



# MAKE YOUR VOICE COUNT

National Members' Council Elections  
Scotland



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# John Nicholls

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

## 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

My top priority for the Co-op is simple – keep delivering for member-owners, with high quality, good value products and services. More specifically, I'd like to see if there's still more we could do to support our most vulnerable member-owners in terms of accessibility and affordability, and to further support our frontline colleagues in their delivery roles. I'd also be keen to see what more might be done to promote awareness of co-operative principles across the communities we serve.

## 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

To be honest, I knew very little about the values and principles until my son started work as a Co-op Customer Team Member a few years ago. He's moved on to other things now, but I find the values and principles still align with my personal views and the way I want to live my life. I guess I demonstrate my commitment to equity by my interest in sight loss issues arising from my own disability. And I'd say that I'm fully signed up to self-responsibility and member economic participation by my enthusiasm and advocacy for Co-op products (the dry roasted peanuts are a particular favourite!).

## 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I gained a lot of experience with management boards when I worked for the Scottish Government. I regularly attended meetings of five publicly owned companies operating in the commercial sector. My role was to represent the interests of the ultimate owners - the people of Scotland. I've sat on a fair few committees over the years, and been convener of some of them. I've learned about corporate governance, the value of partnership working and how to hold a board to account, in the role of "critical friend". I believe I could make good use of those skills as a Council Member. I've also really enjoyed meeting folk from a range of roles across an organisation, finding out how the core business gets done, and what matters to member-owners and customers. So, I'd relish the opportunity to get involved with the Co-op in local settings.

I've been partially sighted for 30 years. I'm by no means an expert on sight loss, but my lived experience has given me a personal insight into the barriers and challenges faced by people with disabilities, whether in a retail environment, in the workplace or in everyday life. I believe I could use my experience to help remove those barriers and make products, services and employment opportunities more accessible for everyone.

Finally, I have to say that I don't normally do this sort of thing! Since I retired, I've

not been in paid employment, and I'm not on any boards or committees, other than helping out with a sight loss research project in recent months. I just find the Co-op approach appeals to my core values, and I think I could make a positive contribution as a Council Member drawing on my skills, experience and a bit of common sense. I hope you'll agree!



## Liam Doherty

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

To continue upholding the Co-op's vision. And provide the best for our member-owners in the communities we serve.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

By actively embodying those values in my actions and interactions. Attending meetings, be involved in the community and working collaboratively with others. By not only being a colleague member, but also a proud member-owner.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I would add value to the Council as I have a unique perspective on the business. As an HGV driver for Co-op, I am an important cog in the Co-op wheel. And my job allows me a different perspective in the company. I interact daily with warehouse and transport colleagues. Store colleagues and the general public at the stores. So, I am able to obtain many views and opinions of the business. I believe these would be helpful skills for my role in the Members' Council.



## Ashley Masson

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

The Co-op's most important priority in 2025 is growing the number of Co-op Member-Owners. The Co-op is celebrating the second UN International Year of Co-operatives by embracing the

UK Government's commitment to doubling the size of the co-operative sector. This will be achieved by bolstering the Co-op's convenience retail presence by opening 75 new food stores and refurbishing up to 80 existing food stores across the UK. This significant step will rapidly grow Co-op Membership by creating connections with new member-owners and strengthening relationships with existing member-owners and their communities. Furthermore, these actions will enhance membership diversity and maximise shared value for our fellow member-owners.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

My volunteering delivered free extra-curriculum multi-sport activities at local schools to show care for others by supporting equity for children from disadvantaged families negatively impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. My passion for education and lifelong learning has strengthened my self-responsibility and improved my social mobility as I achieved my degree and two master's degrees. My part-time university studies are developing my knowledge of current social issues to support a Just Transition. I embrace my responsibility to campaign with the Aberdeen Fair and Sustainable Trade Steering Group on issues that matter to fellow Co-op Member-Owners, customers and colleagues.

My Social Impact Advisor role allows me to practice social responsibility by providing expert advice and support to empower members of the Responsible Business Network to transform lives and help communities thrive. My Co-op roles have built my extensive experience supporting local communities by creating social value through environmental and social sustainability initiatives. I regularly collaborated with Co-op Colleagues to raise funds for our national charity partner, Barnardo's. My Member Activator role facilitated engagements with Co-op Member-Owners to maximise the ownership, economic, and social value gained from Co-op Membership. My Member Pioneer role allowed me to deliver workshops at local schools to educate pupils on the importance of Fairtrade and sustainable living.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

My personal reflection, emotional intelligence, effective communication, and strong listening skills help me engage in two-way conversations with Co-op Member-Owners.

This will help me understand important member-owner issues to help shape our Co-op by maximising membership value and support positive change.

My Co-op role has built a strong working relationship with my local Member Activator and developed my extensive local community network, enabling me to understand the issues that matter most to local communities. My Social Impact Advisor role regularly provides me with opportunities to take a diplomatic approach to constructively challenge, influence, and empower senior business leaders to take a responsible approach to business, with a major focus on social mobility, belonging, diversity, and inclusion.



## Jane Green

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

Standing together in solidarity in everything that we do is hugely important, as is empowering people to take action for themselves to make their own decisions and actions to make the world a better place. I believe the most important priority for the Co-op should be sustainability and resilience in both environmental and social aspects. This includes prioritising eco-friendly practices, reducing carbon footprints, and supporting ethical sourcing.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

I believe by advocating for others and working together - this is a key part of this commitment. The need to promote inclusiveness is vital and ensuring that everyone's voice is heard. Collaboration and shared goals are important too. These efforts can ensure the Co-op remains a trusted, forward-thinking organisation that not only meets the needs of its members but also plays a key role in creating a positive social and environmental impact.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

A lifelong career in teaching means that I can bring the following: empathy and patience assisting and supporting. Teamwork and collaboration where I have worked with parent and pupil partnerships.



## Susan Wilson

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food and Insurance

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

Looking ahead to 2025, the most important priority for Co-op must be a firm commitment to sustainability and community wellbeing. This focus not only addresses the pressing environmental challenges we face but also reinforces our dedication to social responsibility. Our members have repeatedly expressed concern for both social and environmental issues; by actively embracing sustainable practices, Co-op can ensure these concerns are met with tangible action. This involves adopting greener operational methods, reducing waste, and supporting initiatives that protect our natural resources. In addition, investing in local communities and encouraging engagement through sustainability projects strengthens our bond with members and nurtures a shared sense of purpose. By leading by example, Co-op can demonstrate that business success and environmental stewardship are not mutually exclusive but rather interdependent, securing a healthier future for all.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

My commitment to Co-operative Values and Principles is reflected in both my everyday actions and long-term strategic vision. As an advocate with VoiceAbility, a human rights charity, I have developed the skills necessary to ensure every voice is heard. This commitment is essential in representing the interests of our members and addressing their concerns effectively. When local members share their ideas and challenges, I make it a priority to raise these issues with the Board and management team. Our current governance structure has served us for 10 years, there is now a need for fresh, modern approaches to engage members in our democratic process. It is important to communicate that co-operative membership goes far beyond the benefits of member pricing; it embodies a broader commitment to fairness, equality, and mutual respect. By consistently upholding these values, I strive to ensure that our co-operative difference is visible, and that every member feels empowered and valued.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I would continue to add value to the Members' Council by drawing on my experience in open communication, teamwork, and inclusivity. Establishing a clear and transparent dialogue with members is essential; I believe in creating an environment where every individual is encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas. My previous experience chairing a regional diversity working group has equipped me with the ability to promote equality and inclusivity, ensuring that contributions from every part of our community are acknowledged. In addition, I would aim to work closely with the new



Member Activators to build a strong network that connects colleagues and members alike, reinforcing the idea that our collective strength is rooted in collaboration. By integrating these skills with my deep understanding of co-operative principles, I am confident that I can help shape a Members' Council that is not only effective in its operations but also truly representative of our community's aspirations and needs. In doing so, I will ensure that our Council is still a vibrant forum where open dialogue and shared purpose drive positive change for the future of Co-op.



## Struan Ferguson

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food and Insurance

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

With the business strategy to have eight million members by 2030, our success in store has been Member Prices. What we need to do as we grow our Co-op is to engage more closely with those member-owners. Ownership value will mean that members feel engaged in our Co-op's democracy.

They can have their say on the direction of our Co-op. This will be achieved if we, as Council Members, can communicate with local members. Work is currently underway to improve this, and I have been involved in the early plans for this.

I work closely with my Member Activator to engage with members at local level. Colleagues are also member-owners and my role as a colleague on Council will remain to be that their voice is heard at senior level.

I will continue to strive to make colleagues feel safer at work. We are still losing millions to shoplifting.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

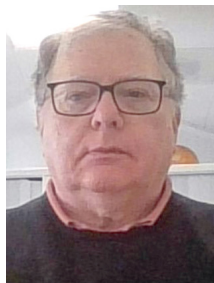
Having been involved in Co-op democracy for over twenty years, I am committed to raising Scottish member and colleague issues at the national level.

I am proud to have been one of the Council Members that raised awareness to the business back in 2018 on colleague safety. This received backing by the business and a campaign of Safer Colleagues, Safer Communities, which led to changes in UK and Scottish Government legislation to protect shopworkers.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

My knowledge and experience on the Council and the connections I have made with Council colleagues and the leaders of our Co-op.

I have been Chair of many committees and also Scottish Constituency meetings. I have the necessary leadership qualities to drive the Council forward.



## Peter Kelly

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

To strengthen links with members and local communities and demonstrate that the Co-op does listen to its member-owners.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

As Chair of Getting Better Together, I ensure that the charity remains focussed on ensuring that the local community has the opportunity to be involved in the design and delivery of programmes and services created to help improve health and wellbeing and build life skills. As a credit union board member, I support the ideal of members helping members by providing ethical loans whilst using the income to support good causes throughout the UK.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

As a committed co-operator, I have links locally with community groups, elected members of my local authority, and Scottish and Westminster Parliaments. I have 40 years' experience of management in the Civil Service, dealing with HR issues, recruitment and championing diversity. I am a trade unionist and member of the Co-operative and Labour parties. I understand financial spreadsheets and interpreting legislation. I have good relationships with my local Food store, Funeralcare managers and staff, and my local Member Activator.



# THANKS FOR MAKING YOUR VOICE COUNT

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