

co-operative party annual review 2024



Contents

The purpose of the Party	3
Strategic Objectives	4
Chair's Report	5
Meet our 2024 political representatives	6
Strategic Objective Support the election of co-operators at all levels of government	9
Strategic Objective Be leaders of co-operative solutions, seeking their delivery locally, regionally and nationally in every sector of society and the economy	14
Strategic Objective Inspire and educate our audience about the achievements and potential of the co-operative movement	22
Strategic Objective Have an engaged, diverse and growing individual and organisational membership that values the Party and its work	29
Strategic Objective Ensure the Party is organisationally and financially stable	33
Operations and Governance	36

The purpose of the Party is to promote co-operative and mutual forms of economic, social and voluntary 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, both domestically and internationally.



Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives used by the Party in 2024 are replicated in the below. In conjunction with the Party's strategic year plan these strategic objectives guide the Party activity and provide the basis for the structure of this Annual Report. A report on 2024 in pursuance of each strategic objective is provided below.



Chair's Report

It is my pleasure to present the Annual Report of the Co-operative Party through 2024. In many ways it was an extraordinary year for the Party.

Through the previous number of the years the Party has built its organisational platform. The Party has grown its membership and supporter base, it has built its representative base to historic levels. It had built a solid reputation in both the Co-operative and Labour movements. The Party had also worked hard to develop its campaigning and communications capability to better support its policy objectives.

The Party has important contributions to make on many of the big challenges the country currently faces. We know that economic growth needs to be felt locally and regionally as well as generate more equitable outcomes, that is why its 'double the size of the co-operative sector' policy is vital. We know that in order to achieve Net Zero we must bring people with us and ensure that there is a truly just transition, that is why the Party's call for an historic expansion of community owned renewable energy generation is so important. We also know that our communities and high streets need supporting and empowering and that is why the Party's campaigning for a new community right to buy and better protections for retail workers are fundamental to progress.

In some ways 2024 was a culmination of this work. The Party was able to deliver its strongest ever General Election. It was able to support its candidates in ways not previously possible, it achieved its strongest influence within the Labour Party's manifesto process with the historic commitment to double the size of the co-operative and mutual sector included. It was able to mobilise members and deliver its own campaigning in a way which demonstrated real movement leadership. Of course, this work doesn't finish in 2024, but it is worth reflecting on the strength of the work delivered.

The year wasn't just about the General Election, the Party has worked hard to support its representatives in local and regional government as well as delivering strong work in Scotland and Wales. Its training, conferences and events programme is a strength of the Party and 2024 saw some fantastic events such as the Co-operative Change event in Manchester in November. The Party continues to focus on providing strong value to its individual and organisational members and evidence of that can be seen through this Annual Report. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our members both individual and organisational for their support of our party. I would also like to thank our NEC, local officers who volunteer time to help our Party life. Finally, I believe the staff team worked hard through 2024 delivering fantastic results and I know they deserve our thanks.

Jim McMahon OBE MP
Chair of the Co-operative Party



Meet our 2024 political representatives

House of Commons



**Anneliese
Dodds MP**



**Andrew
Gwynne MP**



**Alice
Macdonald MP**



**Alex
Norris MP**



**Andrew
Pakes MP**



**Alex
Sobel MP**



**Anna
Turley MP**



**Baggy
Shanker MP**



**Chris
Evans MP**



**Chris
Vince MP**



**Douglas
Alexander MP**



**Emma
Foody MP**



**Florence
Eshalomi MP**



**Gareth
Snell MP**



**Gareth
Thomas MP**



**Helena
Dollimore MP**



**Jack
Abbott MP**



**Jayne
Kirkham MP**



**Jim
McMahon MP**



**James
Murray MP**



**Jo
Platt MP**



**Jonathan
Reynolds MP**



**Kate
Dearden MP**



**Kirsty
McNeill MP**



**Kate
Osamor MP**



**Kirsteen
Sullivan MP**



**Lucy
Powell MP**



**Luke
Pollard MP**



**Dame Meg
Hillier MP**



**Miatta
Fahnbulleh MP**



**Sir Mark
Hendrick MP**



**Oliver
Ryan MP**



**Preet Kaur
Gill MP**



**Paul
Waugh MP**



**Rachel
Blake MP**



**Rachael
Maskell MP**



**Stella
Creasy MP**



**Stephen
Doughty MP**



**Sally
Jameson MP**



**Simon
Lightwood MP**



**Seema
Malhotra MP**



**Steve
Reed MP**



House of Lords



Lord Bassam



Lord Coaker



Lord Foulkes



Lord Hain



Baroness Hayter



Lord Hunt



Lord Kennedy



Lord Knight



Lord McAvoy



Lord Monks



Baroness Royall



Baroness Smith



Baroness Thornton



Lord Tomlinson



Lord Tuhig



Baroness Wilcox

Scottish Parliament



Anas Sarwar MSP



Claire Baker MSP



Colin Smyth MSP



Daniel Johnson MSP



Monica Lennon MSP



Neil Bibby MSP



Paul O'Kane MSP



Pauline McNeill MSP



Paul Sweeney MSP



Rhoda Grant MSP



Sarah Boyack MSP

Senedd Cymru



Alun Davies MS



Carolyn Thomas MS



Dawn Bowden MS



Huw Irranca-Davies MS



John Griffiths MS



Jeremy Miles MS



Joyce Watson MS



Lynne Neagle MS



Lee Waters MS



Mick Antoniw MS



Michael Hedges MS



Rebecca Evans MS



Rhianon Passmore MS



Sarah Murphy MS



Vaughan Gething MS



Vikki Howells MS



Police & Crime Commissioners



**Andy
Dunbobbin**



**Clive
Grunshaw**



**Clare
Moody**



**David
Allen**



**Danielle
Stone**



**Emily
Spurrell**



**Emma
Wools**



**Gary
Godden**



**Joy
Allen**



**Jane
Mudd**



**John
Tizard**



**Matt
Storey**



**Nicole
Ndiweni**



**Susan
Dungworth**



**Sarah
Taylor**

Metro Mayors



**Andy
Burnham**



**Claire
Ward**



**Damien
Egan**



**David
Skaith**



**Kim
McGuinness**



**Dr Nik
Johnson**



**Oliver
Coppard**



**Richard
Parker**



**Rokhsana
Fiaz**



**Tracy
Brabin**



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

Introduction

Through 2024, the Party's work in pursuit of this strategic objective was focussed on the pre- General Election work along with the local and regional elections in England and Wales. With historic highs achieved in terms of the numbers of Westminster, local and regional government representation it 2024 was a particularly strong year for the Party around this strategic objective. The Party has worked hard to significantly develop its range of support for co-operators to get elected in recent years. Through 2024 key aspects of this work has included:

- Selection support
- The delivery of the Local Government Development programme
- The Party's digital support for candidates
- Supporting member-led selection processes
- Practical campaign support
- Member mobilisation
- Supply of campaign materials
- Management of the Party's Westminster Parliamentary Panel
- Supply of policy content



Westminster (including relevant General Election 2024 reporting)

The Party stood 50 joint Labour & Co-operative Candidates at the 2024 General Election which returned an historic high of 43 Members of Parliament. To support the candidates and to ensure the Party's achieved its aim of having its strongest General Election ever the Party:

- Delivered individual and group training for candidates and their teams on digital campaigning
- Delivered a new member mobilisation tool (#TeamCoop) which better signposted and equipped members to individual candidate's campaigns. This included materials for individuals to take online actions in support of individual candidates
- Ran national, regional and equality network phone-banking sessions
- Invested record amounts in campaign merchandise and materials
- Delivered its first ever joint national campaign day with the Labour Party
- Delivered a comprehensive practical campaign programme for members and activists, which included sessions on mobilisation, door knocking and high visibility campaigning
- Delivered financial support for individual campaigns.
- Delivered strong communications offer throughout the short campaign
- Delivered strong policy support and content to candidates

While other aspects of this review will cover other aspects of the Party's work in this area in greater detail, the Party is proud of its work supporting the election of co-operators to the Westminster Parliament through 2024.

The Westminster Group delivered in 2024 puts the Party on a firm footing for future years. The Group contains a strong mix of existing, new, returning knowledgeable and committed Parliamentarians. Following the formation of the new Westminster Government the Party has a record number of Cabinet Ministers (5), Ministers (19) in addition to Chairs and Members of Departmental Select Committees and Whips.

Local Election Candidate Development Programme 2024

Through 2024, the Party continued to deliver its popular and important Local Election Candidate Development Programme. This programme has been an important way in which the Party can develop increased numbers of knowledgeable and equipped Local Election candidates. Through 2024 the programme ran three times and saw several hundred candidates and potential candidates take part. It is open to new and returning candidates including those who may run in future years. The Programme in 2024 included:

- Informal coffee morning sessions
- Digital campaign training
- Message based campaigning
- Information sessions around co-operative policy and movement
- Member mobilisation and Labour Party campaign tools



Local Elections (England) 2024

2024 saw the Party pass historic highs of local government representation. The Party moved past 1,600 joint Labour & Co-operative councillors. This figure represents roughly 1 in 4 of every Labour elected representative being joint Labour & Co-operative and includes 50 Council or Opposition Group leaders. In addition to the delivery of the 2024 Local Election Candidate Development Programme, the Party supported the election of co-operators in English Local Elections by with the following activities:

- Worked with Local Parties, activists and council groups to carry out the Party's selections and adoption processes
- Issued campaign packs to individual candidates
- Managed WhatsApp groups of existing and new candidates
- Delivered member mobilisation work
- Delivered digital design tools
- Delivered policy and manifesto development support
- Issued relevant joint certification

Local Elections (England) 2024 in numbers:

541

candidates

163

for re-election

10+

**candidates for
17 councils**

550

contests

47

candidates stood down

9

**parish councils
contested**

134

**adding
councillors**

91%

**councils contested
in England (97 of 107)**

Councils with the highest grouping of candidates included:

33

**Stevenage
Borough Council**

17

**Warrington
Borough Council**

13

**Leeds
City Council**

28

**North Hertfordshire
District Council**

14

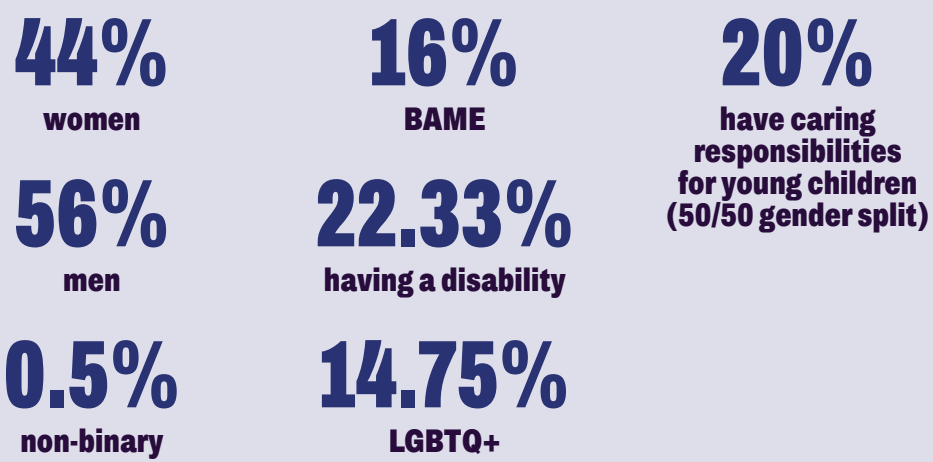
**Plymouth
City Council**

13

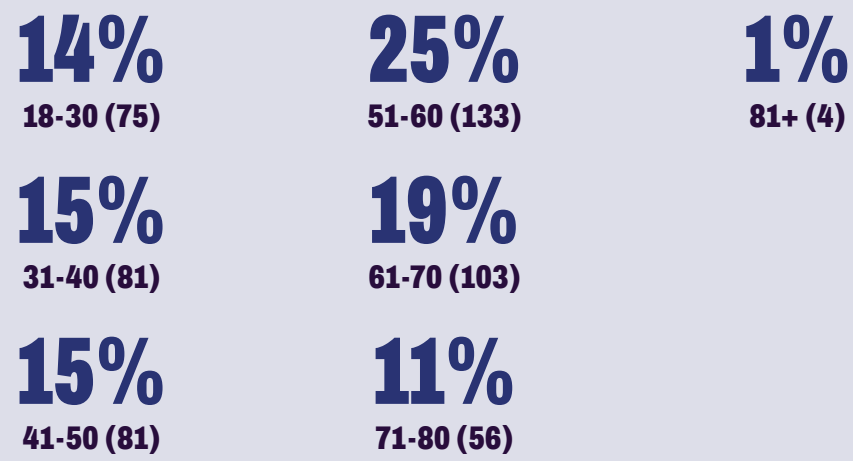
**Sheffield
City Council**



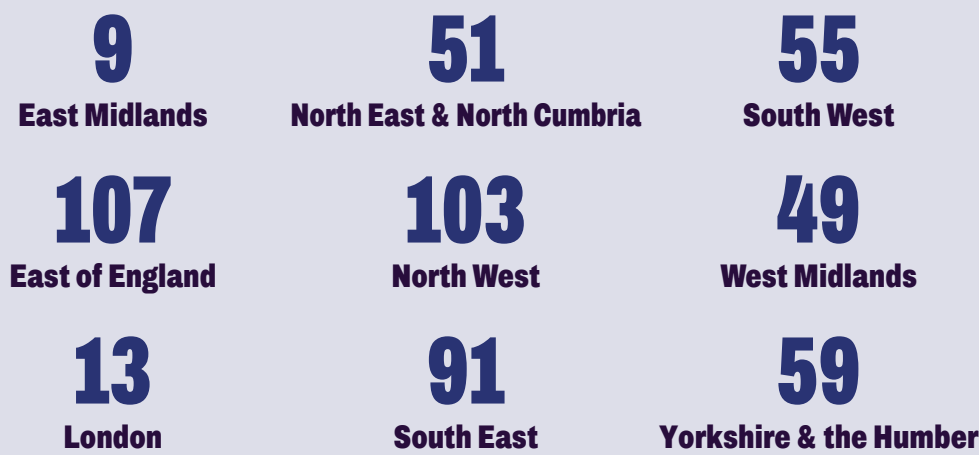
The Party continues to monitor its work to produce increased diversity within its candidates. In 2024, of those candidates who have provided the Party equality data:



Also, for those candidates who provided the Party with age information the 2024 candidates contained the below profile:



The regional split of the 2024 candidates can be seen below:



Finally, through 2024 the Party begins to build its candidate cohort for 2025, so the Candidate Development Programme began post-election along with the identification work National Officers carry out with Local Parties.

Metro Mayor Elections (England) 2024

In 2024 the Party gained 4 new Metro Mayors during the election in addition to the four existing Co-operative Metro Mayors. The new Metro Mayors included:

Claire Ward
East Midlands

Richard Parker
West Midlands

Kim McGuinness
North East

David Skaith
York & North Yorkshire

Police and Crime Commissioner Elections (England and Wales) 2024

The Party gained 9 new Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in 2024, leaving the Party with 15 sitting PCCs. During the campaign, the Party worked with candidates to raise awareness and secure commitments on tackling retail crime. The new Police and Crime Commissioners included:

John Tizard
Bedfordshire

Clare Moody
Avon & Somerset

Matt Storey
Cleveland

David Allen
Cumbria

Nicolle Ndiweni
Derbyshire

Clive Grunshaw
Lancashire

Jane Mudd
Gwent

Sarah Taylor
Norfolk

Danielle Stone
Northamptonshire

Susan Dungworth
Northumbria

Gary Godden
Nottinghamshire

Emma Wools
South Wales

Scottish and Welsh Selections

Whilst Scottish and Welsh Parliament elections will not take place until 2026, 2024 did see the start of the Parties work in candidate recruitment. Sessions were held in 2024 for potential Scottish and Welsh candidates with the General Secretary and the Scottish and Welsh Parties began to agree their approaches to these selection processes.

Welsh Labour leadership hustings and member led vote was also carried out through 2024.



Be leaders of co-operative solutions, seeking their delivery locally, regionally and nationally in every sector of society and the economy

Introduction

As in previous years this was a hugely important strategic objective for the Party through 2024. Some of the key aims set out within the year plan included achieving strong Labour Party Manifesto representation, the production of Co-operative Party platforms and pre local manifesto materials. The Party also wanted to continue its strong policy partnership work with think tanks and campaign organisations. With the change of Westminster Government in 2024, the Party was also afforded an opportunity to work with Ministers to begin delivering on the Party's co-operative aims.

It was a strong year for the Party in this strategic work with historic manifesto commitments secured and delivery begun in the four key campaign and policy areas the Party focussed on in 2024.

Four key policy priority areas

In 2024, the Party focussed on four main policy and campaign areas. Of course, there was wider work delivered through the year and included in this review, but the four areas provided the Party with focus ahead of General Election manifestos. The four areas included:

1. Co-operative Growth:
'Double the Size of the Co-operative Sector'
2. The expansion of Community Owned Renewable Energy Generation:
'8GW of energy and 1 million owners'
3. The expansion and support for community ownership:
'A New Community Right to Buy'
4. Safer highstreets and better protection for retail workers:
'New legislative protections for Retail workers and tackle retail crime'

The Party's work and success in each of these key areas is summarised below.



1

Co-operative Growth: 'Double the Size of the Co-operative Sector'

Through the year the Party worked on its demand for commitments to double the size of the co-operative and mutual sector meant that it:

- Developed internal policy briefings
- Developed strong coalition work with co-operative movement organisations
- Worked with elected representatives
- Produced campaigning materials
- Promoted the policy area in traditional and social media
- Contributed to the Labour Party's National Policy Forum Process

Through this work the Party achieved support for the commitment from the Labour Party and this was included in its General Election manifesto. This represented perhaps the strongest ever commitment to co-operative growth in a Labour Party manifesto.

Since the General Election, the Party has worked with the new Labour Government to begin the work of co-operative growth. The ambition has been promoted and underscored in Westminster activity and from senior Government Ministers. This has seen co-operative growth references in the Budget Red Book for the first time in decades. During the new Labour Chancellor's first 'Mansion House Speech', Rachel Reeves welcomed the formation of a new Mutual and Co-operative Business Led Growth Council, tasked regulators with reporting to Parliament on their work with the sector and opened a new consultation aimed at better facilitating the growth of credit unions. Work began on a range of further areas in pursuit of this priority, which will be delivered upon in 2025.



2

The expansion of Community Owned Renewable Energy Generation: '8GW of energy and 1 million owners

The Party has firmly believed that Community Owned Renewable Energy is an important aspect of the needed just transition and promoted an historic expansion of the sector through 2024. To develop and promote this historic expansion, through 2024 the Party undertook a range of activity including:

- Site visits to community owned energy schemes
- Traditional and social media coverage of policy
- Delivering campaign materials and local releases related to the campaign
- Working with the sector to develop its asks
- Working with councillors and Metro Mayors to promote existing schemes
- Working within the Labour Party's National Policy Forum process on the issue
- Working with Westminster elected representatives and frontbench teams on proposals

As a result of this work the Labour Party included delivery of its 'Local Power Plan' into its Manifesto. Delivery of this plan would result in 8GW of community owned renewable energy being put into the grid. This would, in the Party's view, bring the possibility of one million owners of energy being created across the country.

Since the election, the Party has worked with Ministers, the sector and Parliamentarians to support the delivery of the policy through legislative items such as the Great British Energy Bill. The Party was also delighted to have its work in this area through 2024 recognised by Community Energy England, receiving a 'Special Recognition Award'.



3

The expansion and support for community ownership: 'A New Community Right to Buy'

In 2024 the Party campaigned consistently to achieve political and wider support for a 'New Community Right to Buy', which would apply to England. This new right would learn from the Scottish version and was the centrepiece of wider campaigning for enhanced support for community empowerment.

At the start of the year, the Party worked with Mark Gregory, former chief economist at EY, to publish a report titled '[Unleashing Community Ownership](#)'. The report was launched by Party Chair Jim McMahon MP and provides proposals on the rapid expansion of community ownership across the UK. The report was well received by the sector and policymakers across different levels of Government.

As a result of the Party's work, the Community Right to Buy was featured by the Labour Party in its manifesto work and in its 'Highstreets Plan'.

Following the General Election, the Party maintained its work in this area. The Government (relevant Minister, Party Chair Jim McMahon MP) released a new Devolution White Paper which included the Government's plans to implement the Community Right to Buy. This White Paper is a forerunner to legislation expected in 2025.

For local councillors, the Party has developed and issued new campaigning materials around the Community Right to Buy. This pack contains a new Council motion that has been passed by councils including Barnet, Southampton and Stockport.

In Wales, the Party developed a new campaign, including briefing materials, on a Community Right to Buy to be taken up by the Welsh Government. The Party will continue to campaign on this in the lead up to the 2026 Senedd elections.



4

Safer highstreets and better protection for retail workers: ‘New legislative protections for Retail workers and tackle retail crime.’

As one of the Co-operative Party’s four key policy priorities for the General Election 2024, the Party undertook extensive work to develop policy and campaigning in favour of action to reduce retail crime – including a standalone offence for violence against shopworkers. Joint campaigning with trade unions and the Labour Party helped to force the then Westminster Government to accept the legislative recommendation of a standalone offence for retail crime. This offence was to be included as an amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill, but it failed to become law prior to the dissolution of Parliament.

The new Labour Government announced the standalone offence will be included in the forthcoming Crime & Policing Bill – a significant victory for the co-operative movement.

In addition to Westminster, the Party undertook work on tackling retail crime at a devolved, regional and local level. Party activity included facilitating over 1,000 letters to Police and Crime Commissioner candidates on the campaign with Co-operative Group members; producing a new campaign pack for councillors and having representatives of the Scottish Co-operative Party meet with the Scottish Chief Constable on the campaign.



Other work through 2024 in this strategic objective

Building Societies Act 2024

The Party supported Julie Elliott MP's private members bill updating the Building Societies Act 1986. The Bill achieved Royal Assent in May 2024 and provides new capital raising and funding options for building societies.

Metro Mayor & Local Manifestos Impact

The Party provided Labour & Co-op Metro Mayors across the country with a policy briefing pack, which helped to inform commitments on co-operative and mutual models in the Mayoral Manifestos of Andy Burnham & Oliver Coppard. The Party provided a Build Your Own Co-operative Manifesto document to Labour & Co-op local councillors across the country – helping to provide ready-made policy proposals to local councils. The [Build Your Own Co-operative Manifesto](#) was revised and updated for 2025.

Royal Borough of Greenwich Co-operative Commission

The Party supported the Royal Borough of Greenwich to develop and produce a new co-operative commission, bringing together councillors, council officers, and external commissioners to develop a plan for co-operative growth in the borough. The Commission focused on three policy areas – co-operative growth, community energy and developing co-operative social care. The Commission report will be formally launched in February 2025.

UK Labour Party's Financial Services Review

The Party contributed policy proposals to Labour's Financial Services Review process which were included in the final document: [Financing Growth – Labour's Plan for Financial Services](#). The final document included a commitment to double the size of the mutual and co-operative financial services sector, with an explicit role in facilitating regional growth. Regulators will be required to report on how they are supporting mutual financial institutions to grow, and the Building Societies Act will be modernised. Furthermore, mutual financial institutions will have a role in investing in SMEs that have been rejected by major banks.

Policy Discussion Forum

In line with the Strategic Plan, the Party aimed to ensure it has the most up to date, relevant policy offering to represent the co-operative movement. To ensure the party represented the cutting edge of policy for the co-operative and social economy, a Policy Discussion Forum was established. The Policy Discussion Forum held three sessions in 2024, with expert input from a broad range of organisations. This was supported by wider policy stakeholder engagement work by the Policy Officer throughout 2024.



The Party's Policy Platform

Drawing upon the Party's existing policy documents and through the Party's regional conferences and online consultation through 2023, the Party produced its Policy Platform document, which was issued ahead of the General Election short campaign.

During the General Election campaign, the Party provided written policy briefings and FAQs to candidates on the four priority policy areas and major campaign focuses.

Local Government motions

In 2024 the Party continued to promote Local Government motions on Modern Slavery, Community Ownership, Diverse Councils and retail violence. These motions were passed by over 30 Councils during 2024.

Wider policy progress in Westminster

The Party was pleased to see the Government act rapidly to end the effective ban on onshore wind projects, a measure which will aid the community energy sector. Co-operative Party MP Steve Reed, the Secretary of State for EFRA, announced an intention for consumer panels to be established in water companies. This measure was advocated by the Party in its publication '*Democratic models of ownership for the 21st Century*'.



Inspire and educate our audience about the achievements and potential of the co-operative movement

Introduction

The work within this strategic objective surrounds the campaigning and events programme of the Party. In recent years both its campaigning and events have rapidly expanded, and it has become a significant part of the Party's work.

Campaigning includes using the Party's email supporter list, its social media output, its traditional media work, site visits and online communications. In the General Election this also centred on on-the-ground campaigning.

The events programme includes the Party's conferences, policy events, Labour Party events and other organisations' conferences it attends and presents at.

With the General Election expected to take place any time in the year, the Party adapted its programme of online and in-person events to focus members' engagement on their local General Election candidates and support their doorstep campaigning. The NEC agreed to postpone 2024's in-person Annual Conference and moved other events to online only, including smaller evening-based Local Government events.

Regional General Election Campaign launches

To kick off the Party's General Election campaign, 11 campaign launches were held across each English region, Scotland and Wales in the following seats: Hastings and Rye, Truro and Falmouth, Ceredigion Preseli, Stoke Central, Leigh, Derby North/Derby South, Doncaster East/Doncaster West, Midlothian/East Lothian, Cities of Westminster, Redcar and Norwich North.

These well organised, branded events provided very good online content as well as engagement with members locally, mobilising 300+ members to come out and support our Co-op Candidates. The Party thanks all those who attended and those who came to speak at the events including Jim McMahon MP, Preet Gill MP, Jonathan Reynolds MP, Lucy Powell MP, Wes Streeting MP, James Murray MP, Alex Norris MP, Daniel Zeichner MP, Baroness Chapman, Ed Miliband MP, Luke Pollard MP, Hannah Blythyn MS, Julie Morgan MS, Huw Irranca Davies MS, Stephen Doughty MP, Sarah Murphy MS, Paul Sweeney MSP, Sarah Boyack MSP, Lord Vernon Coaker. In addition to Party Organisers and Communications colleagues, each session was attended and spoken at by the General Secretary or the Assistant General Secretaries Emma Hoddinott or Emma Foody. Ahead of each campaign day we held accompanying online 'meet your candidates' sessions.

Co-operative Change Showcase (12th October)

The Party's Co-operative Change Showcase was held at the Co-op Group HQ, Manchester and was attended by over 350 members and supporters. This one-day event celebrated the Party's recent General and Local Government Election successes. The event explored the Labour & Co-operative government's policy commitments to the co-operative and mutual sectors in a series of conversations, panel discussions and keynote speeches. The Westminster Government's commitments on co-op growth, community energy, local ownership and safer high streets were focussed on.

The programme included the following sessions:

- **Co-operation in Parliament** with Preet Kaur Gill, MP for Birmingham Edgbaston (chair); Andrew Pakes, MP for Peterborough; Emma Foody, MP for Cramlington and Killingworth; Jack Abbott, MP for Ipswich
- **Co-operation in the Devolved Nations** with Paul Sweeney, MSP for Glasgow and Co-operative Party NEC Member (chair); Becky Gittins, MP for Clwyd East and Sarah Boyack, MSP for Lothian
- **Co-operative campaigning:** action on retail crime with Rachael Maskell, MP for York Central (chair); Paul Gerrard, Campaigns, Public Affairs and Board Secretariat Director at Co-op; Emily Spurrell, Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside; Jayne Allport, National Officer USDAW
- **Co-operative Communities** with Jo Platt, MP for Leigh & Atherton (chair); Alex Norris, MP for Nottingham North and Kimberley and Minister for Democracy and Local Growth; Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader of Oldham Council and Annoushka Deighton, Friends of Stretford Public Hall

Sponsorship and support - we were delighted that the Showcase was co-sponsored by the Co-op Group, BSA, Social Enterprise UK, Better Society Capital and USDAW. During the lunch break attendees were able to visit the small exhibition area with stalls provided by the event's sponsors, other exhibitors included Causeway Collective and Co-ops UK. The Co-op Councils Innovation Network (CCIN) were pleased to launch their Councils' Co-operative Development Toolkit at the event.



Retail Crime Summit (12th November)

The Retail Crime Summit was organised by the Co-operative Party, USDAW and the Co-op Group to mark Respect for Shopworkers Week. The Summit brought together retailers, Police and Crime Commissioners, mayors and deputy mayors and other stakeholders to discuss the campaign against retail crime, the commitments made by the new Labour Government, and what needs to happen next to protect shopworkers.

Speakers included: **Dame Diana Johnson MP**, Minister of State for Policing, Fire and Crime Prevention; **Lord David Hanson**, Minister of State (Home Office); David Skaith, York and North Yorkshire Mayor; Helen Clayton, Senior Crime and Security Manager, Sainsbury's; Chris Chandler, Head of Store Support, Midcounties; Stuart Toogood, West Midlands Police; Duncan O'Leary and the New Futures Network.

Co-operative Change: Co-operative Party's Priorities Launch (14 June)

Officially launched by **Jim McMahon MP** and **Preet Gill MP** in Birmingham on 14 June, this online event gave senior figures in the Party the opportunity to talk about our four main campaign priorities for the next Government, as well as give our members the opportunity to take part and show their commitment ahead of the General Election. Live-streamed on YouTube, the event used the Co-operative Party's social media tools to share these Priorities with our wider audience of followers on X/Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok and was attended in-person by a group of local and invited members and supporters, who were attending Co-ops UK's annual Co-op Congress.

Annual Labour Party Conference (21/25 September)

The Party attended the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool, with the General Secretary giving sororal greetings from the Conference platform and the staff team delivering and taking part in a series of successful and well-attended fringe events, as follows:

- **Growing co-operatives and mutuals: Labour's mission, in partnership with Building Societies Association** with Douglas Alexander MP, Minister of State (Dept. of Business and Trade); Dominic Kendal-Ward - Group Secretary and General Counsel, Co-op; Rose Marley - Chief Executive, Co-ops UK; Kevin Parry, chair Nationwide; chair Emma Hoddinott, Assistant General Secretary, Co-op Party
- **A million owners of energy: a community-owned revolution, in partnership with Yunity** with Michaela Cryar - Director, Yunity; Miatta Fahnbulleh MP – Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Dept of Energy Security & Net Zero); Ali Abbas - Director, Greater Manchester Community Renewables; Chair Andrew Pakes MP (Peterborough)
- **Co-operatives in the rural economy** (invite only) breakfast roundtable, *in partnership with Arla UK*
- **Power in your hands: community ownership driving local growth, in partnership with Power to Change** with Jim McMahon MP – Minister of State (Housing, Communities and Local Government); Sarah Longlands – Chief Executive, CLES; Ailbhe McNabola - Deputy Chief Executive, Power to Change; Deana Bamford, Coalville CAN and Chair – Emma Foody MP (Cramlington and Killingworth)

In addition, the Party, working with the Co-op Group, held an evening reception which was addressed by the Secretary of State for Business and Trade and Co-op Group CEO.



Local Government Forum (31st July)

Branded “Local Co-operative Change”, this online evening event built on our recent successes in May’s elections, profiling new councils, councillors, Mayors and PCCs, while also building on the recent Kings Speech and the Party’s campaigns on increased Devolution, the Crime Bill to protect and respect shopworkers and a new Energy Bill and Local Power Plan. In a busy year for the Party, our traditional one-day event was shortened to a format that fitted into a weekday evening. Co-operative speakers from across local government included **Jim McMahon OBE MP**, Chair, Co-op Party and Minister of State for English Devolution and Local Government at Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government; **Mete Coban**, former Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport, London Borough of Hackney and now London Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy; Cllr Joe Fagan, Leader, South Lanarkshire Council; Cllr Shanika Mahendran, Cabinet Member for Economy, Sustainability and Innovation, Milton Keynes City Council; Cllr Richard Olszewski, Leader, Camden Council; Cllr Jim Robbins, Leader, Swindon Borough Council; Baroness Wilcox of Newport, former Leader of Welsh Local Government Association and Newport City Council.

Annual General Meeting of Co-op Party Ltd (7th September)

Postponed due to the announcement of the General Election, the rescheduled AGM took place on 7 September. This is one of the main ways that members can engage in the democracy of our Party and was held online on Zoom. 116 members, including 45 delegates representing twenty-four local Co-operative Parties, Societies and affiliates, were present at the AGM. Minutes are available here: [Co-operative Party AGM 2024](#).

Equalities Conference (9th November)

Equality is one of the founding principles of the co-operative movement and central to our Party. At Party’s third annual Equalities Conference we highlighted some of the diverse themes that cut across our communities and impact us all, sharing ideas and discusses how to create change in a co-operative and intersectional way. Speakers included **Anneliese Dodds MP** – Labour & Co-operative Minister for Women and Equalities and Minister of State (Development); Cllr Valerie Bossman-Quarshie (Islington Borough); Cllr Lilith Fenris (Llanelli); Cllr Finlay Gordon-McCusker (Stoke-on Trent); Dr Leanne Dawson (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Consultant; Author; and Academic); Graeme Atherton (Director, Ruskin Institute for Social Equity (RISE)); Cllr Dr Kindy Sandhu (Coventry City Council, Co-operative Party NEC); and Jennifer Hemingway (Co-operative Party Equalities Officer).

Bright Futures Co-op Westminster Event (December)

To mark the UN International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, we brought together politicians, co-ops and modern slavery survivors to discuss the Bright Future co-operative and the transformative role it is playing supporting survivors into safe and secure employment. Bright Future was founded as a co-op in 2020 and now comprises more than 30 members including major retailers, who work with survivor organisations to match survivors with work placements. Representatives from both the Home Office and Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner’s office were present at the roundtable and pledged to progress further work to promote Bright Future and the model it offers.



Other conference and events

Labour Local Government Conference (10/11 February)

Party Officers attended the Labour Local Government conference and ran a stall, with campaigning content on local ownership and an accompanying fringe which was addressed by Party Chair and Shadow Local Government Minister Jim McMahon MP.

Scottish Labour (16/18 February) & Welsh Labour (15/17 November) Conferences

The Party had a full presence on Welsh and Scottish Labour Party conference platforms, as well as holding fringe events and stands in the exhibition. Fringes were well attended and profiled Co-operative elected representatives and figures from the co-operative movement:

- Scottish Co-operative Party Fringe: Ambition For Change: Growing the Co-operative Economy In Scotland with (chair) Kirsty McNeill, Scottish Labour & Co-operative PPC for Midlothian; Kirsteen Sullivan, Scottish Labour & Co-operative PPC for Bathgate and Linlithgow; Daniel Johnson MSP, Scottish Labour & Co-operative MSP for Edinburgh Southern and Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Business and Fair Work.
- Welsh Labour Conference Fringe: Doubling the size of the co-operative sector in Wales – How to do it and how to maximise impact. With Rebecca Evans MS, Welsh Labour and Wales Co-op Party Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning, and specialists from the co-operative movement..

Co-operative Societies Retail Conference (15/17 March)

Party Officers attended and had a stall at the Co-operative Retail Society Conference, and the General Secretary spoke from the platform.

Co-op Congress (14/15 June)

Party Officers staffed a stall at this annual gathering of co-operatives organised by Co-ops UK and the General Secretary and Party Chair spoke from the platform.

Launch of Co-op Group Social Mobility Report (September)

Party Chair Jim McMahon MP spoke at the launch of the Co-op Group's new report.

EOA Conference (27th November)

The General Secretary spoke at the EOA Conference on behalf of the Party.

Responsible Finance Member Day (27th November)

The Policy Officer spoke at Responsible Finance's Member Day on behalf of the Party.

Democratic Business Summit (3rd December)

The Policy Officer attended the Democratic Business Summit on behalf of the Party.



Welsh Labour leadership hustings (11 January)

This Welsh member's event took place with prospective candidates for Welsh Labour leader - Vaughan Gething MS and Jeremy Miles MS.

Social Media

Throughout 2024 the Party sought to utilise its social media presence to inspire its audiences. The Party made more use of a wider range of social media platforms including BlueSky, TikTok and Instagram. This work is a year-round endeavour of the Party, but it was especially important through the period of the General Election. As a case study for the Party's work in this area through 2024, below is a snapshot from the General Election.

General Election social media

The Party made the most of the expanded digital and communications capacity to deliver creative, focused content which raised awareness of candidates, the four policy priorities and wider campaign activity. This was successfully delivered by investing in doubling the size of the communications staff team over the recent years.

As the campaign began, the Communications team rapidly scaled up the level of output on all channels, including email and social media. The Communications team deployed diversified content across different social media channels, with tailored made content for each. This helped to expand reach to new and varied audiences. Party fundraising further enabled expanded social media advertising, leading to an increase of 15,000 to the Party supporter list.

Video content was an important feature of the campaign, with staff travelling regularly to capture high quality communications content for the Party and candidates. This included regular site visits during the short campaign to various co-operative and community-owned organisations.

Overall, the output from the communications and digital team was well-received by various audiences, candidates and stakeholders.

The statistics for the communications and digital campaign are:

- 6.64 million impressions across all social media
- 285,086 total engagements across all social media
- Facebook: over 70,000 link clicks, over 273,000 reach, over 300,000 impressions.
- Instagram: over 921,000 impressions, post-reach over 750,000, daily average impressions over 21,000.
- Twitter: over 396,000 impressions, individual tweets over 45,000 impressions.



Media coverage

Throughout the year, the Party aimed to expand coverage of the Party and its activities in traditional media, including print and broadcast. During 2024, the Party produced a joint letter calling for broadcasters to correctly identify Labour & Co-operative candidates, with 1,000 members signing.

These efforts, undertaken by both Party staff and elected representatives, have led to an increase in coverage for the Party, including:

- A joint op-ed from Tulip Siddiq MP (Shadow City Minister) and the General Secretary on Labour's commitment to double the size of the co-operative and mutual financial services sector
- New Statesman article on the Party's community ownership policy work
- Politics.UK op-ed by the General Secretary on the Party and its work
- PoliticsHome interview with Party Chair Jim McMahon MP on the Party's influence on Labour policy
- The House Magazine profiled the General Secretary
- The General Secretary on Times Radio on the issue of Retail Crime.
- The Party was featured and quoted within the Mirror on the issue of Healthy Start Vouchers, following analysis the Party compiled.
- Following a PMQ which Labour & Co-op MP Emma Foody asked on the issue of ticket touts, the Party was quoted in both the Mirror and Guardian.

In addition to traditional media, the General Secretary participated in a Reddit 'Ask Me Anything' (AMA) on r/UKPolitics. This helped the Party to connect with audiences outside of traditional broadcast and print.

Further campaigning

Campaign against ticket toutting

The party campaigned against the issue of ticket touts during 2024. Activity undertaken by the party and its representatives include Emma Foody MP leading a Westminster Hall debate; party officers presenting at the All-Party Group, and regular campaign content to members and supporters. The Government announced new measures on curbing the price gouging that touts had been involved in as well, as a broader consultation on the sector.

Co-operatives on the curriculum campaign

In the second half of 2024, the Party worked with Co-operatives UK and the Co-operative College on a campaign to have co-operatives and mutuals included in the National Curriculum for England, which was undergoing review. A submission was made to the consultation and a petition for members was launched. Elected representatives raised the issue in a Westminster Hall debate.



Have an engaged, diverse and growing individual and organisational membership that values the Party and its work

Introduction

In a busy electoral year, the Party continued to work to strengthen internal party activity, ensuring that members get the most out of their membership experience. This work featured a range of activities designed to improve member experience and engagement.

In advance of the General Election, the Party undertook a broad range of activity to encourage membership engagement with the campaign. The Party held 'Meet the Candidate' sessions with Prospective Parliamentary Candidates, where members had the opportunity to meet candidates and discuss local issues and policies. Six practical member-focussed campaign training sessions were held, which provided information on various forms of electioneering.

In addition to the Party's Candidate Development Programme for local councillors, the Party has provided wider training opportunities for members, including new officer training, new treasurer training, and workshops on both antisemitism and anti-islamophobia.

A member survey was conducted in 2024, both online and through The Pioneer, capturing member experience and expectations of membership. Party staff will use findings to continue improving member experience and engagement.



Individual Membership & Supporter List Growth

At the end of 2024, the Party had achieved a small increase in membership, to 13,428 individual members across the country. Despite the increase, the Party did not reach its membership growth goal through the year. This was because of a larger attrition rate than previous years combined with slower recruitment. The Party achieved considerable growth in its supporter list and subscribers due to the work of the communications and staff team, with a 20% increase from 2023 to 108,684 people.

'Co-operative Party Live' sessions

The Party's commitment to sharing its work to a wider membership audience through online events continued in 2024 and are increasingly a valuable informative resource for members. More information on content covered is listed below. Policy sessions are recorded and made available to view on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ukcooparty/videos>. Through 2024 'Co-op Party Live' sessions included:

Warm Welcome Hubs

David Barclay, Campaign Director of Warm Welcome; Cllr Francesca Brennan, Inverclyde Council.

Retail Crime

Paul Gerrard, Co-op; Emily Spurrell, PCC for Liverpool; Paddy Lillis, USDAW.

Community Energy

Michaela Cryar, Yonunity; Afsheen Rashid, Repowering London; Alistair MacPherson, Plymouth CE.

Building Your Co-operative Manifesto

Cllr Sue Smith, Rochdale; Cllr Matt Brown, Preston and Cllr Vince Maple, Medway Council.

Co-operative Growth (the Economy)

Andrew O'Brien, Demos; Glenn Bowen, Cwmpas; Sarah Longlands, CLES.

Equalities – LGBTQ+ History Month

Local Ownership

Cllr Kemi Akinola, Wandsworth and Prof. Mark Gregory.

What's next for the Household Support Fund

Cllr Eleanor Thompson, Leeds and Georgia Power, Children's Society.

International Women's Day

Nan Sloane, Bec Brookes and Kemi Akinola

Online Iftar

Anas Sawar MSP Leader of Scottish Labour Party

Local Government election launch event

Tracy Brabin Mayor of West Yorkshire; Cllr James Lewis, Leader Leeds City Council; David Allen - Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner Candidate for Cumbria.

Sustainable High Streets

Jim McMahon MP; Power to Change ; We're Right Here campaign; Stretford Public Hall.

Black History Month: Reclaiming Narratives & World Mental Health Day.

Building Stronger Communities

Gareth Snell, MP for Stoke on Trent Central with Hope not Hate and All Souls Bolton.

End the Ticket Price Rip-Off

Emma Foody MP; Rob Davis, The Guardian; Adam Webb, Fanfair.

Re-Launch of Updated Build Your Own Manifesto tool

Cllr Gareth Dowling, Dept Leader West Lancs Council; Vince Maple, Leader Medway Council and Kate Ewart, Leader Cornwall Labour Group.

Learning from international co-op growth

Roser Hernandez, Deputy Director General of Social Economy and Co-operatives of the Generalitat de Catalunya; Baroness Thornton and Dunia Rosello, Suara Co-operative.



Member training

Through 2024 the Party continued to offer its members a range of training opportunities. In addition to officer training outlined later in the review this included static training modules on protected characteristics, new member training, bystander training, antisemitism and anti-islamophobia training. In 2024 there was a particular focus on practical campaigning training. In the Spring several 'how-to' online training sessions were held to encourage member activity and engagement in advance of the General Election. This included two programmes being delivered which included sessions on:

- Digital campaigning
- Mobilising members
- Phone banking
- Branch and CLP mobilising

New Members Summer School

In July and August, the Party ran a series of short Summer School online events aimed at helping members find out more about who we are, what we do, how to get active and what support we give to get the most out of membership. These Summer School events were aimed at newer members who may have joined in the last few years. The events at this Summer School included:

- Getting the most out of your membership
- The Co-operative Party link with Labour
- Introduction to local government
- The Co-operative Party link with the co-operative movement
- Introduction to the Co-operative Party equalities networks
- Introduction to Co-operative Party campaigns
- Introduction to being a party officer (training)

Local Party events with elected representatives

The Party has sought to better ensure that local members' meetings featured new or returning MPs. This included Jo Platt MP with North West and Northern Ireland members; Alex Norris MP with East Midlands members; Luke Pollard MP with South West members and Metro Mayor Oliver Coppard with South Yorkshire members.

Equalities

The Party's Equalities Networks have been active throughout the year, with member-led events regularly taking place. In addition to a well-attended Equalities Conference, Equalities Network Committee elections were held and the Chris Herries Programme for women's leadership was opened for applications for 2025, with new delivery partner - Co-operative College. Further details of the Equalities Network activities are contained in Strategic Objective 5.



The Pioneer & Buzz

The Party continued to provide written publications and updates to our membership. For our member magazine, The Pioneer, the Party published a General Election special which profiled our candidates and covered the four priority policy areas and our key campaigns.

For the Autumn & Winter edition, The Pioneer was a post-election edition covering the Party's historic election success and featured a written piece from the Prime Minister. This edition saw Party staff revise and refresh the look and design of The Pioneer.

The Party continued to produce and distribute a Local and National Buzz newsletter and our regular local government update for councillors across the country.

Scottish and Welsh member led policy processes

At the end of 2024, the Party began the Scottish and Welsh members policy processes ahead of future manifestos and elections for the Welsh Senedd and Scottish Parliament. These processes have already had open members sessions and stimulus questions and papers have been circulated.



Ensure the Party is organisationally and financially stable



Party AGM

The Co-operative Party AGM took place on 7th September, enabling members and delegates to take part in the Party's democratic processes via an online meeting. AGM participants approved the Party's accounts, performance, future plans and rule changes.

Officer training

The Party continued to provide training for existing or new local Party officers. During 2024, this included treasurer and secretary training and member retention training.

Social Media advertising development

To maximise the Party's social media visibility, the Party undertook development work around its ability to utilise social media advertising even more effectively. This work saw the Party partner with external experts and led to a positive impact on its online footprint and its ability to understand the new member pipeline.

Membership Income

In 2024, membership income increased to £506,000, rising from £482,000 in 2023. This sustained growth in membership income was driven by consistent recruitment and retention work by the Party staff team.

Fundraising

The Party expresses its gratitude for the generosity of our membership in supporting our operations. The Party worked closely with Party Councils to expand fundraising in advance of the General Election campaign – contributing additional funding to various campaign activities and candidate support.

The Party secured further individual donations during 2024 which help to expand the Party's social media advertising. This funding boost helped to increase the supporter list and Party visibility during the General Election period. The Party has put in place new systems to ensure compliance with the updated electoral law on donations.

Subscribing Societies

The Party's Subscribing Societies provide essential support and funding for our activities and operations. The Party engages extensively with Subscribing Societies on important issues that advance the cause of the co-operative movement – at home and abroad.

The Party offered speakers, stalls and video content for several Subscribing Societies' AGMs, including the Co-op Group, Midcounties, Central Co-op, and East of England Co-op. Each AGM voted in favour of retaining its support for the Party.

In addition to hosting the Retail Crime Summit with Subscribing Societies, the Party welcomed the Co-op Group CEO to the Westminster Parliamentary Group, co-ordinated a response to the government's planning consultation, attended and spoke at the Co-op Group's National Member Council and worked with Midcounties to produce a Westminster event that centred on Modern Slavery and the Bright Futures Co-op.

During Respect for Shopworkers Week, 11 – 17 November, a record number of Co-operative Parliamentarians conducted Co-op store visits, with these being highlighted by the Party's communications channels.



Equalities Committees and Review

The Party concluded its information gathering on the equalities network review. This information will now be used within the wider membership review the Party is launching. The Party will also use the review to inform the 2025 Policy Process, focusing on equalities.

In addition, through 2024 there were training and policy events produced by the Party and by the networks committees themselves. The networks committees contributed to the member led policy process. There were also training sessions for potential new local election candidates with protected characteristics, events to mark particular events in the year (some of which were outlined within the Co-op Party Live reporting), and the networks undertook a range of online and in-person events for their members. The networks committees also contributed to the Party's blog.

Towards the end of 2024, the Party supported the election of new equalities networks committee members. This work will be concluded in early 2025.



Operations and Governance

National Executive Committee (NEC)

As the Party's governance body and Board, the NEC is elected by members, subscribing societies and affiliates every three years. The next NEC election will take place in 2026.

NEC Members

- Stella Creasy MP: England East & London
- Chris Vince MP: England East & London
- Jamie McMahon: England Midlands
- Kindy Sandhu: England Midlands
- Michael Bell: England North
- Abigail Marshall: Katung England North
- Dr Savneet Bains: England South
- Lucy Naylor: England South
- Tony McMullan: Northern Ireland
- Ruth Hall: Scotland
- Mary Wimbury: Wales
- Preet Kaur Gill MP: Parliamentary Group
- Jim McMahon MP: Parliamentary Group [Chair]
- Arooj Shah: Elected Representatives
- Paul Sweeney MSP: Elected Representatives
- Sarah McCarthy-Fry: Co-operative Group
- Sarah Newens: Co-operative Group
- Maria Lee: Retail Societies
- Eddie Thorn: Retail Societies
- Rev. Chris Wilson: Affiliates
- Prof. Cecile Wright: BAME
- Sandra Wilson: (dis)Ability
- Ashley Halstead: LGBTQ+
- Ellie Ormsby: Youth



Party Staff

The Co-operative Party now employs 20 staff – seven full time and thirteen part time.

In 2024, we said goodbye to Emma Foody, Assistant General Secretary, who was elected to Parliament at the General Election. We welcomed David McGregor for the short campaign in a communications role. We wish them both well for the future.

New staff members included Caitlin Prowle, joining as Interim Head of Political Affairs, Andy Jackson (Design Officer) and David McGregor (Communications Officer). These additions have helped strengthen the staff team and its activities.

Eight of the Party's staff work in Head Office (in London). The remaining staff work from Scotland, Wales, the Midlands and the North.

- General Secretary: Joe Fortune
- Assistant General Secretary: Emma Hoddinott [Part time]
- Head of Political Affairs: Caitlin Prowle (from August 2024)
- Head of Communications: Georgia O'Brien
- Finance & Office Manager: Dorota Kseba
- Policy Officer: Daniel Monaghan
- Political Officer (Scotland): Richard McCready [Part time]
- Digital Officer (Mobilisation): Beth Cheshire [Part time]
- Equalities Officer: Jennifer Hemingway [Part time]
- Political and Membership Officer (Wales): Huw Lewis [Part time]
- Campaigns Officer: Eva Murray [Part time]
- Membership Officer: Joel Northcott
- Digital Officer (Content): Will Sorenson
- Design Officer: Andy Jackson [Part time]
- Events Co-ordinator: Issy Oozeerally [Part time]
- Regional Organiser and Membership Assistant: Stephen Barry-Stanners [Part Time]
- Regional Organiser: James Butler [Part time]
- Regional Organiser: John Cook [Part Time]
- Regional Organiser and Local Government: Gareth Dowling [Part Time]
- Board Secretary: Karen Wilkie [Part Time]
- Communications Officer: David McGregor (June – July 2024)

Electoral reporting and returns

The Party undertook intense pre- and post-election reporting, including weekly reporting, briefings and guideline changes from the Electoral Commission. Following the election, the Party submitted its full returns and reports. An independent audit took place at the end of the year, with the full audit report sent to the Electoral Commission.

Social Media Advertising Audit

During 2024, the Party had an expert third party work with officers to conduct an audit of social media advertising. The purpose of this audit was to ensure that the Party remains competitive in its use and delivery of social media advertising. This has been a valuable activity and leaves officers with a strong understanding of our strategy and approach.



Fair Tax Mark

In 2024, the Party was again awarded the Fair Tax Mark and continued to be the only political party in the country to do so. Most organisations accredited with the Fair Tax Mark are co-operatives and mutuals.

Living Wage

The Co-operative Party has maintained its accreditation as a Living Wage Employer in 2024.

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 & Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, reporting to both the Electoral Commission and the Financial Conduct Authority. Detailed information on the Party's compliance can be found separately in the Board Report and Accounts 2024, which will be available at the AGM in summer 2025.



the co-operative party

**Unit 13, 83 Crampton Street,
London, SE17 3BU**

**020 7367 4150
mail@party.coop**

www.party.coop

Co-operative Party Limited is a registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Registered no. 30027R.

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

