operative Party elected representatives, campaigners and members, as well as having your say on our Policy Process:

- Owning the Future Regional & National Conferences
Spring 2021
- Co-operative Party Online Policy Conference
19 June 2021
- Co-operative Party Online Annual Conference & AGM
9-10 October 2021
- Co-operative Party Local Government Conference
20 November 2021

Local Branch Events

As well as these events, your local branch should now also be meeting online. If your branch has yet to meet or you have an idea for a local event, contact the Team: events@party.coop ●

POLICY PROCESS



Anna Birley
Policy Officer,
Co-operative Party

Our policy platform sets the agenda for our party and its representatives, and puts forward our to-do list for Parliament. In the tradition of co-operation, our policy process is member-led and this is your opportunity to shape the ideas we'll take to all levels of Government.

This year, the policy consultation will focus on two areas – one seeks to tackle the crisis in our social care sector, the other at how we save and revitalise our town centres and high streets. You're invited to share your views and ideas through our consultation, running until 11 June.

Taking part is easy:

- You can contribute by responding to our consultation: either with your own personal views in an "individual submission" or with your local party as a "group submission".
- To make a group submission, local parties can organise online meetings to debate the topics and write their response. We've put together some resources to help you organise an engaging policy meeting, which will be regularly added to and updated.
- If you want to learn more about the topic before making your submission, attend your local regional conference! At each regional conference, we'll be holding a policy debate on both of the chosen topics – so you can learn more about co-operative approaches to these issues. ●

Check our website for
more information
party.coop/policy/2021

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