



Co-operative Party
Annual Review
2025

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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 Co-operative Party's strategic objectives are shown 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 2025 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 2025, another remarkable year for our Party and our movement. Building on the foundations laid over recent years, the Party has continued to strengthen its organisational capacity, deepen its political influence, and demonstrate the impact of co-operative values in action. The scale of our representation, the breadth of our campaigning and the seriousness with which government now engages with co-operative ideas all speak to the progress we have made together.

Building on the success in electing our largest ever Co-operative Party Parliamentary Group in 2024, in 2025 the Party began the work of translating long-standing campaigns into delivery. The Party saw its priorities reflected in the substance of government legislation; the inclusion of a new Community Right to Buy in the English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill, the embedding of community energy in the Great British Energy Act, and the advancement of protections for retail workers in the Crime & Policing Bill all represent historic achievements. These are policies the Party has championed for years.

This year also saw the Party's strongest ever presence across local and regional government. Close to a quarter of all Labour councillors are now Labour & Co-operative, a testament to the success of our candidate development work and the commitment of our members. Our support for candidates, from training and mentoring to communications and campaigning, has grown and expanded, setting a strong foundation for further local elections across the country in the coming years.

Beyond Westminster, the Party has continued its strong campaigning in Scotland and Wales, shaping policy platforms for the 2026 elections and supporting our MSPs and MSs in advancing co-operative solutions. Our Community Britain campaign has provided a powerful narrative for the year, showcasing the potential of empowered communities and giving voice to the people and places already building a more co-operative future.

The Party's events, training and communications programme has grown in ambition and reach, helping to inspire and educate our members and the wider movement. Our organisational strength has continued to deepen, with renewed support from our subscribing societies, investment in our staff team, and ongoing work to modernise our digital infrastructure.

I would like to thank our members, both individual and organisational, for their continued support. I also want to acknowledge the dedication of our NEC, our local officers, and our staff team, whose hard work throughout 2025 has delivered exceptional results. This report reflects their commitment and the collective strength of our movement. .

Jim McMahon OBE MP
Chair of the Co-operative Party



Meet our 2025 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**



**Sarah
Hall 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
Monks**



**Baroness
Royall**



**Baroness
Smith**



**Baroness
Thornton**



**Lord
Touhig**



**Baroness
Wilcox**



Scottish Parliament



Anas Sarwar MSP



Claire Baker 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



Metro Mayors



**Andy
Burnham**



**Claire
Ward**



**David
Skaith**



**Kim
McGuinness**



**Dr Nik
Johnson**



**Oliver
Coppard**



**Rokhsana
Fiaz**



**Richard
Parker**



**Tracy
Brabin**

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**



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

The Party's work in pursuit of this strategic objective focused on local authority elections and building a strong pipeline of candidates ahead of further elections in 2026, including for both the Welsh Senedd and Scottish Parliament. The results of local elections in 2025 mean that close to a quarter of all elected Labour Party representatives are now Labour & Co-operative, demonstrating the breadth and strength of our political representation across the country's town halls. The Party's work on candidate recruitment and development through 2025, including extensive candidate support and training, means it is well-placed for the 2026 election cycle. 2025 also saw the election of a Labour & Co-operative Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, for the first time in history.



Local Government Candidate Recruitment & Development

Through 2025, the Party continued to expand and strengthen local government candidate support. The first half of the year saw extensive work to prepare for May's local elections, with the Party undertaking a broad range of activities to ensure it was well-placed, including:

- Extensive candidate recruitment and training, including continuing the Candidate Development Programme
- Targeted communications including Whatsapp groups
- Candidate coffee morning sessions
- Support in developing campaign materials and local manifestos
- Message based campaigning

The Party regularly communicated with its local government candidates, including through email and via social media channels – Bluesky, Twitter, TikTok, and Instagram. These featured a range of engagement activities such as graphics, video content, hand-raisers and campaign materials.

Local government campaign events helped bring together candidates and raise awareness local Co-operative election campaigns. The main event was a '100 Days until Local Elections' event, which featured council leaders, Metro Mayor candidates and other council candidates. This was supported by Party Officers taking part in campaign visits to various council areas across the country, including Doncaster, Hull, Amber Valley, Peterborough and Ormskirk.



Local Elections 2025

Councillors

The 2025 elections held the Party's councillor base numbers at approximately 1,500 nationwide. This means that Co-operative councillors represent 1 in 4 of all Labour councillors – 24.8% following the election.

1500

Councillors (approx)

1 in 4

of all
Labour Councillors

Key statistics for the 2025 Local Elections include:

318

candidates

56

standing
for re-election

10+

candidates for
20 councils

342

contests

100%

councils contested
in England (24 of 24)

50

Co-op council or
opposition group leaders

62

seats won
(representing 18%, against a
benchmark of Labour winning 6%)

Councils with the highest grouping of candidates included:

32

West Northamptonshire Council

30

Lancashire County Council

22

Hertfordshire County Council

20

Derbyshire County Council

20

Oxfordshire County Council

22

Staffordshire County Council

16

Cambridgeshire County Council

15

Cornwall Council

96

East Midlands

31

North West

41

West Midlands

40

East of England

36

South East

12

Yorkshire & the Humber

22

North East & North Cumbria

40

South West



Of those candidates who have provided the Party equality data:



44%

identify as women

17%

identify as BAME

18%

have caring responsibilities for young children (58/42 gender split)

55%

identify as men

12%

identify as LGBTQ+

1%

identify as non-binary

24.5%

identify as having a disability

Age profile:

12%

18-30 (37)

22%

51-60 (69)

<1%

81+ (1)

11%

31-40 (35)

25%

61-70 (79)

16%

41-50 (51)

13.5%

71-80 (43)



Mayoral Elections

The Party worked hard to support the election of further Labour & Co-operative Metro Mayors across England, building on the Party's existing influence at a mayoral level with its seven Metro Mayors. The Party provided policy support to Metro Mayor candidates, supporting the development of official Mayoral policy proposals for candidates in Hull & East Yorkshire and Greater Lincolnshire.

In 2025, the Party had 3 out of 4 candidates standing in Metro Mayor authorities including:

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – Anna Smith (not elected)
- Hull and East Yorkshire – Margaret Pinder (not elected)
- Greater Lincolnshire – Jason Stockwood (not elected)

And 1 of 2 council mayoral candidates:

- North Tyneside – Karen Clark (elected)

In advance of Mayoral Elections in 2026, The Party undertook work on upcoming Metro Mayor selections for new mayoral combined authorities, with nominations being made in advance of elections in both East of England, Northamptonshire and Sussex.

Candidate Recruitment & Development for 2026

In the second half of 2025, the Party began its work to build towards the Local Elections 2026, with a target of attaining 1000 candidates for the election. This target was compromised due to 29 councils applying for election cancellations, which delayed the candidate recruitment process. In spite of this, the candidate recruitment work has been strong, with the Party still likely to have approximately 19% of Labour candidates running as Labour & Co-operative in 2026.

The Party undertook a spectrum of work to build towards this target number including:

- Utilising the new selection procedures with Party Councils agreed by the NEC earlier in the year.
- Writing to all sitting Labour Councillors in seats which will be contested.
- Working with Party Councils, Council Group contacts and Labour Regional Parties to drive regional recruitment.
- Producing specific social media content on candidate recruitment.

Candidate Development Programme training and events

The Party's Candidate Development Programme continues to support Co-operative candidates nationwide, giving them training on a range of areas to prepare them for local election campaigns. At the end of 2025, 640 members registered for our council Candidate Development Programme, or applied to stand for election in May 2026. 597 of those members have progressed to selected candidate for May 2026.

In total, the Party hosted 24 council candidate training and event sessions across 2025, with the CDP activity including:

- CDP programme ran three times in 2025, January, July, October
- Other sessions included:
 - Antisemitism training
 - Neurodiversity training
 - Labour Connects training
 - Digital and Social Media training
- Other events included:
 - In person local government conference
 - Summer School on 'Our Work in Local Government'
 - 4x Candidates' Coffee Mornings
 - 100 days to go local elections launch event online
 - Equalities in local government session



Scottish Parliamentary Selections

Candidate selections for the 2026 Scottish Parliamentary elections were an important work stream for the Party, with 31 candidates being selected through member-led selection meetings. This represents an increase in candidate numbers from the previous Scottish Parliament Election in 2021.

Through 2025 the Party also began preparatory work to support Co-operative candidates in Scotland in their elections, including preparing campaign and policy support.

Name	Constituency
ANAS SARWAR	Glasgow Pollok & Cathcart
CLAIRE BAKER	Kirkcaldy
NEIL BIBBY	Paisley
PAULINE MCNEILL	Glasgow Baillieston & Shettleston
PAUL O'KANE	Renfrewshire West & Levern Valley
PAUL SWEENEY	Glasgow Easterhouse & Springburn
FRANCESCA BRENNAN	Inverclyde
JOE FAGAN	East Kilbride
LYNSEY HAMILTON	Clydesdale
KATHERINE SANGSTER	Edinburgh Eastern, Musselburgh & Tranent
KAINDE MANJI	Stirling
PAUL GODZIK	Falkirk West
JORDAN STOKOE	Almond Valley
EVE KESTNER	Caithness, Sutherland & Ross
SIOBHAN PATERSON	Falkirk East & Linlithgow
CHERYL-ANN CRUICKSHANK	Dundee City East
DANIEL JOHNSON	Edinburgh Southern
CALLUM MCNALLY	Clydebank and Milngavie
FOYSOL CHOUDHURY	Edinburgh Northern
PAM DUNCAN-GLANCY	Glasgow Kelvin and Maryhill
COLETTE MCDIARMID	Strathkelvin and Bearsden



Welsh Senedd Selections

In advance of the Senedd Election 2026, the Party undertook candidate selections, supporting over 32 candidates, representing a third of all Welsh Labour candidates. However, the new voting system in Wales combined with existing electoral law around joint candidates means the Party is legally restricted in Welsh election campaigning. Through 2025, the Party therefore communicated these restrictions to candidates through briefings and began preparations for the limited campaigning it is legally able to undertake.

Labour Party Deputy Leader Elections

The Party provided support and an official nomination for Labour & Co-operative MP Lucy Powell during the Labour Party's Deputy Leadership election in the autumn. The Party produced social media content and communicated with members. Following a successful election, Lucy Powell became the first Co-operative Deputy Leader of the Labour Party in history.

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

Throughout 2025 a key focus of the Party was converting electoral success and manifesto commitments into tangible delivery across Westminster, Whitehall and the devolved nations.

At last General Election, the Party campaign for four key shared commitments with the Labour Party, all of which were reflected in either the Labour Party's manifesto or subsequent first King's Speech:

- Co-operative Growth: double the size of the co-operative sector
- The Local Power Plan: The expansion of support for community-owned energy
- Community Ownership: A new 'Community Right to Buy' giving communities first right of refusal
- Ending Retail Crime: new legislative protections for retail workers against violence and abuse

Faced with a historic moment for the delivery of co-operative values and principles in government, it was important for the Party to seize the opportunity. This meant moving quickly from campaigning on these priorities to finding a new and innovative ways to work to see them delivered.

The Party also sought to implement co-operative ideas across Westminster government departments, and continued our campaigning and advocacy work in Wales, Scotland and across local government.



Westminster Government Legislation

English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill

The English Devolution Bill was announced in the 2024 King's Speech, and the Party worked through 2025 to develop and influence its contents. Central to this was achieving the inclusion of a new Community Right to Buy, which has been a key campaign priority for the Party over many years.

Focused advocacy from the Party ensured that clauses to implement the new Community Right to Buy were included in the Bill's first draft. The Party was proud to work closely with Labour & Co-operative MPs Jim McMahon MP and Alex Norris MP, both of whom were contributing Ministers to the early stages of the Bill's development, and Miatta Fahnbulleh MP in the latter half of 2025 who became a Minister on the Bill. The Party's efforts also saw a change in the Bill's title – and the addition of 'community empowerment' became saw it become the first UK public bill in history to include the word 'empowerment' in a title.

Activity to support the Bill included private roundtables, briefings to elected representatives, member events, stakeholder meetings, social media content and coverage in traditional media. The Party's activity and strong support was recognised on several occasions by leading Ministers and MPs in the House of Commons chamber.

The Party further worked to secure inclusion within the Bill of better protections for local sporting facilities as assets of community value, creating an automatic listing for these assets. The Party first pursued this through a 10 Minute Rule Bill led by Labour & Co-operative MP Emma Foody, and was later adopted by government and included in the Bill. The addition will mean sporting assets are automatically eligible for the new Community Right to Buy.

At the close of the year, the Bill had progressed towards final stages, with Royal Assent expected in the first half of 2026.

Great British Energy Bill

The introduction of the Great British Energy Bill was another significant step towards achieving the Party's long-term ambition of creating the largest ever expansion of community energy. The Bill creates GB Energy, a new publicly-owned energy company, which will support the development and scale-up of community energy projects across the UK through the Local Power Plan.

The Party worked closely with Co-op parliamentarians to maintain the salience of community energy to the work of GB Energy. This included working with Government on an amendment to put the involvement and benefit of local communities on the face of the Bill, as part of GBE's core objectives.

The Bill achieved Royal Assent in May 2025, meaning the Party's ambitions for community-owned energy were included in one of the Labour Government's very first Acts of Parliament. Efforts in the second half of 2025 turned towards the further development and rollout of the Local Power Plan, including work to bring together relevant Government ministers with council leaders and community energy stakeholders. Further announcements on the Local Power Plan are expected early in 2026.



Crime & Policing Bill

The introduction of the Crime & Policing Bill in early 2025 advanced another key priority of the Party - the introduction of a standalone offence on retail crime and withdrawal of the £200 investigation limit for shoplifting. The Party supported the early stages of the Bill, including working in partnership with Usdaw and our Subscribing Societies to provide parliamentarians with case studies of retail crime for use in debates and Bill scrutiny. The Bill is due to receive Royal Assent in the first half of 2026.

Wider Westminster & Whitehall Activity

HM Treasury

The Party pursued strong engagement with HM Treasury Ministers and advisors through 2025 to advance Government's commitment to double the size of the co-operative sector.

The Party secured important progress in a range of areas, including:

- A reiteration of the Government's commitment to doubling the size in the Chancellor's Autumn Budget, including the first reference to co-operatives in a Budget Speech in modern times.
- The announcement of a government consultation on business support for co-operatives and mutuals, running until early 2026.
- A strong focus on credit union growth, including within HM Treasury's Financial Inclusion Strategy.
- A new £30m Credit Union Transformation Fund and a commitment to reform the Credit Union Common Bond.
- New commitments from key regulators to better enable co-operative growth, including a new Mutual Societies Development Unit within the FCA to support alternative business models with insight and expertise.
- Meetings between HM Treasury Ministers and the Co-operative Party parliamentary group.

Housing, Communities & Local Government

The Party worked closely with Ministers in MHCLG through 2025 to promote key priorities around support for community ownership of local assets and co-operative development support more broadly.

Outside of the substantive work involved in influencing the Community Right to Buy legislation outlined above, the Party worked to:

- Support the development of the Pride in Place programme, a £5bn decade-long community regeneration programme. Crucially, spending decisions as part of the programme are genuinely community-led via local Neighbourhood Boards. The Party worked to ensure that the Pride in Place prospectus also includes a requirement for Neighbourhood Boards to transition into community-led or co-operative models within three years.
- Prepare Co-op councillors in receipt of Pride in Place funding, including the development of a training package to support councillors with campaigning and communications



highlighting the important of the community-led model.

- Support the development of the accompanying Pride in Place Strategy, which crucially includes a commitment to a new Co-operative Development Unit within MHCLG, advancing one of the Party's main priorities to expand co-operative development support across the UK.
- Increase awareness of and support for co-operative and community-led housing, including supporting Andrew Pakes MP's 10 Minute Rule Bill calling for the establishment of co-operative housing tenure in law. Support for this Bill included visits to co-op housing projects, digital communications, member asks and media coverage.
- Achieve Government funding for co-op housing through a £20m funding programme specifically for community-led and co-op housing, amounting to 2500 homes over the next decade.

Department for Business & Trade

The Party worked closely with Ministerial teams in DBT to support action on the double the size of the co-operative sector commitment. This included:

- The announcement of a government consultation on support for co-operative businesses, announced by the Chancellor post-Budget. This is a vital step in analysing what support exists and identifying what further support is needed for co-ops to grow and thrive.
- The establishment of the Mutuels and Co-operative Business Council, announced in 2024 and formally established in 2025, to work with government to support double the size. The Council includes representation from major co-ops and mutuels including ARUP, Arla, Co-op Group, Nationwide, John Lewis Partnership, Co-ops UK and BSA.
- Announcements from the Business Secretary at the Co-operative Party Conference, including a requirement for Regional Growth Hubs to provide support for co-op models as a condition of funding, support for co-operatives as an explicit part of the Government's Business Growth Service.

Department for Energy & Net Zero

Alongside work described above to ensure the inclusion of the Local Power Plan in Great British Energy legislation, the Party worked with DESNZ Ministerial teams to:

- Support the announcement of GBE's first major funding project, £12m of which was allocated to community energy projects to help build a pipeline of projects in advance of the full Local Power Plan rollout.
- Lead an event with Secretary of State Ed Miliband MP, making the political case for community-owned energy, as part of our Community Britain series (outlined further below), in collaboration with the Labour Climate and Environment Forum.
- Organise and facilitate roundtables between community energy stakeholders, council leaders and Ministers to prepare for the Local Power Plan.
- Increase awareness of the upcoming Local Power Plan among parliamentarians through briefing sessions and photo drop ins.



Policy Development & Publications

Through 2025, the Party continued to develop and publish reports expanding our ideas, allowing us to work with external partners and widen our political reach.

Lessons in Global Co-op Development Report

The Party developed and launched a new report, Lessons in Global Co-operative Development, which marked the UN Year of Co-operatives. The report highlighted best practice for co-operative development support internationally, focusing on case studies in South Korea, Sweden, Italy, Catalonia & France. During development, the Party engaged with policy experts and academics in these countries to learn more about the co-operative development systems.

The report was launched at Co-op Congress in an event featuring Labour & Co-op MP Andrew Pakes and a representative from the International Co-operative Alliance. The report was covered by two articles in Co-op News – an interview with the Policy Officer Dan Monaghan and a standalone feature on its content.

Empowering Communities through Empowered Councils Report

Towards the end of 2025, the Party produced and published a new local government focused report, entitled Empowering Communities through Empowered Councils. The report looks at how councils can build co-operative and collaborative relationships with their local communities – helping to build trust and improve their local area in partnership. The new publication was supported by an online launch event and targeted communications to councillors and the wider membership.

Community Britain

Following the launch of the Community Britain campaign early in 2025, the Party published four related reports, listed here and outlined in more detail later in this report:

- Stories from Community Britain
- Holding onto Hope: Lessons from Community Britain
- Power in our Communities
- Grassroots Growth



Local Government

The Party refreshed and promoted its Build Your Co-operative Manifesto interactive tool, making it easier for councillors and candidates to use online and find co-operative policies to include in their local Labour manifestos. A concise, physical version of the Build Your Own Manifesto was sent out to all candidates in advance of the 2026 Local Elections.

Throughout 2025 the Party worked to support and encourage local councils to pass motions on key Party campaigns. The 'Community Right to Buy Ready' motion developed by the Party was passed by several local authorities, including Manchester City Council, Rochdale Borough Council, Stockport Borough Council, and Sheffield City Council.

The Party had supported the Royal Borough of Greenwich's Co-operative Commission project, which launched in early 2025. The Commission report, which focuses on co-operative social care, community energy and new co-op growth, was accompanied by the announcement of a new £1m community energy fund for the Borough. The report was launched at the CCIN conference in Greenwich at which the General Secretary made a speech.

Westminster Parliamentary Group

Following the election of the Party's largest ever Parliamentary group at the 2024 election, work throughout 2025 focused on consolidating effective interventions in Parliament. To do this, the Party has provided regular support to parliamentarians in the form of:

- Monthly parliamentary group meeting to provide Party updates to parliamentarians
- Regular briefings covering key campaigns, legislation and policy announcements
- Provision of oral questions across departments on key Co-op Party priorities
- Support with Westminster Hall debates
- A comprehensive visits programme for parliamentarians as part of Community Britain campaigning
- Regular communications support including social media copy, video scripts and article writing support



Scotland

The Party undertook influencing work on a range of legislation in the Scottish Parliament, including land reform, access to cash, community wealth building, housing and Ecocide. The Party worked closely with our MSPs to influence these proposed legislative bills, supporting the tabling of amendments and parliamentary activity.

The Party continued to campaign on key issues in the Scottish Parliament during 2025, including working with Rhoda Grant MSP on a Right to Food in Scots Law and further action on retail crime, building on the successful passage of the Protection of Workers (Retail) Act in 2021.

The Party raised awareness and held events on the UN International Year of Co-operatives and Fairtrade Fortnight with Co-op MSPs.

The Party has also been closely involved in influencing the development of the Scottish Labour Party's Manifesto for the 2026 Scottish Parliament Election. This influencing work includes formal submissions to the Scottish Labour Policy Forum, private engagement and sessions with Party members to determine their policy priorities. The Party is pleased to report that its key policy priorities, on co-operative growth support, community energy development and community empowerment have all been adopted in the final Scottish Labour Manifesto, representing a significant influencing win.

The Party has produced its own Policy Platform for the 2026 Scottish Parliament Election, with the platform development process being a member-led exercise which contained multiple rounds of consultation, including roundtables and online events. The Platform will be launched in early 2026, in advance of the election campaign.

Wales

The Party has worked hard in Wales to influence the Welsh Labour Party's Manifesto for the Senedd Election 2026. Engagement took place through formal and informal channels, and the Party will continue to campaign for the inclusion of key priorities, including a new Community Right to Buy for Wales and a commitment to double the size of Wales' co-op sector ahead of next year's elections.

A Welsh Co-operative Policy Platform was developed with member involvement and consultation. This Platform was published at the end of 2025, with both the First Minister for Wales and Deputy First Minister speaking at the launch event. In the Senedd, Party Officers supported Co-op MSs on legislative activity including questions on co-operative housing and community energy.



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

This strategic objective focuses on the Party's events, communications and campaigning programme, which has continued to expand and evolve this year. Campaigning includes using the Party's email supporter list, its social media output, traditional media work, site visits and online communications. The events programme includes the Party's conferences, policy events, Labour Party events and other organisations' conferences it attends and presents at.

2025 was a particularly strong year for the expansion of the Party's traditional media coverage, including coverage of our key conference and campaign launches. This helped to raise the Party's profile and consolidate its leadership in progressive politics.

The introduction of the Community Britain campaign was also key to this year's work, providing an overarching narrative on the importance of empowered communities to cohesive and thriving places. Community Britain also provided a platform for a significant increase in visits to community projects by Co-operative elected representatives. This helped to provide further content and coverage of the Party's work and achievements.



Community Britain

At the start of 2025, the Party launched Community Britain, a new campaign aiming to highlight the role communities play across the country as a serious political and economic force. Through 2025, the Party developed and launched a number of Community Britain publications, each looking at a different aspect of community power. Through this work, the Party was able to develop new partnerships with think tanks, community organisations and academics and collaborate much more widely across the labour movement and communities sector, helping to take the campaign to wider audiences.

1. Stories from Community Britain

The first publication, Stories from Community Britain, showcased community groups and campaigners who have been making a real difference in their communities – including energy schemes, social clubs and community ownership projects. The report demonstrated what benefits empowered communities can produce and made the case for greater Government action to empower community-led initiatives.

The report was launched by Alex Norris MP, Minister for Local Government, Ros Wynne Jones of The Mirror; Co-operative Party's Head of Politics, Caitlin Prowle, and Anouskha Deighton, of the We're Right Here campaign in Westminster.

2. Holding on to Hope: Lessons from Community Britain

Holding on to Hope presented extensive national polling research on public attitudes to communities and their attitude to politics, conducted in partnership with Hope Not Hate. The report found a majority are proud of their local area and believe more power should be devolved to local communities to help reshape and improve their local areas, strengthening trust in local democracy.

Both The Mirror & The Independent reported on the launch of the report, which was supported by an online members' event and joint social media communication with Hope not Hate.

3. Power in Our Communities

Power in Our Communities, the third publication in the Community Britain series, contained contributions from a range of experts on community-owned and renewable energy, making the case for a community-led net zero transition.

Produced in partnership with Labour Climate & Environment Forum (LCEF), the report was launched by Ed Miliband MP, Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, at the Local Government Association Offices in London. The launch was accompanied by a visit from Ed Miliband MP to a community energy scheme in West London, and both the visit and report were covered in a New Statesman feature.

4. Grassroots Growth

The fourth publication, Grassroots Growth, explores the need for an economic growth model that is rooted in people and places, building on the Prime Minister's call for "growth from the grassroots" in his Labour Conference speech. The report brought together contributions from economists, policymakers, Ministers and practitioners to discuss community-led inclusive economic growth.



Campaigns

Community Britain

At the start of 2025, the Party launched Community Britain, a new campaign aiming to highlight the role communities play across the country as a serious political and economic force. Through 2025, the Party developed and launched a number of Community Britain publications, each looking at a different aspect of community power. Through this work, the Party was able to develop new partnerships with think tanks, community organisations and academics and collaborate much more widely across the labour movement and communities

JANUARY	Jason Stockwood Labour & Co-op Mayoral Candidate Greater Lincolnshire	Grimsby Community Energy, visit with mayoral candidate as part of election campaign in Greater Lincolnshire.
	Mete Coban Deputy Mayor of London	St Paul's Church, West Hackney which hosts a community energy installation. The Party produced video and social media content from the visit.
MARCH	Andrew Pakes MP	Coin Street CLT as part of promoting the work behind Andrew's Co-operative Housing Tenure Ten Minute Rule Bill. This visit was covered in Politics Home.
	Anneliese Dodds MP	Ultimate Picture Palace, community-owned cinema in Oxford. The Party produced video and social media content from the visit.
APRIL	Rachel Blake MP	Jubilee Hall Gym, a community space under threat of sale, discussing the importance of shared spaces for local communities.
JUNE	Mayor David Skaith	Settle Community Pool & Music Hall, highlighting the importance of shared spaces and shared experiences in building stronger, healthier and more connected communities.
	Miatta Fahnbulleh MP	Westminster House Youth Club on the importance of clean power and how solar energy projects can provide community benefits. This was covered as part of The Mirror's Real Britain series.
JULY	Mayor Richard Parker	Chelmunds Cross community-owned fish and chip shop, raising awareness of community ownership to high street revival.
AUGUST	Rachel Blake MP & Mete Coban Deputy Mayor of London	Aldgate Community Energy, raising awareness of the Labour Mayor of London's Community Energy Fund



SEPTEMBER	Joe Fortune General Secretary	Sheffield Co-operative Development Group (SCDG) to raise awareness of the double the size of the co-operative and mutual sector commitment. SCDG joined the Party as a Subscribing Society
NOVEMBER	Baggy Shanker MP & Elaine Dean	Derby County FC, raising awareness of the importance of football clubs to communities and local pride.
	Alex Norris MP	Evolve Nottingham, a community-owned mixed-use space which aims to build community cohesion and unity by providing local services & activities. This visit was covered by Nottinghamshire Live.
	Cllr Tom Hinchcliffe	Bramley Baths, a community-owned centre providing leisure activities to a diverse community.
	Alex Sobel MP	Be Caring, an innovative social care co-operative which is delivering high quality services in an employee owned model.
DECEMBER	Alex Sobel MP	Headingley Enterprise & Arts Centre – a community owned centre providing leisure and entertainment offerings for the local community.
	Miatta Fahnbulleh MP	Damilola Taylor Centre & Peckham Levels, supporting the MP's campaign to expand community-led youth services in the constituency. This was covered in The Mirror's 'Real Britain' series.
	Alistair Strathern MP	Red Lion, Hitchin, the UK's first community owned pub dating back to 1983, demonstrating the resilience community ownership provides to pubs operating in difficult circumstances. This was covered by The Mirror.
	Paul Gerrard Co-op Group	Local co-op store – highlighting the importance of action against violence against retail workers. This was in support of a joint campaign on this issue between the Party, USDAW and the Co-op Group.

Peace & Co-operation Campaign

Through 2025 the Party worked on campaign with the Co-operative Group which sought to highlight the role co-operatives can play in building peace around the world and establishing connection between disparate communities. As part of this programme of work, the Party engaged thousands of members and supporters to sign joint letters and petitions on the importance of 'Peace & Co-operation'. The Peace & Co-operation campaign engaged Co-operative Parliamentarians & Government ministers, with the Party working jointly with the Co-op Group to deliver a Parliamentary roundtable with Ministers, NGOs, Parliamentarians, and representatives from a cross community co-operative village in Palestine called 'Oasis of Peace'.



In-person Events

Community Britain launch

25 Feb

As outlined above, Community Britain was launched by Alex Norris MP alongside a range of other speakers. The 100+ strong invite-only audience featured many of the representatives from organisations and policy makers whose stories we shared.

Power in our Communities

3 June

As outlined above, the third Community Britain report was launched by Ed Miliband MP. Over 100 policy makers and local government representatives attended this invite-only event held in partnership with Labour Climate and Environment Forum (LCEF).

Community Britain: Co-operative Party Local Government Conference

21 June

This Conference, held in-person every two years, was well supported with 117 registered attendees and took place in Leeds. Labour & Co-operative Councillors explored the themes of the Community Britain campaign, including how communities are delivering real change from the ground up, by hearing from others who believe politics works best when it's rooted in people and place and are taking action to achieve it, by way of a series of keynote speeches, panel discussions and hands-on workshops. Keynote speakers included:

- Cllr James Lewis, Leader Leeds City Council (civic welcome)
- Jim McMahon MP, Minister for Communities & English Devolution and Co-operative Party Chair
- Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire

Panel discussions highlighted specific ways that Labour & Co-operative Councillors can make change happen in their own communities by showing how co-operative solutions are making a difference across the UK. Morning sessions looked at:

- **Co-operative action in local government** with Jim McMahon MP; Emily Spurrell (PCC Liverpool City Region; Mayor Caroline Woodley (Hackney City Council); Cllr Liz Terry (Reading Council)
- **Growing an Inclusive Economy** with Praful Nargund (Good Growth Foundation), Dept. Mayor Cllr Glyn Jones (City of Doncaster Council); Jessica Craig (Power to Change); Rosie Lockwood (IPPR North & Scotland)

The Independent Commission on Neighbourhoods (ICON), partnered with us to deliver 2 afternoon discussion sessions highlighting how local government policy can work to bring communities together:

- Community Britain: Opportunities with Cllr Arooj Shah (Leader Oldham Council); Cllr Titus Ajayi (Kingsthorpe Parish, Northants); Ben Glover (ICON)
- Community Britain: Solutions with Annoushka Deighton (Stretford Town Hall/We're Right Here campaign); Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz (Newham Council); Josh Westerling (Power to Change)



During the lunch-break, partners Causeway Creative opportunity to hosted 3 concurrent training events: using AI in campaigns, Resisting reactionary politics locally and Community champions.

The event concluded with the launch of the 'Community Champions' initiative, a training programme to develop and inspire activism locally.

The adjacent exhibition area was well supported with stands representing sponsors USDAW, We're Right Here, Independent Commission on Neighbourhoods, LGA Labour, Yorks & Humber Party Council and Causeway Creative. A drinks reception was held in the venue following the event, supported by the Yorkshire and Humber Co-operative Party Council, for members to get the chance to network and meet other members.

A 'Co-op Leaders Summit' roundtable was also held immediately prior to the start of the Conference – where we were delighted to welcome 22 Council Leaders from across the UK and Tracy Brabin, Mayor West Yorkshire, for discussion on co-operative solutions and priorities hosted by Jim McMahon MP.

Labour Party Conference

27 September/1 October

The Party attended the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool, with the staff team delivering the largest programme in recent times, working with 11 separate sponsors. The Party's events and activity were complemented with strong, regular social media content produced directly from Conference.

Prior to Conference beginning, the Party held two Community Britain-based events: a film screening with The Mirror journalist Ros Wynne Jones of her film on community cohesion, and a Ministerial roundtable event with Local Government Minister Alison McGovern MP regional stakeholders in a community-owned venue.

The full conference programme in summary included:

- The General Secretary's sororal greetings from the Conference platform
- The Party's exhibition stand, focusing this year on Community Britain campaigning work and membership recruitment
- A series of well-attended fringe events, both led and supported by the Party:
 - **Access for All: Tackling financial exclusion in the UK**, in partnership with Link, GMB, Fair4All Finance. Speakers included Dame Meg Hillier MP; John Howells (Link); Andy Prendergast (GMB); Kate Pender (Fair4All Finance) and chaired by Rachel Blake MP
 - **Peace and Co-operation: a new model for International Development** with Co-op Group. Speakers included Shirine Khoury-Haq (Co-op); Halima Begum (Oxfam); Anneliese Dodds MP; Heather Staff (Labour Campaign for International Development) and chaired by Joe Fortune (Co-operative Party).
 - **Holding onto Hope: How to Build Community Britain** with Hope Not Hate. Speakers included Ross Wynne Jones (journalist); Kirsty McNeill MP; Misbah Malik (Hope Not Hate); Sacha Bedding (Power to Change) and chaired by Caitlin Prowle (Co-operative Party)
 - **Power in our Communities: Owning our Future** with Labour Climate & Energy Forum (LCEF) with speakers including Michael Shanks MP, Caitlin Prowle (Co-operative Party) and chair Megan Corton-Scott (LCEF)



- **Driving Inclusive Grow for a Fair and Inclusive Economy** with Better Society Capital, Arla, Good Growth Foundation, with speakers including Ali Strathern MP; Gavin Devine (Park Street Partners); Jovana Lalic (Better Society Capital); Jade Azim (Good Growth Foundation) chaired by Caitlin Prowle (Co-operative Party)
- **A coalition of pessimism: who is switching their vote to Reform UK** and how Labour can win them back with Hope Not Hate, Thompson’s Solicitors. Speakers included Joe Fortune (Co-operative Party); Paul Novak (TUC); Sofie Jenkinson (Round Our Way); Gerard Stillard (Thompsons Solicitors) and chaired by Georgia Laming (Hope Not Hate).
- Additionally, the Party held 2 industry-led invite-only roundtable discussions, with attendees focussing on governmental delivery of a mutual and co-operative policy agenda:
 - **Financial Mutuals** in partnership with Building Societies Association featuring cabinet minister Lucy Rigby MP, Economic Secretary (HM Treasury).
 - **Communities** in partnership with ICON (Independent Commission on Neighbourhood) with Baroness Hilary Armstrong and Miatta Fahnbulleh MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (, Communities and Local Government).
- Two of the Party’s Equality Networks held engaging events outside the secure zone:
 - Co-op Party Women: **Support her Health - a Co-operative Approach to Fixing Women’s Healthcare**
 - Co-op Party BAME: **Collaborating for Change – Bringing our BAME communities together**

The Party also hosted a drinks reception for Conference Party members and supporters, sponsored by the Co-op Group.



Community Britain: Annual Conference 2025

15-16 November

The Party's flagship Community Britain campaign was the theme for 2025's in-person Annual Conference held at the Royal London Leonardo Hotel in London. 594 attendees registered to take part (265 visitors, 157 delegates; 95 ex-officio, 77 exhibitors) and 47 speakers took part across the weekend's events.

In the build up to Annual Conference the Party also held pre-event online updates for members on the work of our three parliamentary groups in Westminster; Holyrood and Cardiff Bay.

Conference Saturday

The programme showcased the ongoing Community Britain work to our members and supporters in a series of speeches and in-conversation interviews. Keynote speakers included:

- Joanne Thomas, General Secretary USDAW
- Jim McMahon MP, Chair Co-operative Party
- Joe Fortune, General Secretary Co-operative Party
- Paul Novak, General Secretary TUC
- Peter Kyle MP, Secretary of State for Business and Trade
- Robin Fieth, CEO Building Societies Association
- Shirine Khoury-Haq, CEO Co-op Group
- Steve Reed MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Lis Telcs – chair Conference Arrangements Committee – CAC report

With 'In-Conversation' style panel discussions digging deeper into the content highlighted in recent Community Britain publications:

- **Stories from Community Britain** – with speakers Sacha Bedding (We're Right Here); Emily Bolton (Our Future); Kirsty McNeill MP and Caitlin Prowle (Co-operative Party).
- **Holding onto Hope** – with speakers Paul Nowak (TUC); Sofie Jenkinson (Round Our Way); and Nick Lowles (Hope Not Hate)
- **Power in our Communities** - with speakers Mark Pepper (Ambition Lawrence Weston); Mayor Caroline Woodley (Hackney Council); Rachel Blake MP and Megan Corton Scott (Labour Climate and Environment Forum)
- **Grassroots Growth** – Conference launched the latest Community Britain report with speakers Miatta Fahnbulleh MP; Rachel Laurence (Centre for Thriving Places); and Professor Graeme Atherton (Ruskin College)

The conference drinks reception was addressed by James Murray MP, Labour & Co-operative Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

Conference Sunday

This was a member-led day, allowing for greater debate, discussion and interaction with members and Party Council delegates and included:



- Member-led discussion on the future for Community Britain
- Update from Amanda Gallie and Elaine Dean of Central England Co-operative Society who outlined the urgent need for legislative funeral care reform.
- Two policy debates on Future Co-operative Development and Equalities. Agreed by show of hands.
- Two organisation motions deemed in order by CAC and agreed by show of hands.
- Membership subscriptions for 2026 were agreed by card vote.

Partner organisations

Conference was supported by two headline sponsors, Co-op Group and USDAW, with the Building Society Association (BSA) sponsoring the Conference lunch.

Exhibitors included:

- Building Societies Association (BSA)
- Campaign Lab
- Causeway Creative
- Co-op Councils Innovation Network (CCIN)
- Co-ops UK
- Community Energy England
- Community Energy London
- Cwmpas
- Datnexa
- FairTax Foundation
- Greenwich Leisure (GLL)
- Hope Note Hate
- Independent Commission on Neighbourhoods (ICON)
- Labour Party
- Labour YIMBY
- Mainstream
- Social Enterprise UK
- Park Street Partners
- Venture.Community
- 3NI

Sponsored lunchtime fringe meetings included:

- **Creating sustainable local infrastructure** – partner ICON – with speakers Kirsty McNeill MP (Midlothian and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Scotland); Ben Glover, Head of Policy Analysis (ICON); Carli Harper (Norwich City Council and Mayoral Candidate for Norfolk and Suffolk); Caitlin Prowle (Political Officer Co-operative Party),
- **Community Power in Every Place: A Co-operative Future for the Whole UK** – partners Co-ops UK and Cwmpas - with speakers Jim McMahon MP (Chair Co-op Party); Glenn Bowen (Cwmpas), James Wright (Co-op); Cheryl Barrott (Sheffield Co-op Development Agency);
- **Making social enterprises not just part of the economy, but at the heart of it** – partner Social Enterprise UK – with speakers Baroness Glenys Thornton (Patron Social Enterprise UK); Jovan Owusu-Nepaul (Social Enterprise UK), Mete Coban (Deputy Mayor of London).
- **Using co-operative ecosystems to grow the startup economy** – partner Venture. Community – with speakers: Dame Meg Hillier (Chair Treasury Select Committee); Peter Hopton (founder Venture Community); Nuala Gallagher (Longshaw Advisors); Daniel Monaghan (Co-operative Party).
- **Co-operation, Inclusion, and the Future of Mental Health** – partner Co-operative Party Equality Networks – with speakers Dawn Butler MP (MP for Brent East); Paul Sweeney MSP (MSP for Glasgow region), Victoria Ann Desmond (Founder & Director of Labour Campaign for Mental Health)



Other in-person events

Labour Local Government Conference

8/9 February

Party Officers attended the Labour Party LGA Conference in Warwick and ran a stall, campaigning content on the Local Power Plan and an accompanying fringe 'Power to the People: Maximising the Local Power Plan' with Kate Gilmartin, Board Member of Great British Energy, Tom Hayes MP (Net Zero Mission Champion) and Cllr Adam Hug, Leader of Westminster Council and LGA Net Zero lead.

Scottish Co-operative Party Conference

March

The Party held an online Scottish Co-operative Party Conference with speakers including Anas Sarwar MSP; Douglas Alexander MP; Kirsty McNeill MP; Kirsteen Sullivan MP; Sarah Boyack MSP; Rhoda Grant MSP; Cllr Eva Murray; Cllr Francesca Brennan; Cllr Alan Moir and Scotmid President Eddie Thorn. This event allowed our members to make their views known on our policy process.

Scottish Labour Conference

Glasgow, Feb 21-23

The Chair of Scottish Co-operative Party delivered a sororal greeting, Party staff held a stall and we held a fringe meeting on Community Energy with Sarah Boyack MP (Shadow Environment Secretary for Net Zero, Energy & Net Transition), Westminster Energy Minister Michael Shanks MP and Lesley Hinds (Edinburgh Solar Co-operative).

Welsh Labour Conference

Llandudno, June 27-29

Party Officers held a joint stand with Cwmpas and a fringe event on community-led housing. Party officers held stalls and fringe meetings at South West Labour Party, North West Labour Party and West Midlands Labour Conference.

Co-operative Societies Retail Conference

15-17 March

Party Officers attended and had a stall at the Co-operative Retail Society Conference in Nottinghamshire, and the General Secretary made a well-regarded speech from the platform.

London Co-operative Party regional conference

22 March



Party Officers regional event built on the momentum of a new Labour government and the London Party's "5 Mutual Missions for London" manifesto in this regional conference will explore four key themes: Housing Democracy: From Leasehold to Commonhold; Clean Energy, Clean Water: Reclaiming London's Commons; Common Ground: Tackling Division & Isolation in London's Communities; and Growth For All: Co-operative Solutions for London's Future.

SxSW Conference

5 June

The Party held a panel event at the international technology and creative conference, South by South West, in London. The event, entitled 'Building Climate Consensus with Community Energy', was an in conversation event between Co-operative Party Head of Political Affairs, Caitlin Prowle, and Deputy Mayor of London, Mete Coban. This discussed the benefits of community energy to the green transition and its positive impact on London's diverse communities.

No. 10 Downing Street Co-operative Celebration

9 June

This afternoon reception held in the garden at No.10 Downing Street was a Government-led celebration of the co-operative and mutual sector and marked the UN Year of the Co-operative. Attended by specially invited representatives from co-operative societies across the UK, attendees were addressed by Labour & Co-op and Secretary of State for Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds MP and CEO of the Co-operative Group.

Co-op Congress

14-15 June

The General Secretary and Co-operative MPs Lucy Powell and Paul Waugh spoke at Co-op UK's annual gathering of the UK co-operative movement held in Rochdale Town Hall, which this year included a gathering of ICA (International Co-operative Alliance) members. Party staff ran a stall and held a fringe event to launch the Party's report 'Lessons from Global Co-operative Development' with Denise Scott-McDonald; Daniel Monaghan (Co-operative Party); Andrew Pakes MP; Leire Luengo (Director of Comms, ICA); Sarah Alldred (Co-op College).

Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Co-op Party Ltd

28 June

172 members, including 42 delegates representing twenty-five local Co-operative Parties, Societies and affiliates, were present at this online AGM, one of the main ways that members engage in the democracy of our Party.

MidCounties 'Bright Future'

30 June

The Party supported the delivery of a Midcounties-led Westminster event held on the terrace at the House of Commons, which marked 5-years since the founding of the Bright Futures co-op which seeks to give employment opportunities for victims of modern slavery



Youth & New Member Summer School

13 Sept

Party staff hosted a free event for newer and younger members in central Birmingham with Preet Kaur Gill MP as keynote speaker and examining other topics including Save Birmingham; how to get active in your branch and the history of the Co-op Party and Movement.

Confederation of Co-operative Housing (CCH) International Roundtable

21st February

The Policy Officer represented and spoke on behalf of the Party at a roundtable event, bringing together elected representatives from the UK and Malta on the importance of co-operative housing.

CLES Community Wealth Building Summit

3rd July

The Policy Officer attended and took part in a one-day event on community wealth building in Manchester.

Woodcraft Folk Camp 100

29 July

The Party's Policy Officer attended and presented an interactive session with youth members of the Woodcraft Folk to help inform the Policy Process 2025 Equalities consultation.

Credit Unions in 2035

16th Sept

The Policy Officer spoke on a panel event on the future of credit unions, held by Swoboda Research Centre and the New Economics Foundation.

L'Onde de Coop

23rd Sept

The General Secretary & Head of Politics attended and spoke at an international festival on co-operative policy in Paris, France.



Digital & Communications

During 2025, the Party has updated its messaging and strategic communications to reflect the current political moment, and the opportunities created by being in Government.

Through our Community Britain work, we identified both a gap within the Labour movement that our distinctive voice could fill, and a growing need to provide clear, values-based counter-messaging to those using the language of community for their own ends. The campaign has enabled the Party to articulate a confident, outward-facing narrative about co-operation and community power that highlights our movement's relevance to the challenges facing Britain today, and reinforces our role as the political voice of the co-operative movement.

Alongside this, we undertook a comprehensive brand review, refreshing our messaging, tone of voice and visual identity. This work was informed by stakeholder insight, analysis of high-performing content, and best practice across the sector. The result is a clearer, more accessible and more compelling way of communicating our values and priorities to a wider audience which will be implemented through 2026.

In 2025, the Party continued to deliver high-performing, engaging content across social media, achieving strong results despite an increasingly challenging digital environment. Across all platforms, our content reached over 5 million views and generated 114,800 interactions. The Party also expanded its presence on newer, fast-growing platforms. On Instagram, our content reached 1 million views with 11,300 interactions, while on TikTok we achieved 134,000 views and 7,200 interactions. Much of this content supported our flagship Community Britain campaign. The team travelled across the UK to capture stories from communities, producing a wider range of formats including short-form video and vox pops to bring our work to life.

The Party also strengthened our direct communication channels. The launch of a new WhatsApp Community enabled us to better connect with members and supporters, including supporting our largest-ever WhatsApp group linked to Labour Conference. Increased use of SMS – combined with improved audience segmentation – has also helped drive event participation, recruitment and retention.

Email remains one of the Party's most effective channels for engaging members and supporters. Throughout 2025, we continued to deliver strong open and engagement rates through our digital mailing list, reflecting the strength of our relationship with our audience even as email platforms become more competitive and filtering more complex. The Party have also enhanced our email programme through improved audience segmentation, new automated journeys for members, and targeted re-engagement campaigns – helping ensure our communications are timely, relevant and effective.

Building on our brand review, we began a full redevelopment of the Party's website. This major project will modernise the site's design while significantly improving functionality, accessibility and security. By delivering this work in-house, we have been able to test and refine new designs iteratively – using improved analytics to optimise user experience, content and performance. The new website is due to launch in 2026 and will provide a strong platform for future growth.



Traditional Media

The Party's campaigning efforts and expansive events programme have led to a rise in coverage and salience in traditional media – with extensive growth of reporting in news publications on the Party's activity.

During 2025, engagement with journalists and media outlets has led to coverage in major publications including The Mirror, The Independent, The Observer, the New Statesman. The Mirror provided the most frequent coverage of the Party's work and campaigns, including several articles on our Community Britain campaign and visits by MPs to community organisations – including Miatta Fahnbulleh MP, Alistair Strathern MP and Kirsty McNeill MP. The Party also received coverage on news websites, including regular features and opinion pieces in Politics Home, The House and LabourList – with this including an in-depth interview with the General Secretary.

The Party also regularly received coverage in sectoral press outlet Co-op News, with several stories including a 'Year in Review' piece with the General Secretary and an interview with the Policy Officer on the Party's 'Lessons from Global Co-operative Development' report.

The Party also ran a short campaign highlighting the BBC not identifying Labour & Co-operative MPs as joint representatives. This emerged from a Freedom of Information (FOI) request by the Party staff team. Following this FOI, Party officers met with BBC executives to make the case for ensuring this is rectified in the future. Social media content helped raise awareness of this campaign amongst wider audiences.



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

An active and engaged membership is vital to the operations, success and future of the Party. Ensuring member experience is rewarding and valuable to our membership was a core part of this year's work on this strategic objective and the Party delivered a wide range of activity to ensure members had a diverse range events and activities to participate in. Working in close partnership with our Subscribing Societies is another core component of this strategic objective, with this activity striving to defend and promote the interests of our Societies.

This strategic objective aims to ensure that the Party is welcoming, accessible and supportive of a diverse membership – drawn from different backgrounds and faiths. Supporting the work of our equalities networks aims to ensure members feel included and represented – with the Party making an update and modernisation of its policy work an important outcome for 2025.



‘Co-op Party Live’ sessions

The Party has continued to produce a strong number of high-quality online members events under the banner ‘Co-op Party Live’ to support engagement and give members a deeper understanding of our ongoing political activity, campaigns and policy work. These online events continue to feature a wide range of elected representatives, policy experts and other external stakeholders – providing insightful and educational information to a broad range of our membership.

‘Co-op Party Live’ will be rebrand ‘Co-op Conversations’ at the start of 2026, reflecting brand evolution. New design and logo will be part of this transition. The Party has also taken the decision in late 2025 to change the format of Co-op Conversations, with more offerings at a regional level to help create more localised online events which cover topics of regional interest.

Wales policy consultation – discussion with Welsh members to build a manifesto for the May 2026 elections.

Scottish policy consultation – discussion with Scottish members to build a manifesto for the May 2026 elections.

Unleashing a co-operative retrofit – how the Co-op Party is working to ensure that households are better insulated and more resilient against rising energy costs.

‘100 days to local elections’ – a Local Election campaign launch with Council leaders, Metro Mayoral candidates and Council candidates.

A Recipe for Success? – how children and young people access food in their communities with the Co-op Group.

International Development – discussing the roles co-operatives can play in international development, peacebuilding and post-conflict rebuilding with the Co-op Group.

Saving Britain’s Social Clubs – with the number of social clubs fast declining, Co-operative Party are briefing on how the Party is working to give communities the rights to protect these vital assets with Stir to Action.

Ticket price reform – our campaign to end the ticket price rip-off of music fans.

Women’s History Month – with Seema Malhotra, Labour and Co-operative MP for Feltham and Heston, and Minister for Equalities.

Ramadan 2025 – members of all faiths and none were welcomed to join with our Muslim members in this online event to celebrate Ramadan.

Local Assets in Community Hands – how local elected representatives are supporting the development of new community owned assets and businesses with Power to Change.

Summary of Hope Not Hate polling – review of recent polling, compiled together with Hope Not Hate as part of the Community Britain campaign, looking at how people around the country feel about their country and communities.

The Future Co-operative Economy – exploring how co-operative models can harness emerging technologies for the common good, creating democratic platforms that empower both workers and consumers.

Our work in Westminster – an update on all of our key policy areas and how they are being implemented.

Pride 2026: Strength in Co-operation – Building bridges & protecting the rights of the LGBTQ+ community.

Lessons from Global Co-op Development – summarising the Party’s report celebrating the success of the international co-operative movement and what the UK can learn from global experiences in co-operative development.

The Government’s English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill – outlining the core legislative priorities in the Government’s forthcoming Devolution Bill.

Regional online events – members were invited to attend Zoom events with Parliamentarians local to them, enabling them to learn more about local activity and how they can get involved from their MP. Alex Norris MP hosted one in the East Midlands, Alice McDonald MP in the East of England, Jo Platt MP and Paul Waugh MP in the North West and Anna Turley MP in the North East & North Cumbria.



Member Training & Summer School

During 2025, the Party continued to offer an array of training events and opportunities for members. These training opportunities provided new members with the chance to learn more about how they can get more involved in the Party and get elected to positions in Party Councils, branches and networks. The Party also provided training designed to make participation more inclusive to all members – reflecting our co-operative values. Training events and programmes included:

- Anti Jewish Racism
- Neuro-diversity
- Equalities
- Party Treasurers
- Party Officers

The Party also provided online Summer Schools aimed at giving newer members more information on:

- Our link with the co-operative movement
- Our agreement with the Labour Party
- Our work in Local Government

‘Co-operative Change’ UK-wide Conferences

In recent years the theme of the Party’s regional and devolved national Conferences has followed on from the Annual Conference the previous year. 2025’s theme followed the Party’s 2024 Co-operative Showcase theme of ‘Co-operative Change’ and were held online-only for members in the Midlands (West and East regions); the North (encompassing North West, North East & Cumbria and Yorkshire & Humber regions); East & South East; South West; Scotland and Wales.

The programmes of these events sought to combined national political figures, local and regional representatives alongside co-operative and community led practitioners. Each event carried roughly 10-15 speakers and had member led policy discussions and Q&A. Speakers included Westminster Co-op Ministers such as Douglas Alexander MP, Kirsty McNeil MP, Leader of Scottish Labour Anas Sawar MSP, Sarah Hall MP, David Skaith Metro Mayor, Kim McGuinness, Metro Mayor, Becky Gittins MS, Clare Moody PCC, Sadik Al-Hassan MP, Preet Kaur Gill MP, Gareth Snell MP, Baggy Shanker MP, Andrew Pakes MP, Chris Vince MP, and Alice McDonald MP.

Other online events

Labour Party webinar – the national Labour Party held a members Zoom event on the Co-operative Party and movement to recognise the UN Year of the Co-operative, with speakers including MPs Preet Kaur Gill and Emma Foody as well the Party’s General Secretary. This event was advertised to all Labour Party members.

Wales campaign launch – held on 15th December and livestreamed on the Party’s website and YouTube channel, A Co-operative Vision for Wales: was launched online ahead of 2026 Senedd Elections. This rally-style event welcomed Eluned Morgan (First Minister for Wales); Huw Irranca Davies (Deputy First Minister for Wales); Caitlin Prowle (Head of Politics, Co-operative Party); Mahaboob Basha (Welsh Labour candidate for Bycheiniog Tawe Nedd); Chris Binding (Welsh Labour candidate for Pontypridd Cynon Merthyr); Dawn McGuinness, Welsh Labour candidate for Bangor Aberconwy and was chaired by Mike Hedges MS – Chair of Co-operative Party Group in Senedd



The Pioneer Magazine & Buzz Newsletter

The Party's member magazine, The Pioneer, continues to be a well-received and valued publication by our members, as evidenced by membership survey data. The Pioneer is a biannual publication, with a spring/summer and autumn / winter edition.

The spring/summer edition was a special Community Britain edition, covering our new campaign and its initial publication, Stories from Community Britain. It featured articles from Local Growth Minister Alex Norris MP; Chair of the Independent Commission for Neighbourhoods, Baroness Hilary Armstrong, and Chair of the HCLG Select Committee, Florence Eshalomi MP.

The autumn/winter edition featured reporting on the Party's policy delivery in Westminster – highlighting the transition from manifesto commitments to government delivery. Other articles included a long-read piece from Party Chair Jim McMahon MP on the transformative potential of the English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill and an article on our 'Power in our Communities' report by Miatta Fahnbulleh MP, Labour & Co-op MP for Peckham.

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

Recruitment & Retention

Membership retention remains critical to the Party's future sustainability and success, with this work continuing to be core to operations throughout the year. The Party Staff teams efforts have helped to maintain the existing level of membership, which is below the stated target of growth. Despite this, the Party undertook a wide variety of activity to retain members and prevent drop-off. This includes testing new forms of messaging in 'Join Asks' to new members, as well as different carriers, timings and improved 'email journeys'.

Data collection of past members and target audiences has also been an important strand of this work – helping to inform social media advertising which expanded the supporters list at the back end of the year.

The Party also engaged every non-member of the Parliamentary Labour Party, asking them to join and support the Party. The Labour Party Conference produced good recruitment results, reflecting the work of Party Officers across the conference period.

Policy Process 2025

The Party conducted its annual member-led policy consultation during 2025, focusing on the topics of Equalities and the Future Co-op Economy. The Party is pleased to report it received extensive submissions from Party Councils, party branches, networks and individual members. Party Officers actively worked with these groups to arrange and hold group meetings, which produced formal submissions and policy proposals to the consultation. This includes a variety of regional meetings, bringing together members in person, as well as online meetings.

For the Equalities strand of the Policy Process, a meeting was held with each one of the networks to receive feedback – with all network members invited to participate. These were well attended events which held to shape the final policy papers with direct lived experience and expertise of member participants. Wider engagement was also undertaken by Party Officers with external organisations, including the Fawcett Society and Runnymede Trust.

For the Future Co-op Economy, expert policy insight was contributed by the Platform Co-operativism Consortium, Harvard Ash Kennedy School, Co-Tech Forum and Co-operatives UK – helping to create up-to-date policy proposals.

Both papers were passed comfortably by majority decision following the policy sessions at Co-operative Party Annual Conference.



Scotland & Wales Members Policy Events

In advance of the development of both the Scottish & Welsh Co-operative Party and Labour Party Manifestos, Party Officers held open-invite meetings with members from both devolved nations to hear member priorities for the manifesto development process. These useful sessions helped to inform the final Co-operative Party manifestos for the Senedd and Scottish Parliament elections, and the submissions made by the Party to the Labour Manifesto processes in Scotland and Wales.

Equalities

Our Equalities work continued to expand in 2025, reflecting the hard work of Party Officer and Equalities Networks elected representatives. Network steering committees helped to provide direction and leadership on activity through 2025, with Party Officers supporting and providing induction for new committee members. Network steering committees were elected to two-year terms and develop plans for the year – increasing activity.

Chris Herries Programme

The Party undertook its fourth year of the Chris Herries Women Leadership programme, working in partnership with the Co-operative College on its delivery. Programme activity included sessions on leadership, on co-operative history, personal development and storytelling. An in-person event held in Birmingham was addressed by Baroness Anderson of Stoke on Trent.

The Party is pleased to report the programme received overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants – providing valuable support and personal development.

Equalities Conference

20 Sept

The Party's fourth annual Equalities Conference celebrated co-operative ways of working together to empower communities and create co-operative change. Keynote speakers included Seema Malhotra MP, Minister for Equalities, Baroness Debbie Wilcox of Newport; and Cllr Kemi Akinola, Deputy Leader of Wandsworth Council & CEO of Be Enriched. Panel discussions included 'How to Build more Equitable Communities', 'Co-operation in Action: Spotlight on how co-operative values change lives' and 'Diversity in Local Government'.

Subscribing Societies

The Party engaged in a wide range of activity in support of our Subscribing Societies throughout 2025, including speaking at events, engaging with elected representatives and working on campaigns.

The Party secured and assisted in the organisation of a No.10 Downing Street Government-led celebration for the co-operative and mutual sector. This event was addressed by the first Co-operative Business Secretary, Jonathan Reynolds MP and CEO of the Co-operative Group. This event also marked the UN Year of the Co-operative. The Party also supported Midcounties Co-op's parliamentary event on Bright Futures Co-op, an organisation which provides employment opportunities for victims of modern slavery, including securing the attendance of the relevant Home Office Minister, Jess Phillips MP.

Party Officer regularly attended and spoke at subscribing society events throughout the year, including AGMs, members councils and board meetings. These events marked an opportunity to convey our work, campaigns and parliamentary activity to subscribing societies' leadership and membership.



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.

Ensure the Party is organisationally and financially stable



Fundraising

The Party expresses its ongoing gratitude to our members for their generosity in supporting our operations. The Party was able to secure a donation in 2025 which enabled us to better resource the Party's Community Britain work programme. This donation meant the Party was able to recruit two Community Britain officers, both a political and campaigns offer to help deliver an ambitious programme of Community Britain training, campaigns, policy work and wider political and community engagement.

Subscribing Societies

The Party's Subscribing Societies continue to provide vital support, funding and engagement in our work and operations. The Party aims to represent and advocate for the issues that matter most to the co-operative movement and our Subscribing Societies.

The Party engaged with Subscribing Societies to make the case for their continued membership of the Party. Content and communications were produced to help achieve this outcome, including through partner organisations such as the Labour Party and USDAW. This included communicating on Motion 8 for the retention of political donations to the Party by the Co-op Group as part of the Group AGM. The Party regularly had staff representation at Society AGM's and provided video updates to the Central Co-op AGM.

We are pleased that this work has led to all Subscribing Societies maintaining their membership of the Party. The Party is also pleased to report a new society join its membership, the Sheffield Development Co-operative Group.

Electoral Law

The Party undertook extensive work on electoral law across different legal settings to ensure the Party is well-placed for future elections and has the ability to run joint candidates at all levels of government across the UK.

To achieve this the Party engaged with MHCLG, the Electoral Commission and the Welsh Government in relation to recent changes introduced to the Welsh electoral process, which has meant the Party will only be able to financially support candidates and not appear on the ballot paper for Senedd elections. The changes introduced will not affect the Party in elections at other levels in Wales.

The UK Government has issued its Election Strategy, which will lead to future legislation which will clearly define the rules around 3rd party spending and the formal electoral pacts between parties. The Party has worked to ensure future changes introduced by the Elections Bill recognise joint parties within the Westminster Government.

Tax, Audit & Financial Compliance

The Party undertook work with tax experts and HMRC on VAT and Corporation Tax arrangements. This has led to the Party re-registering for VAT payments.

As a result of record Party spending during the 2024 General Election, the Party's election return required external auditing and submission to the Electoral Commission. This significant piece of work was formally published by the Electoral Commission.



Staff Training & Development

The Party undertook training and development work for the staff team, helping to ensure the Party is meeting the highest standards in compliance and safeguarding. This includes all Party Officers attending new data protection training and online security. As a result of this work, the Party engaged external providers to increase the security of the Party's data systems and online operations.

Training on safeguarding led to an updated safeguarding policy, ensuring the Party's standards are at the highest level. A training session on neuro-diversity was also held.

Member Retention

Throughout 2025, the Party engaged in strong membership retention work across a range of different activities. This includes texts, emails, letters and direct engagement with local officers. This work is vital to ensuring the Party's active membership base, income and wider activity.

Operations Planning

The Party formalised its Year Plan and 2026 Budget, building on the 3 year strategic plan between 2025-2027.

Branding Update

Party Officers have undertaken work to refresh the Party's branding. This included a survey of stakeholders on the current branding to inform changes, which were completed by the Design Officer. An updated of website usability and function was also completed.



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 2027.

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 (until August 2025)
- Tom Laing: England North (from October 2025)
- 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 OBE 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 (until June 2025)
- David Paterson: Retail Societies (from August 2025)
- 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 2025, Assistant General Secretary Emma Hoddinott and Campaigns Officer Eva Murray left the team, and Regional Organiser John Cook announced his retirement for Q1 2026. The Party recruited three new staff members in 2025: Fraser Welsh as an Assistant General Secretary, Megan Griggs as Political Officer, and Charlie Gray as a Campaigns Officer. The new role of Local Government Officer was created to strengthen our work in this area. These additions have helped strengthen the staff team and the Party's 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: Fraser Welsh
- Head of Politics: Caitlin Prowle
- Head of Communications: Georgia O'Brien
- Finance & Office Manager: Dorota Kseba
- Policy Officer: Daniel Monaghan
- Local Government Officer: Gareth Dowling [Part Time]
- Political Officer: Megan Griggs
- Campaigns Officer: Charlie Gray
- 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]
- Board Secretary: Karen Wilkie [Part Time]

Fair Tax Mark & Living Wage Accreditation

In 2025, the Party was again awarded the Fair Tax Mark and continued to be the only political party in the country to do so. The Party also retained its accreditation as a Living Wage employer.

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 2025, which will be available at the AGM in summer 2026.

Co-operative Party

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