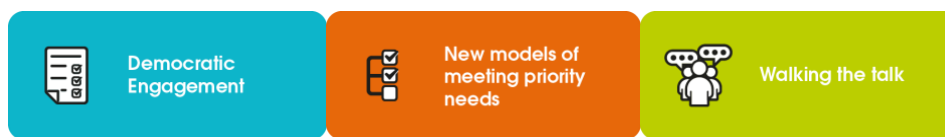


## STRATEGY



## Branding.coop working with the CCIN

### A cooperative journey

After nearly a decade as CEO of the Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network (CCIN), I stepped down at the end of December 2025. My break was brief, however, as I was soon invited to take on the role of Honorary President — an honour and a privilege.

The earliest events in my CCIN journey were the Cooperative Congress in Birmingham, swiftly followed by the LGA Conference and Exhibition in Bournemouth. Over the years, I have taken the CCIN roadshow from Dundee to Plymouth, and organised Annual Conferences in Cardiff, Oldham, Croydon, Rochdale, Telford, Sunderland and Greenwich, working officer teams in each place. Around 100 events have been delivered, spanning thousands of miles. Highlights have included study visits to Mondragon and Emilia-Romagna, where members have had the opportunity to visit cooperative places in action and speak with international cooperators. I am immensely proud of that achievement and of the breadth of local government talent nurtured within individual councils to take advantage of the opportunities that the CCIN has given.



Figure 1 – Cllr Jim Robbins – Chair of the CCIN and Leader of Swindon Borough Council with Nicola Huckerby at the LGA Conference in Liverpool in July 2025.



*Figure 2 – Dr Ariel Guarco – President of the International Cooperative Alliance and Nicola Huckerby at Cooperative Congress in Rochdale, July 2025.*

My cooperative journey began in 2012 at the International Cooperative Alliance in Geneva, first as Coordinator of the International Year of Co-operatives and later as Director of Communications. 2012 also saw the launch of CCIN. At the ICA, I witnessed the transformative power of cooperative enterprises — values that continue to underpin my work with the Network. I was thrilled to end my tenure as CEO during the second UN International Year of Cooperatives in 2025, as it gave me the opportunity to meet so many of my international friends at the Cooperative Congress in Birmingham

Since 2016 the Network has grown from 19 councils to more than 140 councils, opposition groups, and organisations. Today, CCIN stands as the fastest-growing cross-party network in local government. This stands as one of the Network's most significant achievements.

Over the years, I've had the privilege of working with three inspiring Chairs: Baroness Taylor, Councillor Louise Gittins (Chair of the Local Government Association), and Councillor Jim Robbins. The Network's exponential growth has been fuelled by a deep, shared commitment to cooperative principles and a collective desire to connect like-minded leaders and innovators across the country.

As Honorary President, I am proud to play a small part in the next chapter of the CCIN journey.

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**For further information contact:**

Nicola Huckerby

Honorary President – Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network

Director – COOP Brand Ltd

[hello@branding.coop](mailto:hello@branding.coop) | 07813 687 292 | [www.branding.coop](http://www.branding.coop)