



Empowering Communities through Empowered Councils

The Co-operative Party



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Foreword



For far too long, power has been a distant concept for many communities. Decision-making has been hoarded by the centre, leaving local people with little say in what happens in their areas. Boarded up shops, declining highstreets and disappearing services have become commonplace in far too many places, with communities paying the price. This distance from power has had real consequences, with levels of political trust in decline and a profound disbelief in politics as a vehicle for real change.

Bringing power closer to people must be one of our defining missions as a Labour Party in power. The Co-operative Party has always believed that community empowerment is the most powerful tool for enabling communities to feel a sense of pride and control over their local area. Since its earliest days, our movement has been built around empowering members and communities – through self-responsibility, solidarity and equity. These enduring values should be at the heart of building strong, resilient communities which can take agency in delivering change locally.

During my time as Leader of Oldham Council, we recognised the need to rebuild trust and agency within the communities we served. Residents were tired of feeling they weren't listened to and included in decision-making and service provision. The Council made building a new relationship with communities a priority – putting people and place at the heart of the Council's work. Creating the opportunity for local communities to contribute and have their say was vital to restoring a sense of pride and resilience in the borough. With the Council as a supportive partner, communities took the initiative in helping to drive the change they wanted to see. This experience led Oldham to become one of the original co-operative councils, known across the country for our approach to building stronger relationships between councils and the local state.

We have a real opportunity with a Labour Government pursuing a programme of local government reform and genuine community empowerment to establish a permanent culture shift across the country – which builds a closer partnership between council and communities. Local government must have the conviction to trust local communities to help reshape and rejuvenate their local area – whether through its local services, green spaces or high streets. I believe this cultural shift can help the Labour Government achieve its objectives of national renewal – strengthening local partnerships in which everyone contributes, and everyone benefits.

This agenda gives us the opportunity to reset the relationship between communities and political power, and begin to rebuild trust in politics from the ground up. This report sets out some of the ways we could go about this, and I look forward to working with Co-operative councillors and our wider movement to achieve the devolution of power we have championed for so long.

Jim McMahon, Co-operative Party Chair

Introduction



Since its inception, the co-operative movement has recognised the value and importance of empowering communities to building strong, resilient and cohesive places. When communities are empowered, they can deliver transformative change to their area – acting as an economic and political force alongside local and national authorities.

The scale of challenges the Labour Government faces in its mission to deliver national renewal will require bold thinking, which seeks to create a permanent shift in power from Westminster and Whitehall to councils and communities. The English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill provides the opportunity to achieve the process of double devolution – strengthening both local government and community powers. Only by supporting resilient and strong communities will Britain begin to rebuild its social and economic capital.

The shift in powers must also be accompanied by a shift in culture, which recognises diminished levels of trust in public institutions to improve the lives of local residents. In areas dealing with low levels of trust and alienation from local and national authorities, building co-operation between the council and wider community stakeholders is vital. Councils are well placed to build these relationships, as they are significantly more trusted than central government and private companies to deliver local services.

This paper advocates that community empowerment should become a central goal of local government – helping to build up the agency of local communities to reshape and rejuvenate their local area. As described by Locality, it will require a shift from “a transactional to a relational state”². This will mean establishing a new co-operative relationship between councils, communities and local residents which builds genuine community power and includes them in decision-making.

Double devolution is a key theme – with the paper looking into why double devolution is vital to breaking out of the centralisation and economic stagnation which has impacted Britain. The new English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill and Pride in Place Programme are central focuses for how double devolution can be achieved and embedded into the UK’s governance going forward.

This paper will discuss how community power can be built through community engagement, co-production and support for local co-operative service delivery. This draws on the original values and principles of the co-operative movement – self-help, equity, solidarity and democracy. By doing with communities, rather than to them, councils can help rebuild trust in local institutions and local government to effect change which makes peoples’ lives better and gives them pride in their community.

Building Co-operative Relationships



The reforms of the Labour Government have opened the opportunity for a once in a generation chance at transforming the way councils work with and deliver for the local communities they serve.

In many areas of the country, there is a deep sense of alienation from the institutions which govern and deliver services to communities. In these areas, communities often feel disempowered to control the direction and development of their local area – whether that's the high street or local services. The closure of businesses or local institutions – such as libraries, civic centres, shops or pubs – has a significant impact on the perception of the locality. A sense of irreversible decline increases alienation and disengagement amongst local residents. This trend is not inevitable nor is it irreversible. It does, however, rely on councils providing their communities with a genuine say over the system and the services they receive. The Commission on the UK's Future found 8 in 10 believe local people should have greater involvement in decision making and spending which directly affect them³. This self-responsibility is at the very heart of co-operative politics, which has always sought to empower local communities to take control and improve their lives. It reflects a belief that communities have the lived-expertise and capabilities to help transform their area for the better.

Greater community say in decision making must work to breakdown the entrenched concerns Westminster and councils have about giving away power. For too long, the dominant paternalistic view has pervaded which has inhibited communities influence on local decision-making. But empowering communities does not mean councils and councillors reducing their power and control. Rather it means developing a new relationship and way of delivering change with communities. Evidence from the Big Local programme



revealed that community involvement in local decision-making creates a greater sense of engagement and trust amongst residents – strengthening the relationship between local authorities and communities⁴. It is also popular with local communities, with polling in *Holding on to Hope* finding 65% of respondents believe local people should be granted greater power and resources on public spending decisions⁵.

Increasing community participation in local decision-making can not only help to restore a sense of agency and control for local residents, but can help to save local councils money by creating more tailored services which are attuned to local needs⁶. This has been particularly successful in the design of services which are most effective when they are either preventative or rely on early intervention – such as youth services.

The councils committed to building co-operative relationships with communities and residents can give them agency to reshape and rejuvenate their local area as partners. A key aspect in creating a genuine co-operative relationship is local government facilitating the capacity building of community groups. Local Trust identified that local authorities can ‘invest to save’ by building the capacity of community organisations to deliver services and manage assets⁷ – reducing costs to local authorities long-term. Each area will differ in its initial capacity for community-led services and interventions. In some areas, they will have the ability to draw on a large pool of professionals or retired professionals, which can more rapidly assemble to own and manage a service or asset. In more deprived areas with less pre-existing social capital, councils will need to support capacity building of community groups, via funding, training and business support. This is vital, as the most deprived communities with the least social capital are those with the lowest trust in institutions and government’s ability to create change. Building a strong partnership between council and community is most required in these areas to help restore trust and empower community to take greater control of their local area.

Agency and empowerment are central to rebuilding the trust between councils and communities – enabling them to feel a greater sense of control over their local area and its future. This requires local councils to actively build a network of partners – including individual residents, community organisations, the wider public sector and more – to help co-produce service design and delivery. The new neighbourhood governance rules introduced by the English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill provide councils the opportunity to begin implementing co-operative relationships and co-production. This can support the development of services which are informed by what local residents actually want, rather than what the council believes they want. This co-production can create meaningful accountability, utilising the lived experience and local expertise of residents and community groups. The process of meaningful co-production of services will look different in each council and will need to be determined by the local circumstances of an area. However, this is not an argument against co-production, rather it is a reflection of the diversity of local councils and local requirements – and an argument for the creation of services which are tailored to community need. Council co-production with communities could create new approaches to social care, green space management, youth services, housing, community hubs, energy generation and much more. It can be the basis for giving communities greater control over their lives and the services they rely on day-to-day.



As these relationships between councils and communities develop, local authorities can embed this cultural change by supporting the delivery of services through co-operatives, mutuals and community-owned enterprises. Economic development through these democratically-owned models will help to increase local control over assets and firms, helping to retain wealth locally. Co-operative and community-owned enterprises have an exceptional track record of business resilience, with co-operatives being twice as likely to survive the first five years of trading and community owned business having a 94% long-term survival rate⁸. Co-operatives tend to create a workplace which promotes wellbeing, productivity and job satisfaction. Co-operatives generally have far lower levels of staff turnover, better talent retention, higher average wellbeing and lower absenteeism. This is in part due to the equitable and democratic nature of co-operatives which provide workers and members with a stake and voice⁹. Facilitating co-operative growth therefore helps to achieve the objectives of empowering the local community, increasing inclusive economic growth and retaining wealth locally.

New deeper partnerships and collaboration could also be established between councils themselves. Collaboration and knowledge transfer of best practice and ‘what’s worked’ can be essential to rolling-out successful community-led interventions to other councils. The reorganisation of local government provides an opportunity for closer collaboration between local authorities – through mechanisms such as Strategic Authorities. Councils can reinforce this collaboration by working together, rather than in silos, to deliver change within regions and expand innovative new initiatives which build community power.

Councils implementing co-operative values and practices is not new. The concept of ‘co-operative councils’ emerged at the time of the Global Financial Crisis and the Conservative-led austerity programme which significantly reduced local government budgets.

Throughout this period, co-operative council initiatives have been built by the efforts of pioneering local authorities which have put co-operative values and principles at the heart of their approach to governance and service delivery. Whether its Oldham and Preston or Lambeth and Plymouth, these councils have taken an innovative approach to the delivery of services, community engagement and co-production. There are now over 48 full council members of the Co-operative Council Innovation Network (CCIN) which was founded in 2012 to promote co-operative values and policies across local government.

The rationale for establishing co-operative principles in local councils is captured in *Towards Co-operative Councils* – “*The principle of co-operation between service provider and user ... and it implies a relationship of equal power and mutual respect between both sides. This is fundamental and it requires a reshaping of the relationship between the citizen and the state so that the citizen is in control*”¹⁰. The ambition to form a co-operative relationship between provider and user has been taken on by several councils, harnessing different approaches to community empowerment. These council case studies highlight how local authorities can build their own approaches to community empowerment and provide inspiration for motivated councils hoping to achieve similar objectives.



Case study

Preston City Council

The Preston City Council developed a model of 'community wealth building', known as 'The Preston Model', which adopted a whole system approach to retain spending locally.

The Preston City Council, in partnership with major anchor institutions – such as the NHS trusts, universities and more – aimed to procure from local co-operatives, SMEs and community-owned businesses. This supported the development of more pluralised ownership of services and assets which were locally rooted in the Preston area.

Over time, the Preston Model has retained hundreds of millions of pounds in local government spending in the local and regional economy – while promoting the development of new co-operatives and increasing the uptake of organisations paying the Living Wage. Worker co-operatives in tech, catering and digital services were all supported to start-up and grow by the initiatives established as part of the Preston Model.



Case study

Oldham Borough Council

Oldham took a place and people first approach – with the core ambition of changing from a culture of ‘doing to’ towards a culture of ‘doing with’ communities. This meant bringing communities and residents into the decision-making process – embedding them in service co-production. Oldham Council sought to empower local community groups to run services and assets and support local co-operatives and SMEs by promoting fairer procurement. Oldham Council aimed to become a civic custodian, rather than a corporate landlord – providing council-owned properties at low-cost to community-owned and social businesses. This meant disused buildings were returned to use while supporting new or existing social business ventures to start-up and develop.

The Council’s efforts to embed a co-operative ethos have been widely praised, with its improved service design, resident focus and community engagement receiving award winning recognition¹¹.



Case study

Lambeth Borough Council

Lambeth Council aimed to implement co-operative principles throughout service design, commissioning and local economic development. This included entrusting communities with the stewardship and ownership of services and assets. Social value procurement has been a key feature of Lambeth's development as a co-operative council.

Lambeth Council launched its Co-operative Parks Programme in 2013, with local community groups taking over the management and upkeep of parks and green spaces. This programme saw the development of Streatham Common Co-operative (SCCoop), which has managed several park and natural areas for over a decade in a community-led model.



Going forward, the opportunity is now for councils to create a proactive cultural shift to a more co-operative approach – taking advantage of the opportunity offered by the English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill and the Pride in Place programme to deliver real change.

These Government interventions, detailed below, mean the state can now play the role of an enabler and supporter of community initiative through local government. This role contrasts the previous Conservative Government's concept of the 'Big Society', which saw the state reduced and communities left to fend for themselves, without a supportive infrastructure. Under the new devolution agenda, councils will have the opportunity to permanently embed a new approach to local governance – one which listens closely to local voices and harnesses their lived experience and expertise to create more responsive and tailored council services.

The Opportunity of Double Devolution



The case for greater devolution is widely recognised across the political spectrum. The UK is one of the most centralised countries in the world – even after the major reforms of the previous Labour Government, which established parliaments in Scotland and Wales and reinvigorated the English devolution agenda.

Centralisation has held back the UK's economic development and rebalancing – entrenching some of the highest levels of regional inequality in the developed world. This has led to a multitude of negative effects – which has deepened the economic stagnation the UK is experiencing. Centralisation has led to highly concentrated investment – disproportionately favouring London and the South East. This has led to reduced productivity growth in other regions and nations of the UK – leading to brain drain and skills concentration.

In the current system, the limits on councils' decision-making powers and local tax raising ability reduces their capacity for governance and service delivery. It has also harmed local areas' capacity to react to crises and plan for the future. This has been further undermined by the previous Conservative Government's deep cuts to local government budgets. Local expertise and knowledge are often overlooked as a result of centralisation, leading to the development of one-size-fits-all economic strategies that fail to account for local areas' strengths, infrastructure and existing economic base.

Greater devolution is therefore pivotal to rebalancing the economy and unlocking inclusive growth in all nations and regions of the UK. Devolving greater powers and responsibilities to combined and local authorities will bring decision making closer to those it impacts directly – drawing on the lived experience and expertise of local residents.



The English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill marks a major step forward in achieving decentralisation. The reorganisation of local government will ensure every area has the opportunity to achieve the benefits of devolution – with a pathway to increase local powers over transport, skills, planning and economic development.

The English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill provides the opportunity to begin developing ‘double devolution’ systems – which consistently engage communities on decision-making. Each local authority will now be required to establish effective neighbourhood governance – creating a legal requirement to work proactively with local residents and community groups. This formalised structure begins the process of creating a cultural shift towards community empowerment – ensuring that council decisions are taken with communities, not for them. Neighbourhood governance will help to embed the principles of co-production, enhancing civic participation and decision-making. By having local communities take an active role in decision-making, it will help bring services closer to those they serve.

Contained within the Bill is a new Community Right to Buy (CRTB) – which will expand existing localism powers to usher in a new era of community rights. This new Community Right to Buy will go beyond existing provision from the Localism Act 2011 – enabling councils to work closely with community groups in reshaping local assets and institutions – helping to reverse the decline of town centres and high streets across the country. The CRTB is a landmark moment for community-led approaches to the delivery and ownership of goods, services and institutions. The CRTB gives community groups first right of refusal on listed Assets of Community Value (ACVs), enabling them to purchase assets without competition in an extended time window – rising from 6 to 12 months. The valuation of assets will either be agreed by the seller and buyer or alternatively through an independent valuation process. The definition of community assets will be widened to include additional important local assets, such as heritage buildings, so they are less at risk of loss or dereliction. The list of ACVs which can be purchased by community groups includes, but is not limited to, shops, pubs, village halls, community centres, cultural venues, music venues, and more. A specific category has also been created for sporting assets of community value (SACVs), which will see qualifying sports facilities automatically listed for an indefinite period. Councils will be able to support motivated community groups to use this power to take back control of the future of their high streets – with the ambition of shaping regeneration in a way which delivers what residents want and need.

Sitting alongside the new English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill is the Pride in Place funding programme, which will facilitate long-term regeneration of 250 places across the UK. For the most-deprived areas, this will mean receiving £20m in funding over the next decade. Pride in Place has three core aims – to build stronger communities, to create thriving places and to empower people to take back control. Building community agency to transform their local area through grassroots-led growth is at the centre of the Programme’s objectives. The Programme’s proposed interventions will focus on enabling communities to invest in and own local assets which may be disused or derelict – reviving both social spaces and green spaces. Along with physical regeneration, social regeneration interventions aim to build community cohesion and resilience – with a new Common Ground Resilience Fund to support these cohesion and resilience strengthening initiatives.



The Pride in Place Plans will be developed by Neighbourhood Boards, composed of local people, working with their local MP, councillors and wider community. Funding will be available to each Neighbourhood Board to build their capacity for engagement and delivery – with the specific goal of achieving deep engagement with their local residents to determine how best to spend the allocated money effectively. This will mean establishing participatory decision-making structures, which could include co-production workshops, participatory budgeting and residents feedback councils. The ambition is to ensure this community engagement builds trust and agency while including the voices of those less heard in the community. Neighbourhood Boards could become a pivotal mechanism for councils to embed more co-operative relationships permanently – with the Pride in Place Prospectus indicating that must transition to a community-led model by year three of operation¹². This could include the Neighbourhood Board converting to a formal co-operative or community benefit society model. The Boards provide the opportunity to build engagement while introducing innovative ways of bringing in community voice and representation on decision-making. Motivated councils should ensure these Neighbourhood Boards are effectively empowered to deliver on local priorities – rather than be viewed as merely a mandatory requirement.

These interventions provide the basis to achieve ‘double devolution’ – going beyond merely empowering town halls – but to empowering communities to play a leading role in determining the future of their local area, its economy and services. Councils can build on this double devolution opportunity by beginning to proactively build relationships with communities – establishing a permanent culture shift in favour of community empowerment. It can be the start of rebuilding trust and restoring pride in local government and local places across Britain.

Interventions for Community Empowerment



Empowering communities is not achieved through one intervention, but rather through a culture shift towards new co-operative and collaborative relationships which harness the power of local communities to deliver change and improvement.

There are several practical areas in which councils can work with community groups to deliver meaningful change – which increases local ownership and creates a more resilient local economy. The areas identified below lay out potential opportunities for councils which adopt a co-operative ethos to service delivery and local economic development in partnership with their communities. As these partnerships between councils and communities develop and capacity for community-led approaches increases, opportunities are available in far more services, ranging from social care and youth services to community allotments and childcare.

The Community Right to Buy



The new Community Right to Buy powers represent a historic opportunity for supporting and facilitating community led regeneration at a wider and larger scale than ever before – enabling communities to come together to reshape and reimagine their town centres. Community ownership can save and protect much loved local institutions and assets and can lead the regeneration of high streets with new mixed-use spaces – providing retail, leisure, residential and hospitality offerings.

Across the country, there are many pioneering examples of community-owned assets driving regeneration. Stretford Public Hall, a Grade II listed civic building, came into community ownership in 2015 with a community asset transfer from the council to Friends of Stretford Public Hall. This community group has led the regeneration of the building, assisted with funding from grant providers and a community share offer. The Public Hall is now a multi-use community hub – hosting arts, live music events, conferences, and wellbeing classes. It has been a core asset in the wider regeneration of Stretford town centre – demonstrating the efficacy of community-owned initiatives as a basis for wider regeneration.

Councils aiming to promote community power could undertake a range of interventions to make the most of the new CRTB. Mapping assets and land which may be eligible for the new CRTB, particularly sporting facilities, would be a clear starting point. Councils could provide training and foster peer-to-peer networks for community-owned groups purchasing, managing and regenerating assets and land. Councils could support and raise awareness of community share offers (CSOs) – which help raise capital to purchase and rejuvenate local community assets. Using council powers on planning to fast-track community owned projects and establishing a policy of public asset disposal in favour of community-ownership would cement a council's commitment to expanding community empowerment.

Community Energy



Central and local government have a clear leadership role in the energy transition, but they alone cannot deliver the net zero objective. Communities have a significant role to play in reaching net zero, delivering new energy generation capacity and improving energy efficiency. Councils committed to partnership with their communities can be enablers of a community-led energy transition.

Community owned renewable energy helps to transform people's relationship with the energy system. Community energy enables local communities to generate their own energy through solar, wind or hydro projects – producing clean energy which generates community benefit. Community energy groups are democratically owned and run – giving members greater control over the energy they produce and consume. This can help to reduce energy bills and create a surplus for reinvestment into communities. Further, it reduces residents and communities' reliance on energy generated by the Big 6 energy firms, establishing a genuine community stake in a cleaner energy system. A recent study found that community energy can generate up to 34 times the community benefit payments than commercial, privately owned renewable energy installations¹³.

Councils have a track record of supporting the development of new community energy groups and installations. Plymouth Council's development of Plymouth Energy Community (PEC) is a standout example of local government partnering with community groups to start-up and scale new community-owned renewable installations. The Council took the lead in convening residents, helping the start-up process, providing funding and making public land available for installation. The Plymouth Energy Community now generates power for thousands of homes each year, creating a surplus from energy sold to the grid which is spent on reducing local fuel poverty.

The opportunity for councils to support the development of community energy is greater than ever. The Government's Local Power Plan aims to deliver the largest expansion of community energy in British history, creating 1 million new owners of renewable energy and delivering 8GW worth of new community-owned energy – equivalent to three nuclear power stations. The Local Power Plan will make up to £600m of funding available to local councils to support community energy development. Councils will have the opportunity to empower residents to meet this energy transition ambition.

Councils wishing to create a new era of community-owned energy have an important role to play. They can serve as convenors and active supporters of new community energy groups – including through providing legal advice, business planning assistance, and project design. Councils can work to ensure local community energy groups have access to funding, project development and installation expertise to expand their generation capacity. They could also provide access to public land, buildings (i.e. schools) and office space to facilitate scale-up of community energy projects and installations.

Co-operative Development



New and existing co-operatives and mutuals can be the ideal delivery partner of services, which are locally-owned, accountable and mission led.

Progressive procurement or community wealth building strategies have been effective in expanding opportunities for co-operatives to deliver local services. Strengthening social value criteria has enabled councils to foster the development of co-operative service providers – creating a level playing field between co-operatives and other private businesses which may not pay the living wage or use offshore tax vehicles.

Preston Council has built up local co-operative development capacity to support new co-operatives and community owned businesses. This includes working with external partners on the creation of the Preston Co-operative Development Network – which incubates new co-operative start-ups.

Councils which want to build relationships with co-operatives and other democratic enterprises can support this objective by enhancing bespoke co-operative development capacity. This could be delivered through new or existing business support services and could include legal, governance, financial and business planning support. Councils can further these efforts by increasing social value criteria in tendering and procurement processes – creating a more level playing field between co-operatives and private outsourcing firms.

Co-operative & Community-led Housing



Councils can support the development of long-term affordable housing and civic spaces – by co-operating with community groups on the development of housing co-operatives and community land trusts (CLTs).

As member-owned and governed organisations, CLTs can be an effective way of establishing local community stewardship of new developments for the long-term. CLTs can be used to steward new developments, incorporating both housing, green spaces and other assets for community-use. This can help to ensure that new developments can be shaped by the needs of local communities, whilst retaining their long-term affordability through the trust model. New CLTs have housing co-operatives own property on the land, enabling the maintenance of low-cost housing for local residents which are members of the housing co-op.

Councils can undertake a range of interventions which would support new community-led and co-operative housing. This could include directly supporting the creation of CLTs – by incorporating CLT entities, delivering planning support and making training available. Councils can change their existing policies to support new CLT developments – including through the disposal of council land in favour of CLTs and housing co-ops – either through direct transfers or discounted sales. Finally, they could ensure there are funding mechanisms available for new housing co-ops or CLTs – such as low interest loans or grants.

Conclusion



Creating a lasting shift of power from central government to empowered communities will be vital in raising living standards, reducing inequality and rebuilding trust amongst the population. Changes are underway in transferring power out from Westminster and Whitehall – but this shift needs to be felt by all communities across the country – not just those in town halls. Councils have a decisive role to play as facilitators of community empowerment and agency. Establishing a new co-operative ethos at the heart of council relations with residents and communities can enable people to genuinely ‘take back control’ and transform their area for the better.

Footnotes



¹ <https://www.apse.org.uk/index.cfm/apse/news/articles/2022/despite-challenges-2022-survey-shows-continued-trust-in-local-councils-for-service-delivery/trust-and-confidence-in-councils-what-the-public-think/>

² Locality (2025) Community powered neighbourhoods: How community anchor organisations can transform our places.

³ Commission on the Future of the UK. (2022). A New Britain: Renewing our democracy and rebuilding our economy. Labour Party.

⁴ Locality (2025) Community powered neighbourhoods: How community anchor organisations can transform our places.

⁵ Co-operative Party & Hope Not Hate (2025). Holding on to Hope: Lessons from Community Britain.

⁶ Commission on the Future of the UK. (2022). A New Britain: Renewing our democracy and rebuilding our economy. Labour Party.

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⁸ Cowcher, C. (2024) Community Ownership: A better form of business. Plunkett UK. <https://plunkett.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Better-Business-Report-2024.pdf>

⁹ Lawrence, M. et al. (2018) Co-operatives Unleashed. New Economics Foundation. <https://neweconomics.org/uploads/files/co-ops-unleashed.pdf>

¹⁰ Reed, S. & Ussher, K. (2012) Towards Co-operative Councils: Empowering people to change their lives. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5454b808e4b03e44bada5cd6/t/54ed2b77e4b0978eebcc5d59/1424829303502/Co-opcouncils.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.lgcplus.com/idea-exchange/how-we-became-most-improved-council-16-09-2025/>

¹² MHCLG (2025) Pride in Place Programme Prospectus.

¹³ <https://www.aquatera.co.uk/news/community-owned-wind-farms-have-paid-their-communities-34-times-more-than-commercial-counterparts>

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