

Scottish Policy Process – 2024-25
Scottish Parliament Election

The Scottish Co-operative Party Policy Process aims to develop a new platform in advance of the Scottish Parliamentary Election in 2026. This is an opportunity for members to provide their contributions to Scottish Co-operative Party policy.

At the General Election the Co-operative Party put forward a policy platform focused on four issues: growing the co-operative economy; growing community renewable energy projects; growing community ownership of assets; and greater protection for retail workers - which has already been put in place in Scotland.

These policy positions have been taken up by the incoming Labour and Co-operative Government at Westminster. In the run up to the next Scottish Parliament election, the Party is looking to develop a policy platform that will be taken up by the incoming Scottish Labour and Co-operative Government which we are working toward.

Over the next few months please let us know your thoughts on what our policy positions should be. You can respond as a party member individually or join opportunities to contribute at in person or online meetings.

The consultation questions below focus on several key areas of Scottish Co-operative Party policy but we wish to hear from members on other co-operative issues which are important to them. Please do add any further thoughts you have at the end of the consultation

Economy & co-op development

Co-operatives and mutual models can help to deliver a more inclusive, resilient and productive Scottish economy. Delivering, at least, a doubling of the size of the Scottish co-operative sector will raise living standards and create good jobs throughout Scotland. The questions aim to provide recommendations for delivering increased co-operative and social economy growth.

- What should be the role of Co-operative Development Scotland (CDS) in doubling the size of the co-op sector?
- How can we ensure co-op development happens in every region of Scotland?
- How can public procurement be used effectively to promote social value and community wealth building?
- How can we make sure co-operative businesses can lead the way in the energy transition and technology innovation?

Energy

Scotland is uniquely placed to take advantage of the clean energy transition. Community energy can help empower communities to achieve the benefits of Scotland's wind, hydro and solar power potential. The questions review how the Scottish Government can enable the rapid scaling-up of community energy development.

- How can the Scottish Government support the delivery of the Local Power Plan to expand community owned energy?
- How can we ensure community ownership in large scale renewable energy developments, such as offshore wind?
- How can the Scottish Government support the development of local retrofit co-ops to help boost household energy efficiency?

Education & Culture

Increasing the accountability and inclusiveness of Scotland's education and cultural assets will help maintain them for generations to come. These questions look at how education, culture and sport can become more co-operative in practice.

- How can the Scottish Government enable co-ops and mutuals to play a greater role in the skills system?
- How can we raise greater awareness of co-operatives through education and the curriculum?
- How can the Scottish education system be made more accountable to service users and families?
- How can the Scottish Government promote fan ownership of football clubs and other sports clubs?
- How can we ensure co-op and community-owned models can help to preserve Scotland's social clubs?

Transport & Utilities

Many communities in Scotland face transport challenges which increase isolation and reduce connectivity. Community-led and co-operative transport provision could empower communities with new transport services run in their interests. The questions seek answers for how the Scottish Government can support the development of new and improved transport services.

- How can the Scottish Government support new community transport locally – i.e. buses, riding sharing, dial-a-ride, etc.?

- How can the Scottish Government enable new mutually-owned and operated transport services – i.e. ferries, rail?

Housing

Scotland needs new affordable housing delivery – which provides different tenures for different housing needs. Co-operative and community housing can ensure homes remain affordable and inclusive for the long-term. This section looks at how a new generation of co-operative housing can be delivered.

- How can we create a new generation of co-operative and community-led housing?
- What can be done to improve the standards in the private and social rental sector?

Care & Health

Co-operatives and mutuals can provide a solution to challenges in primary and social care – establishing inclusive governance models which put care recipients, their families and workers at their heart. The questions look at how the Scottish Government could support their development and delivery of essential services.

- How can we support new co-operative social care provision?
- How could co-op models ensure GPs, dentists and physiotherapists provide services which work for care recipients and providers?
- How can we ensure that the voice of patients and workers is heard in health and social care governance structures?

Community ownership

Community ownership can empower Scottish communities to reshape and reimagine their local economies and high streets. Whether it's a pub, shop, music venue or cinema – community ownership can ensure all communities have access to amenities. The questions look at how to make the most of Scotland's Community Right to Buy (CRtB) and grow the sector.

- How can we improve the uptake of community ownership as part of the Scottish CRtB?
- Should the Scottish Government expand the scope of the CRtB? For example to worker co-operatives, etc.
- What can be done to promote further meaningful land reform focused on community ownership?

Community Power & Devolution

Empowering people and communities will mean pushing powers and rights beyond town halls and into communities themselves. These questions look at how Scotland can achieve this objective.

- How can the Scottish Government empower communities beyond local authorities and current regional structures?

Other key policy issues

- Please tell us about other key co-operative-related policy issues for the Scottish Parliamentary Election 2026