



International Year
of Cooperatives



Review of the Year

August 2024 – July 2025



Building resilient neighbourhoods

49 new Case Studies illustrating some of the ways Cooperative Councils are working with local people to build strong and resilient neighbourhoods

Over 600 Case Studies at councils.coop/case-studies

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Making the most of CCIN Membership

Being a Cooperative Council and getting involved in our funded projects

bit.ly/CCIN-Members-Pack

Welcome from Cllr Jim Robbins



Councillor Jim Robbins

Leader of Swindon Borough Council
Chair of the Cooperative Councils'
Innovation Network

It's been quite the year, hasn't it? If 2023–24 was about building momentum, then 2024–25 has been about turning that momentum into meaningful change. And let's be honest—there's never been a better time to be part of the Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network (CCIN).

We've seen the architects of our movement—Jim McMahon MP, Baroness Sharon Taylor, and Steve Reed MP—step into government roles, bringing co-operative values right into the heart of national policy. It's like watching your favourite football team suddenly be in the Premier League. And they've not forgotten where they came from.

With the government's pledge to double the size of the co-operative and mutual sector, CCIN is no longer just a network—it's a launchpad. Our councils are leading the way in community wealth building, fair employment, and democratic innovation. We're not just responding to change; we're shaping it.

This year, we've welcomed new members, launched groundbreaking policy labs, and published a Social Value Toolkit that's already helping councils rethink how they commission services. It's not just about ticking boxes—it's about embedding social value into every decision, every contract, and every conversation. And yes, we've had a few of those conversations over biscuits and tea (co-operatively sourced, of course).

We've also seen councils transition from opposition to leadership, proving that co-operative principles aren't just idealistic—they're electable. From Adur to Tamworth, Peterborough to Medway, our members are showing that collaboration, not competition, is the future of local government.

Personally, I've been inspired by the energy, creativity, and sheer determination of our members. Whether it's a town council launching a community energy scheme or a city council reimagining care through ethical commissioning, the message is clear: co-operation works.

So, as we look ahead, let's keep pushing boundaries. Let's keep asking, "What if we did this differently?" And let's keep showing that when councils, communities, and citizens work together, the results are not just better—they're transformational.

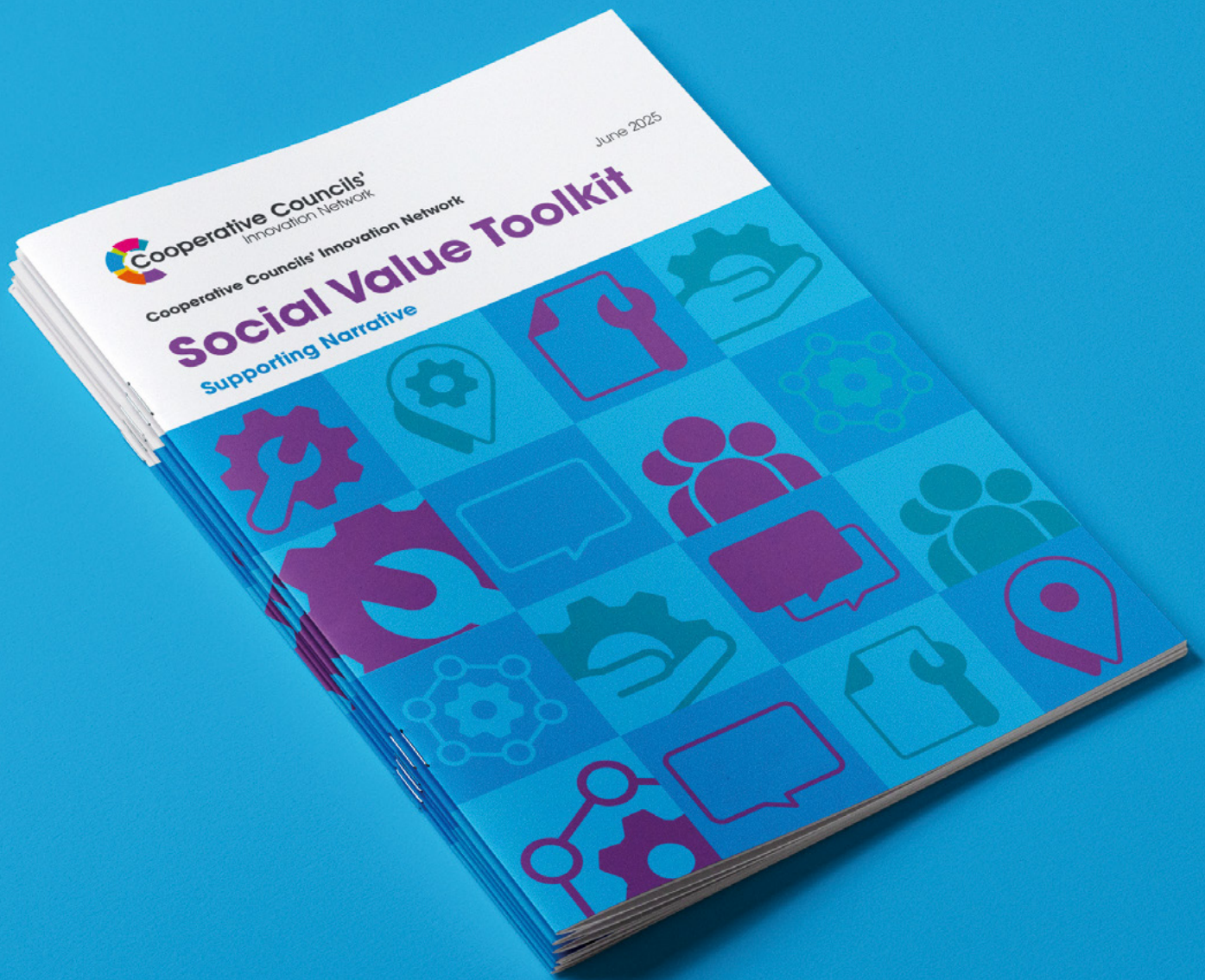
Thank you to every member, officer, partner, and supporter who's helped make this year a success. The future is co-operative—and it's looking brighter than ever.

A tribute to Nicola Huckerby

Before I sign off, I want to take a moment to pay tribute to someone truly special—Nicola Huckerby, our CEO, who will be taking a step back soon.

Nicola has been the heartbeat of CCIN, steering the network through years of growth, change, and challenge with grace, grit, and a good dose of humour. Under her leadership, CCIN has grown into the fastest-growing cross-party network in local government, with over 140 members and supporters and a national voice that resonates far beyond our councils.

Her vision, dedication, and tireless work have laid the foundations for everything we've achieved—and everything we're about to. Nicola, thank you for your wisdom, warmth, and unwavering belief in the power of cooperation. You leave behind a legacy that will inspire us for years to come.



Social Value Toolkit

How to apply the freedoms and flexibilities of the legal framework to achieve community wealth-building and cooperative placemaking goals

bit.ly/CCIN-socialvalue-toolkit

Introduction

Borne out of austerity in 2012, the CCIN is today the fastest-growing cross-party Network in local government. As a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association, we are proud that both councillors and officers are engaged in our work, making it as simple as possible to maximise membership benefits. Our collective work is crucial in facing the cost-of-living crisis and the public sector's financial challenges.

Members of the Network are local authorities committed to reforming their work by building an equal partnership with local people and driving real innovation.

Town, Parish, Community Councils, and Opposition Groups are welcomed as Associate Members. Opposition Groups take control of their councils and are supported through a year of transition to become Full Council members. Our Affiliate members are a growing group of values-based non-governmental organisations and corporations wishing to show their support and engage in developing innovative Cooperative Councils.

Being a network member has meant sharing our developing good practices and supporting one another by spotlighting our cooperative values and

principles. As we enter our second decade, it is clear from discussions that members are eager to see more of our cooperative ideas and approaches percolate throughout their organisations to build a movement of cooperative ideals within local government. With the election of a new Government, members are excited for the opportunity to showcase the difference that the Cooperative Council's approach to service delivery is making in communities. Seeing how the Network has become a focus for creating positive change for the benefit of communities across the UK is inspiring.

Over the last decade, the Network has reinvested around £475k in membership fees for member-led policy projects and organised international study visits for members to experience cooperative working across Europe. As we move forward, it is the perfect time to review how we invest those funds to build a broad range of champions in cooperative service delivery and thematic areas. This will ensure that the learning from this policy work supports council decision-making across the network. The Network is committed to investing in its members and working towards creating positive change in the community.

Embedding ownership of this strategy across the network is critical to furthering a cooperative council movement.



46 Councils → **12.52m Citizens** → **£20.6bn Budget**



CCIN Statement of Values and Principles



Our **Values** are what we believe in

While not a registered cooperative, the Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network has adopted the Cooperative **Values** developed by the International Cooperative Alliance:

Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Our **Principles** guide the way we, and our Members, put our **Values** into action

The Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network endorses the Principles of the International Cooperative Alliance:

- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic member control
- Member economic participation
- Autonomy and independence

- Education, training, and information
- Cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community.

In acknowledging that councils are not in themselves registered cooperatives, we and our Members have developed Principles that have grown from those of the International Cooperative Alliance and are relevant within the context of local government:

The icons (right) are used to indicate how Cooperative Councils are putting our Cooperative Principles into practice, demonstrating the 'cooperative difference' in the work that they are doing.

1. **Social partnership** – We will strengthen the cooperative partnership between citizens, communities, enterprises, and Councils, based on a shared sense of responsibility for well-being and mutual benefit.
2. **Democratic engagement** – We will support the active engagement of the full range of residents in decision-making and priority-setting.
3. **Co-production** – We will develop systems that enable citizens to be equal partners in designing and commissioning public services and determining public resource use.
4. **Enterprise and social economy** – We will promote community-based approaches to economic development that focus on supporting the creation of jobs, social enterprises and other businesses and providing an environment for cooperative and mutual enterprises to thrive.
5. **Maximising social value** – We will support the development of a framework and criteria for social value, giving substance to the concept and supporting Councils with the tools to ensure better local social and economic outcomes.
6. **Community leadership and a new role for councillors** – We will explore ways for Councils to act as a platform for helping the community to contribute to local outcomes, and to re-think the role of councillors as community connectors, brokers, and leaders.
7. **New models of meeting priority needs** – In exploring new ways of meeting the priority needs of our communities we will encourage models, such as cooperatives and mutuals, which give greater influence and voice to staff and users.
8. **Innovation** – We will embrace innovation in how we work with local communities to drive positive change.
9. **Learning** – We will capture and ‘expand’ the experience and learning from individual projects and approaches to encourage broader application of cooperative principles within individual Member Councils and across the Network.
10. **Walking the talk** – As a membership organisation, we will make this statement of our principles operational by:
 - Cooperation among Members: Our Members work together to help each other implement our values, sharing experiences and learning
 - Openness of membership: Full, Associate and Affiliate Membership is open to any qualifying Council, organisation or individual who shares our values and is committed to putting them into action
 - Co-production of the Network’s work: Members help shape the Network’s work programme and the content of events and written products
 - Action-focused: The Network is a vehicle for helping Councils translate cooperative values and principles into policy and practice
 - Membership-based: The Network is majority funded by modest membership subscriptions from its Member Councils, Associates and Affiliates
 - Non-party-political: Members share the belief that working cooperatively within and across communities holds the key to tackling today’s challenges



Highlights of the Year

By the end of July 2025, there were **46** Full Council Members, **28** Associate Members (including **17** Town, Parish, and Community Councils), and **51** Affiliate Members. Excluding GMCA and those councils transitioning from Opposition Groups into Full Council membership, represent **12.52 million** citizens and control a budget of **£20.6 billion**. There are also **20** Supporters, both individuals and organisations.

CCIN's profile has continued to grow. There has been a steady increase in interest from across the Network in participating in Policy Labs, leading to a broader contribution from Network Members in municipal policy development.

Highlights include:

- 2024-5 was our busiest year to date, with **sixteen** events. The core team attended eleven in-person events, launched two Policy Labs with online events, and provided collateral for three partner events.
- Launching **ten** funded projects with a combined budget of **£109,500**, including these Policy Lab Reports:
 - Councils' Cooperative Development Toolkit – Led by Kirklees Council
 - Cooperative Values-driven AI – Led by Wigan Council
 - Tackling Barriers to Developing a Cooperative Economy – Led by Oldham Council
 - Social Value Toolkit – Led by Oxford City Council
 - Cooperative Approaches to Sustainable Food – Led by Oldham Council
- Approved funding for **four** new Policy Labs
 - Approaches to Post-16 Transition – Lead: Manchester City Council
 - Treating Care Experience as a protected characteristic – Lead: Swindon
 - Faith, Young People & Resilience – Lead: GMCA
 - Sustaining Local Leadership and Place-Based Innovation – Lead: Stevenage & Brent
- Approved funding for a Policy Prototype led by the Royal Borough of Greenwich
- Publishing over **600** Case Studies on our website: www.councils.coop
- Publishing the 2025 Case Study Pack of **49** new Case Studies
- **Four** new Full Members: Camden Council, Canterbury City Council, Chorley Council, High Peak Borough Council.
- **Nine** new Associate Members: Biddulph Town Council, Corby Town Council, Cornwall Labour and Cooperative Group, Haywards Heath Town Council, Hereford City Council, Lichfield Labour Group, Shrewsbury Town Council, South West Peninsula Coop Party Council, Stockport Labour Group.
- **Nine** new Affiliate Members: 3ni, Greenwich Leisure, Ikigai Consulting Group, Norman Galloway Homes, Real World Group, Social Value Engine, The Stoke Model, Turtle Creek Limited, South East London Chamber of Commerce



Nicola Huckerby - CEO CCIN speaking with Jane Cameron from CCH at Co-operative Congress in Rochdale July 2025

Membership

In 2024/5, there were 23 New Members. Total numbers grew from 142 members and supporters to 145 by 31 July 2025. We have Green, Labour, Labour-Coop, Liberal Democrat, and SNP-led councils in membership.

125 Members
20 Supporters

46  **Member**
Cooperative Councils'
Innovation Network

28  **Associate Member**
Cooperative Councils'
Innovation Network

51  **Affiliate Member**
Cooperative Councils'
Innovation Network

20  **Supporter**
Cooperative Councils'
Innovation Network



CCIN Stand at the LGA Conference in Liverpool, July 2025 (left to right)

- Cllr Daniel Allen - Leader, North Herts Council
- Nicola Huckerby - CEO CCIN
- Cllr Duncan Enright - Witney Town Council

46 Full Members as of 31 July 2025 (48 in July 2024)

Adur District Council*	Manchester City Council
Barking & Dagenham Council	Medway Council*
Birmingham City Council	Milton Keynes City Council
Brent Council	North Hertfordshire District Council
Bury Council	Oldham Council
Camden Council	Oxford City Council
Canterbury Council	Oxfordshire County Council
Cardiff Council	Peterborough City Council*
Cheshire West & Chester Council	Plymouth City Council
Chorley Council	Preston City Council
Glasgow City Council	Rochdale Borough Council
Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)	South Ribble Borough Council
Royal Borough of Greenwich	South Tyneside Council
Hackney Council	Stevenage Borough Council
High Peak Council	Sunderland City Council
Hounslow Council	Swindon Borough Council
Hull City Council	Tameside Council
Inverclyde Council	Tamworth Borough Council*
Kirklees Council	Telford and Wrekin Council
Knowsley Council	Trafford Council
Lewes District Council	Warrington Borough Council
Lewisham Council	Westminster City Council
Liverpool City Council	Wigan Council

**Councils transitioning from Associate Membership (Opposition Group) into Full Council Membership following election success.*

20 Supporters as of 31 July 2025 (22 in 2024)

Individuals

Stephen Barry-Stanners
Vince Barry-Stanners
Michael Bell
Andy Boys
Cllr Paul Byrne
Cllr Rowenna Davis
Cllr Richard Eason
Kevan Hawker
Christin Marshall
Cllr Keith Martin
Scott Montgomery

Ben Procter
Cllr Mike Roberts
Peter Sagar
Philip Watson

Organisations

CASE
Collaborate CIC
Community Catalysts
The Finance Innovation Hub
Resonance Ltd

28 Associate Members as of 31 July 2025

(22 in 2024)

Town, Parish and Community Councils



Opposition Groups

Cornwall Labour and Coop Group

Gloucester Labour Group

Hillingdon Labour Group

Kidsgrove Labour Group

Lichfield Labour Group

Midcounties Glos & Swindon Coop Party Council

Newcastle-under-Lyme Labour & Coop Group

North Warwickshire Labour Group

Shropshire Green Group

South West Peninsula Coop Party Council

Staffordshire Labour & Co-op Group

Stockport Labour Group

51 Affiliate Members as of 31 July 2025

(49 in 2024)





Cooperative Development Toolkit

A practical guide for councils from “We need more coops!”
to action with steps, resources, and strategy

bit.ly/CCIN-coopdevt

Governance and Structure

The Network is politically led, with elected councillors chairing and forming the Executive Oversight Committee (EOC), Values and Principles (V&P) Board and the Finance & General Purposes Group (F&GPG). Representatives of our associate and affiliate membership are also elected to positions on both EOC and V&P. The V&P Board also comprises representatives from the cooperative and trade union sectors.

Elections for places on the Governance panels are held every two years and will be held again in Autumn 2026. To find out more about the process, visit bit.ly/ccin-eoc.

Executive Oversight Committee

The Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) holds delegated powers to manage Network affairs on behalf of all Members.

The purpose of the EOC is to:

- Drive forward Cooperative Policy Development on behalf of network members.
- Make key decisions on Network priorities, for example, setting the scope of Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes.
- Oversee the development, review, approval and implementation of the CCIN's strategic direction.
- Raise the CCIN's profile, developing our influence
- and strengthen our policy impact.
- Oversee the network budget, allocate spending, and sign off on the CCIN's annual accounts.
- Ensure the Values and Principles Board is resourced and supported to perform its functions.
- Manage the Network's reputation, considering issues, including Member behaviour, which may impact the reputation of the CCIN.

All meetings this year were held online. Minutes of the EOC can be read here: bit.ly/ccin-minutes.

Membership of the Executive Oversight Committee comprises:

- Up to eight Member Council representatives (including the Chair, Vice Chair and Chair of the V&P Board)
- One representative from the Associate Membership (voted for by those members)
- One representative from the Affiliate Membership (voted for by those members)
- Chair of the Executive Oversight Committee (Full Member)
- Vice-Chair of Executive Oversight Committee (Full Member)
- A representative from the Accountable Body
- Chair of the Values and Principles Board

Members of the Executive Oversight Committee as at 31 July 2025



Cllr Jim Robbins
Chair of CCIN
Swindon Council



Cllr Ernest Gibson
Vice Chair of CCIN
South Tyneside Council



Cllr Peter Bradbury
Cabinet Member
Cardiff Council



Cllr Sandra Barr
Cabinet Member
Stevenage Borough Council



Cllr Kelly Middleton
Cabinet Member
Telford & Wrekin Council



Cllr Sue Smith
Cabinet Member
Rochdale MB Council



Cllr Shanika Mahendran
Cabinet Member
Milton Keynes City Council



Cllr Paul Cassidy
Vice-Convenor
Inverclyde Council



Cllr Barbara Brownridge
Cabinet Member
Oldham Council – Accountable Body



Cllr Mike Stubbs
Newcastle Under Lyme
Labour Group



Cllr John Fahy
Chair – Greenwich Coop
Development Agency



Cllr Mili Patel
Chair of V&P
Brent Council

We want to thank **Cllr Louise Gittins** – Leader of Cheshire West and Chester who stood down at the end of 2024, having been appointed as Chair of the LGA. Thanks also to **Cllr Sandra Barr** – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperative Council at Stevenage Borough Council, who stepped down from EOC during the year.

Values & Principles Board

The Values & Principles Board has overall responsibility for Values and Principles oversight within the Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network. More here: bit.ly/ccin-vp.

Individuals from the national cooperative sector serve on our Values and Principles Board, bringing valuable insights and expertise.

All meetings were held online. The minutes can be read here: bit.ly/ccin-minutes.

“The Values and Principles Board plays a pivotal role in guiding the Network's commitment to cooperative values. I am pleased to report the Board upheld its governance remit – evaluating new membership applications and offering recommendations to the Executive Oversight Committee, while ensuring cooperative values manifest both internally and across the Network's projects.

The Board continues to grow in strength. To date, it has funded up to £500,000 to member councils through Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes, guided by the Network's values, including co-production, innovation, learning, and new models of meeting the needs of our communities. A significant amount of this year's work programme has been to review our approach to funding Policy Projects. I want to thank Morgan Jones from Cheshire West and Chester Council, who led on this work and all members of the Governance who volunteered to pick up actions.

As part of our ambition to grow and innovate, the Board commissioned four new Policy Labs, including one on Treating Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic, which was inspired by Terry Galloway, who spoke at our Annual Conference in Woolwich in February.

I am pleased that the board has adapted well to the election of a new government, whilst continuing to promote our timeless cooperative values.

I want to take this opportunity to thank serving members of the Board for their time and commitment over the past year. Their support to facilitate active debate and reflection on how values translate into practice – encouraging workshops, case studies, and peer learning across the Network to explore how cooperative values shape local governance in action.

Last but not least, on behalf of myself and my Board colleagues, I would like to convey my thanks and huge appreciation to Nicola Huckerby, whose hard work and diligence have underpinned the success of the work of the Board.

Cllr Mili Patel *Deputy Leader of Brent Council*



Membership of the Values & Principles Board comprises:

- Chair
- Representatives from up to **five** Full Member Councils
- Representatives from up to **five** Associate Members
- Representatives from up to **three** Affiliate Members
- Up to **five** representatives from the cooperative movement
- A representative from the TUC

We want to thank the following members who served on the Values & Principles Board during the year 2024-25 and who helped support all aspects of the Network's activities:

- Cllr Jacky Alty – South Ribble Council
- Cllr Sandra Barr – Stevenage Borough Council
- Cllr Peter Curling – Hillingdon Labour Group
- Jo Hanon – Your Coop Business Solutions
- Andrew Laird – Mutual Ventures
- Richard McCready – Coop Party
- Cllr Joyce Welsh - South Tyneside Council
- Jo White – Co-operative Futures
- Cllr Sue Woodward – Burntwood Town Council

Members of the Values and Principles as at 31 July 2025



Cllr Mili Patel
Chair of V&P
Brent Council



Cllr Alistair Willoughby
Vice Chair
North Herts Council



Cllr Lisa Denson
Cheshire West & Chester Council



Cllr Sam Pallis
Hackney Council



Cllr Rudi Schmidt
Lewisham Council



Cllr Peter Curling
Hillingdon Labour Group



Cllr David Darkin
Llaneli Town Council



Cllr Dave Griffiths
South Swindon Parish Council



Cllr Dave Grocott
Kidsgrove Labour Group



Cllr Michael Osbourne
North Warks Labour



Claire Ward
Anthony Collins LLP



Jonathan Bland
SBI/E3M



Jo Hannon
Your Coop Business Solutions



Rebecca Harvey
Co-op News



Liz McIvor
Co-operative Heritage Trust



Cheryl Barrott
Co-operatives UK



Gareth Dowling
Co-operative Party



Jo White
Co-operative Futures



Paul Bell
Unison

Finance and General Purposes Group

A Finance and General Purposes Group was introduced in March 2024 to strengthen the Network's processes regarding budget accountability and finance.

The Members of that Group are:

- **Chair – Ernest Gibson** – Vice Chair of the Executive Oversight Committee | Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Area Management, South Tyneside Council
- **Cllr Barbara Brownridge** – Accountable Body Lead | Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Oldham Council
- **Cllr Paul Cassidy** – Vice Convenor Environment and Regeneration, Inverclyde Council
- **Cllr Mili Patel** – Deputy Leader, Brent Council
- **Cllr Mike Stubbs** – Newcastle-under-Lyme Labour Group
- **Cllr Alistair Willoughby** – North Herts District Council
- **Jonathan Downs** – Accountable Body Officer Lead | Corporate Policy Lead – Oldham Council
- **Nicola Huckerby** – Chief Executive

We want to thank the following members who served on the Finance and General Purposes Group during the year:

- **Cllr Peter Bradbury** – Cabinet Member for Tackling Poverty, Equalities & Public Health (Tackling Poverty & Supporting Young People)
- **Cllr Ruth Bennett** – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources & Transformation, Liverpool City Council

Officer group

Monthly officer meetings have allowed Officer Leads and others the space to share experiences and best practices with peers. All council officers are invited to join these calls, which Jonathan Downs chairs. Jonathan is the Corporate Policy Lead at Oldham Council, the Accountable Body.

Network support

COOP Brand Ltd provides network support on a consultancy basis. Nicola Huckerby manages day-to-day operations and provides a central coordination point for the Network including organising events, communications, publications and member engagement. Andrew Huckerby manages website content and CCIN data. Since winning the contract in June 2016, the network has grown from 19 councils to 147 councils, political groups, organisations and supporters.

Reviewing the CCIN Constitution

In March 2025, after nine extraordinary years, Nicola Huckerby announced her decision to step back from her day-to-day role managing the network. In response, Cllr Jim Robbins declared his commitment to ensuring that Nicola's wealth of knowledge, experience, and relationships remain within the network and to shape a continuing role for her, so that she can remain an integral part of the CCIN moving forward.

To help guide the next chapter, a task force was formed to explore new opportunities and ensure the network continues to deliver real value to its members. That task force comprised 12 individuals from across the governance and officer network, resulting in several new work streams, including a focus on opportunities for a new legal and operational structure. An additional resource was bought in from July, when Pete Vallance joined the team to oversee the implementation of our CRM ([see page 27](#)) and manage our growing range of funded projects.

Being a Cooperative Council

Council Leaders have identified some key themes and actions councils can take to grow their local economies. This is not an exhaustive list, but it gives a good framework for these activities across our membership.

There are two key themes:

Community Wealth Building

- Develop an Inclusive Economy Charter
- Promote a progressive procurement policy
- Support the creation of a regional mutual/ community bank by investing
- Work with local anchor institutions to buy and recruit local
- Regulate rent and rates for 'local' businesses in council-owned property
- Offer business rate rebates for those businesses that become Living Wage Accredited
- Champion Local Employment schemes
- Have insourcing Council Services as an objective

Cooperative Placemaking

- Develop a cooperative development strategy
- Establish a cooperative development network
- Commit to community engagement in local decision making including participatory budgeting
- Invest in local community production, particularly those focusing on community energy to tackle the climate emergency
- Promote the circular economy
- Support local enterprises to convert into coops/ worker coops
- Have an Asset Transfer policy to manage land and assets which support Community Land Trusts



CCIN Stand at the LGA Conference October 2024 (left to right)

- Baroness Sharon Taylor of Stevenage
- Cllr Jim Robbins - Leader of Swindon Borough Council
- Cllr Louise Gittins - Leader of Cheshire West and Chester



CCIN Stand at the LGA Conference October 2024 (left to right)

- Jonathan Nunn - Policy & Partnerships Lead, Kirklees Council
- Cllr John Fahy - Royal Borough of Greenwich



CCIN Stand at the LGA Conference October 2024 (left to right)

- Baroness Sharon Taylor of Stevenage
- Nicola Huckerby - CEO, CCIN

Funded projects 2025

Each year, CCIN Members can apply to deliver projects on behalf of the Network. Full Councils are encouraged to submit bids for projects that can be delivered in partnership with other Members seeking cooperative policy solutions to local government challenges. These projects attract up to £20,000. Smaller projects, known as Policy Prototypes, are defined to a specific locality and can attract up to £2,000.

Policy Lab Updates

For 2025, we welcomed Bids from across the Network and approved all four projects:

1. Approaches to Post-16 Transition – Lead: Manchester City Council
2. Treating Care Experience as a protected characteristic and demonstrating social, financial and economic impact in the delivery of council services to achieve positive outcomes for Care Experienced individuals – Lead: Swindon Borough Council
3. Faith, Young People & Resilience: Understanding the Past, Strengthening Cohesion, and Preparing for the Future – Lead: GMCA
4. Sustaining Local Leadership and Place-Based Innovation – Lead: Stevenage Borough Council & Brent Council

Policy Prototype Updates

We received one application for a Policy Prototype, which was approved:

- Greenwich Cooperative Care Compact and Workers Network

Details on all active projects can be found here: bit.ly/CCIN-active-projects.

Report launches

In 2024/5 we approved and launched ten funded projects with a combined budget of £109,500:

Policy Labs:

- Councils' Cooperative Development Toolkit – Led by Kirklees Council
bit.ly/CCIN-coopdevt
- Cooperative Values-driven AI – Led by Wigan Council
bit.ly/CCIN-coop-AI
- Tackling Barriers to Developing a Cooperative Economy – Led by Oldham Council
bit.ly/CCIN-barriers-coop-economy
- Social Value Toolkit for Cooperative Councils – Led by Oxford City Council
bit.ly/CCIN-socialvalue-toolkit
- Cooperative Approaches to Sustainable Food – Led by Oldham Council
bit.ly/CCIN-sustainable-food

Prototypes:

- Cooperative Community Bank of Kindness – Stevenage Borough Council
bit.ly/CCIN-ctty-kindness-bank
- Turning Strategic Plans into Art – Inverclyde Council
bit.ly/CCIN-accessible-strategies
- Cooperative Culture Making in Rochdale – Rochdale Borough Council
bit.ly/CCIN-coop-culture-making
- Employment and Skills Outcome Based Review (OBR) – Brent Council
bit.ly/CCIN-obr-brent
- Engaging and Empowering the Residents of the Woolwich Common Estate – Royal Borough of Greenwich
bit.ly/CCIN-woolwich-common-estate



CCIN Stand at the Labour Party Conference September 2024 (left to right)

- Ruth Cadbury MP
- Nicola Huckerby - CEO, CCIN



CCIN Fringe at the Labour Local Government Conference February 2024 (left to right)

- Cllr John Cotton - Leader, Birmingham City Council
- Cllr Shanika Mahendran - Milton Keynes City Council
- Cllr Jacky Alty - Leader of South Ribble Borough Council
- Cllr Jim Robbins - Chair of CCIN and Leader of Swindon Borough Council
- Cllr Louise Gittins - Chair of the LGA and Leader of Cheshire West and Chester Council

Meetings and events

2025 began with the Labour Local Government Conference, where we ran a Fringe session. This was soon followed by the Royal Borough of Greenwich hosting another groundbreaking Annual Conference in

In May, we attended UKREiIF in Leeds with a Cooperative presence co-ordinated by Lincolnshire Coop, and partnered with Cooperatives UK, Central Coop, Confederation for Cooperative Housing and Cooperative Press. Cllr Mili Patel represented the CCIN in the Panel Session and on the Exhibition Stand.

The year ended with the second LGA Conference and Exhibition in July, which was again held in Liverpool. We launched two further Policy Labs at our stand: Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls, led by Trafford Council, and the Social Value Toolkit for Cooperative Councils, initially led by Oxford City Council and completed by Simon Grove-White.

The timeline displays the following events and dates:

- 14-17 Sept:** Liberal Democrat Party Conference – Brighton – NH
- 12 Oct:** Cooperative Change Manchester – NH
- 16 Nov:** Welsh Labour Conference Llandudno – sent a pack
- 3 Dec:** Democratic Business Summit Cardiff – delegates
- 16 Jan:** CASE roundtable Coalville – Cllr Stubbs & sent a Panel / Pack
- 12-13 Feb:** CCIN Annual Conference – NH
- 1 July:** Cooperative Law Symposium – Manchester – delegates
- 3-4 July:** Co-operatives UK Congress – Rochdale – NH
- 22-25 Sept:** Labour Party Conference – Liverpool – NH
- 22-24 Oct:** LGA Conference & Exhibition – Liverpool – NH
- 19 Nov:** Coops and the Council event Glasgow – sent a pack
- 10 Sept:** Cooperative Values Driven AI Online
- 8-9 Feb:** Labour Local Government Conference – University of Warwick – NH
- 20-22 May:** UKREiF – Leeds – Cllr Patel & sent a pack
- 1-3 July:** LGA Conference & Exhibition – Liverpool – NH
- 23 July:** Social Value Toolkit launch Online



CCIN Stand at the Labour Party Conference September 2024 (left to right)

- Councillor Jackie Hollywell - Stevenage Borough Council
- Nicola Huckerby - CEO, CCIN
- Cllr Richard Henry - Leader, Stevenage Borough Council



Launch of the Councils Cooperative Development Toolkit at the Coop Party's Coop Change event in Manchester - October 2024 (left to right)

- Nicola Huckerby - CEO, CCIN
- Jim McMahon OBE, MP
- Cllr Jim Robbins - Chair of CCIN and Leader of Swindon Borough Council



CCIN Stand at the LGA Conference July 2025 (left to right)

- Cllr Kate Ewert - Cornwall Council Labour & Coop Group
- Cllr Jim Robbins - Chair of CCIN and Leader of Swindon Borough Council



CCIN Stand at the LGA Conference October 2024 (left to right)

- Nicola Huckerby - CEO, CCIN
- Cllr Anthony Okereke - Leader, Royal Borough of Greenwich

Publications

Case Studies Pack

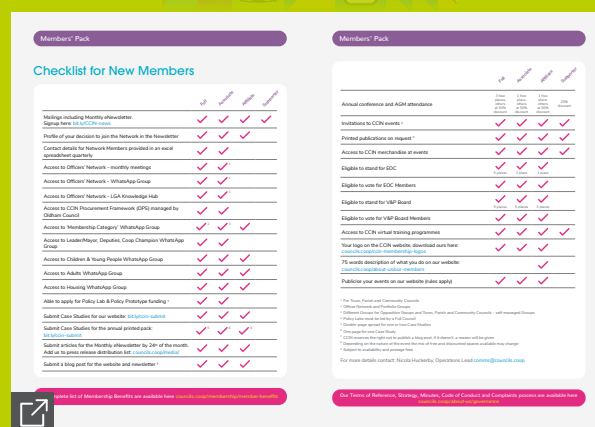
For the last four years, we have worked with the talented team at Coop Press to design our Annual Case Studies Pack. This is our core publication, for which members are invited to submit case studies showcasing their cooperative difference. The Pack is available for download from our website and at all our in-person events. We begin promoting participation in early January, hoping that all members will take advantage of this crucial member benefit by submitting a Case Study. The 2025 Case Study Pack included 49 new Case Studies from 47 Members.

Case Studies can be submitted at any time; there is no need to wait until you are chased. Thank you to everyone who submitted.



Members' Pack

Our Members' Pack was updated at the end of 2024 – again designed and printed by Coop Press. The Pack incorporated a Checklist for New Members detailing member benefits for each category of membership as a visual checklist. The Pack also incorporated content previously found in the A5 'Introduction to the Network and Funded Projects' along with information on our Statement of Values and Principles and Dynamic Purchasing System.



Brand Guidelines

In January 2025, we updated the CCIN logo, removing the hyphen in 'cooperative' and adding an apostrophe after 'councils'. This redesign featured in our first set of Brand guidelines, which were produced to support councils delivering funded policy projects. These projects are a substantial investment for the Network, and the guidelines have been developed to ensure that published reports funded by the Network (whether online or in print) clearly promote the CCIN's brand identity. Published reports are expected to be clearly identified as CCIN publications, with the final document forming part of the CCIN's growing resource database. The guidelines have been produced to assist Policy project leads. They have been developed to meet the expectations of the CCIN's Values and Principles Board in promoting the Cooperative Difference in our work. A copy can be accessed here: bit.ly/CCIN-brand-guidelines



Introduction of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system

As CCIN grows in scale and influence, we're investing in smarter systems to enhance our connections. We've appointed a new member to the core team to design and implement a new CRM (Customer Relationship Management) platform tailored to our needs. Pete Vallance joined us in July and some of you may have met him at the LGA Conference in Liverpool.

Currently, our membership and contact data are scattered across multiple systems, resulting in a fragmented view of our network. This hinders our ability to track activity, manage communications, and engage consistently.

Our new CRM will create a central hub—one clean, connected system for managing engagement, insights, and communications. More than just tech, this will help us personalise member support and improve how we collaborate across the network.

We're starting by cleaning and tagging existing contacts, integrating our data, and scoping what tools we need. We'll then select a cost-effective platform that integrates seamlessly with our existing systems.

This project aligns with wider digital transformation efforts across local government and helps futureproof how we work together.

Knowledge Hub and WhatsApp Groups

The Officer Network continued to utilise the LGA Knowledge Hub as an online platform where officers could upload and share documents, ideas, and challenges.

Officer members have been seeking a safe, convenient way to communicate and share information. WhatsApp is valuable for immediate conversations, but since many officers only have WhatsApp on their personal phones, sharing documents can be

challenging. The space on khub.net is a closed hub, open to all officers of CCIN member councils.

WhatsApp groups have been a timely way to share our news. We're keen to encourage more officers to join the Officer Network WhatsApp Group and for more leaders, mayors, and cooperative champions to join their Respective Groups. To join either Group, please WhatsApp Nicola Huckerby on 07813 687 292. You can remove yourself at any time.

Newsletters

The monthly Newsletter Update reaches 1,327 inboxes across eight different audiences each month. We're always looking for content, so please send your news by the 24th of each month. In addition to the monthly newsletter, 27 Mailings were sent to at least one audience last year. A vital strand of the 2023-

26 Strategy is to 'Support existing CCIN members to deepen engagement about cooperative practice throughout their own organisation'. An essential element of this is encouraging more sign-ups for the monthly Newsletters and greater engagement with the articles shared (more opens and clicks).

CCIN website

The councils.coop website is the first point of reference for Members of the Network to find resources to help develop and grow the cooperative economy. The website highlights what it means to 'Be a Cooperative Council' and our Values and Principles. It uses the icons developed to illustrate how the delivered policy work and case studies resonate with the Network's Principles.

Features include:

- Funded Projects, both Published and Active, which can be searched by Member, Date and Principles supported
- Member listings with a location map, accreditations and links to Affiliate member websites
- Membership Benefits and Application Forms
- Governance details for CCIN, including Boards, Committees, Strategy, Policies and Minutes
- Functionality for members to upload their Case Studies, Blogs, Projects and Events
- Resources section, which includes Publications, Newsletters, News and Blogs
- Toolkits provide resources to enable best practice approaches to be shared
- Over 600 Case Studies, searchable by Member, Region, Principles supported and Categories:
 - Climate Change and Environment
 - Community
 - Community Wealth Building
 - Cooperative Placemaking
 - Education & Training
 - Finance
 - Governance
 - Health & Social Care
 - Housing
 - Jobs
 - Poverty
 - Social Outcomes
 - Strategy
 - Young People

Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)

In April 2020, the Network launched its DPS. This expired in March 2025 and was extended for a further term. The Procurement Act 2023, which came into force in October 2024, has meant that Dynamic Purchasing Systems (**DPS**) may continue under the Act but must expire by 27 October 2028 at the latest.

As Cooperative Councils, our members are at the cutting edge of policy innovation – and it can be a tough place to be. Councils often need to move quickly and flexibly to stay ahead when it comes to ‘doing things differently’. Sometimes, it is necessary to bring in extra capacity and specific expertise to accomplish this, and there may also be a need to seek independent challenge to test assumptions and policy design. The CCIN recognises this and wants its members to be as enabled as possible to develop practical policy solutions as quickly and informed as possible – and this is where the DPS comes in.

A DPS is an entirely electronic system for purchasing goods, works, or services. Unlike a traditional framework, suppliers can apply to join at any time. It is an ‘open market’ solution designed to give buyers access to a pool of pre-qualified suppliers.

Our multi-supplier DPS allows all CCIN Members and Associate Members (and the CCIN itself) to select from a specialist, prescribed pool of organisations to help develop policy, implement prototypes and build capacity in communities and inside the organisation.

The DPS period runs from 1 April 2020 to 28 October 2028. The CCIN website has a User Guide and details of who is on the DPS: councils.coop/dps.

The following organisations were on the DPS on 31 July 2025:

- 4OC
- Anthony Collins Solicitors
- Branding.coop
- Centrifuge
- CLES
- Climate Positive
- Collaborate CIC
- Co-operative College
- Co-operative Futures
- Co-operatives UK
- Crellin Consulting
- Human Engine
- Ideas Alliance
- Made Open
- Mutual Ventures
- Peopletoo
- People, Potential, Possibilities
- RedQuadrant
- Ruby Star Associates
- Stir to Action
- The Behaviouralist
- Trueman Change
- Unlimited Potential




Launch of the Greenwich Cooperative Commission at Woolwich Works - February 2025 (left to right)

- Cllr Mariam Lolavar - Royal Borough of Greenwich
- Cllr Anthony Okereke - Leader, London Borough of Greenwich
- Nicola Huckerby - CEO, CCIN
- Cllr Jim Robbins - Chair of CCIN and Leader of Swindon Borough Council

Budget statement

The CCIN Membership year begins on 1st August, and Oldham Council, as the Accountable Body, invoices in September.

The CCIN's budget report is provided below. The CCIN generated income from membership fees across Full Members, Associates and Affiliates. Each year, the Executive Oversight Committee prioritises spending based on Network needs, funding a range of Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes, attending events and paying for Network support and administration.

 Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network		2022/23 (Actual Spend)	2023/24 (Actual Spend)	2024/25 (Actual Spend)	2025/26 (Projected Spend)
Member Fees		£198,139.00	£231,028.00	£215,765.00	£223,415.00
Associate and Affiliate Fees		£15,175.00	£20,450.00	£21,350.00	£22,000.00
Supporter Fees		£675.00	£625.00	£550.00	£550.00
Carry Forward		£51,300.00	£36,177.00	£69,824.00	£73,101.00
CCIN Annual Conference		£395.00	£-	TBC	TBC
Partnership Income		£-	£20,000.00	£-	£-
Policy Projects Withdrawn		£-	£7,000.00	£4,000.00	£-
Total		£265,684	£315,280	£311,489	£319,066
Expenditure					
Accountable Body Fee		£6,237.00	£6,237.00	£6,237.00	£6,237.00
Officer Network Governance		£6,237.00	£6,237.00	£6,237.00	£6,237.00
AGM and Meetings		£618.00	£530.00	£-	£3,500.00
Travel Expenses and Accommodation		£6,395.00	£5,251.00	£6,202.00	£7,000.00
Revolut Transfer		£-	£-	£3,000.00	£-
Insurance and GDPR		£-	£-	£49.00	£-
Management Fees and Governance	MF	£19,487.00	£18,255.00	£21,725.00	£22,974.00
Communications Support		£60,000.00	£60,000.00	£60,000.00	£60,000.00
Website Maintenance and Email Costs		£3,854.00	£3,706.00	£4,070.00	£4,000.00
Printing, Design, and Postage		£13,589.00	£8,062.00	£13,978.00	£8,000.00
Membership Support		£21,125.00	£23,000.00	£24,000.00	£24,000.00
Communications and Membership Support	CM	£98,568.00	£94,768.00	£102,048.00	£96,000.00
Event Sponsorship		£-	£-	£3,300.00	£1,500.00
Stir to Action Festival		£2,400.00	£-	£-	£-
Sponsorship	SP	£2,400.00	£-	£3,300.00	£1,500.00
Conference Expenses		£20,661.00	£21,841.00	£23,872.00	£30,000.00
Annual Conference		£10,628.00	£7,000.00	£8,000.00	£-
Conference Expenses and Room Hire	CE	£31,289.00	£28,841.00	£31,872.00	£30,000.00
Policy Labs and Prototypes		£57,800.00	£87,000.00	£75,000.00	£75,000.00
Study Visits		£9,168.00	£16,592.00	£-	£-
Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes	PP	£66,968.00	£103,592.00	£75,000.00	£75,000.00
CCIN Strategy Development		£5,794.55	£-	£1,143.00	£-
CCIN 10th Anniversary Video (Rewind Project)		£5,000.00	£500.00	£-	£-
Network Transition Support		£-	£-	£3,300.00	£6,600.00
Legacy and Development Work	LD	£10,794.55	£500.00	£4,443.00	£6,600.00
Expenditure Sub-total		£229,506.55	£245,956.00	£238,388.00	£232,074.00
Reserve		£25,000.00	£25,000.00	£25,000.00	£25,000.00
		£25,000.00	£25,000.00	£25,000.00	£25,000.00
TOTAL BALANCE		£36,177.45	£69,324.00	£73,101.00	£86,992.00

Final word

My journey in the cooperative movement began in 2012, when I won a secondment from the Cooperative Group to coordinate the UN International Year of Cooperatives for the International Cooperative Alliance. To now be stepping back in 2025—the second UN International Year of Cooperatives—feels especially meaningful. After nine deeply rewarding years as CEO of the Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network, I am filled with gratitude for the colleagues, partners, and friends who have shared this journey with me. It has been a true privilege to work alongside so many inspiring people and to be part of this remarkable story.

Since 2016, it's been wonderful to see the Network grow from just 19 councils to 147 members and supporters. As I step back, it feels right to initiate a structural review to prepare the Network for its next exciting chapter. This remarkable growth has sparked meaningful discussions about the legal structure—moving from an informal partnership of local authorities, supported by Oldham as our Accountable Body, towards becoming a legal entity in our own right, potentially even a cooperative, with the ability to raise our own funds. A change in the legal structure does not come without challenge,

especially in the current political climate, where existing financial security cannot be assured if we lose members. I want to thank the councillors, officers, and partners who have joined the Task Force to help shape the way forward. Their commitment reassures me that the Network's future will be even brighter.

As the reviews get underway, we've taken on extra capacity to support the creation of a CRM and to put more resources behind managing our funded projects. And it's been a real pleasure to work with Pete Vallance for the last few weeks.

Being a Cooperative Council is something to be proud of, as it demonstrates a genuine commitment to collaborative working, policy innovation, and our Values and Principles. With over 600 Case Studies on the website and an investment of £470k in Policy Projects, there are boundless opportunities for members to share best practice, highlight their own work and improve the lives of the communities we serve.

Thank you for your continued support.



Contact:

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Chief Executive

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Mobile: 07813 687 292



What works in community asset transfer?

What are the barriers?

What makes them successful?

Download: bit.ly/CCIN-Asset-Transfer

Join us today

Find out more about the UK local authorities who are driving global public sector policy development & best practice with a common belief in the cooperative values and principles

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🐦 @coopcouncils.bsky.social

✉ comms@councils.coop

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