



MAKE YOUR VOICE COUNT

National Members' Council Elections
North East



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RIGHT BY YOU.

V0159_1_P39



Alice Quinn

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?

Continuing to develop and improve membership opportunities is fundamental to helping promote the Co-op's aims of having a better, fairer, more co-operative and collaborative society.

Having more members means generating more income and investment overall for the Co-op and Co-operative Movement. Generating more members will lead to more opportunities to not only improve member pricing and making things more accessible and affordable but also helping support local, national and international causes in order to make the world a better place to live.

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

I have been on the National Members' Council (NMC) representing the North East for 3 years and so far, it has been a very rewarding experience. Having the opportunity to meet with a wide range of people from all walks of life is something that has made the job so interesting and the fact I have been able to make a difference on behalf of member-owners and the Co-op along with the Board and 99 other Council Members is something very special to be part of. Since being on the NMC, I have developed a real passion for being an ambassador and positive role model for the Co-op, educating others on what it means to be part of the Co-op and the Co-op Movement, and I wish to continue being part of that.

As a small business owner and teacher of PE/dance throughout my local community, I get to meet so many people of all ages and stages of life, which I think is a huge advantage when considering people's needs at different stages. I understand the importance of seeing things from different perspectives, and applying these skills to the NMC is imperative in order to create a fair and democratic outcome.

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

As a small business owner, I've found it fascinating to learn about and understand how a large complex consumer co-operative runs and the products and services they offer to member-owners and customers. Learning about how the Co-op operates as a business has been key in helping to make intentional well informed executive decisions when voting for motions during Council meetings. Getting the opportunity to have more insight and input on the positive changes Co-op has made to help shape the business is something that is very rewarding. Examples of things I have done with Council to help shape the future of the Co-op include improving Member Prices, product choices, investment plans, events, supporting colleagues' safety in stores and

so much more. It is highly rewarding knowing that along with the Board and 99 other Council Members that I have helped contribute to the Co-op's decisions and priorities.

Having been on the NMC for 3 years, I feel my knowledge and understanding about Council, why it exists and how it has helped improve and shape how the Co-op operates is something I would love the opportunity to develop further. It is so rewarding knowing that as a Council Member, I have contributed towards making a positive difference to the lives of member-owners and communities through Co-op's work.



Mark Ormston

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food, Funeralcare and Insurance

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

While there are many priorities for Co-op at the moment, one stands out as particularly difficult and distressing; the prevalence and ferocity of retail crime. Of course, this is an issue for most retailers but as Co-op is in so many communities across the nations of the UK, it is very much at the sharp end. This crime is having a profound impact on colleagues, communities and local economies.

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

I very much try to live my life being mindful of the ethical values of Co-op, my values are very much aligned to those of co-operatives. In addition, I have been involved with Co-op as an elected member for many years and I'm a regular in my local store and I have used all Co-op businesses. I take self-responsibility very seriously and I keep myself informed. I'm well-educated, and I share my knowledge and interests willingly.

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

An ability to make informed decisions and to seek out relevant information as necessary. I have considerable knowledge of Co-op businesses and governance, including how the Council operates in order to hold the Board to account and make sure it adheres to Co-operative Values and Principles.

Being Co-op is our uniqueness.



Celia Weldon

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?

I believe that the most important priority for the Co-op in 2025 is to continue to deliver on its unique position in the market as a member-owned organisation that provides local services that people need at reasonable and fair prices. This should incorporate the organisation seeking to grow and support more members across the UK to live well. The Co-op's members should see that there are local initiatives and priorities and that they can make their own voice heard and shape the organisation nationally and locally. The Co-op can learn from other co-ops in the UK and internationally and should always be curious and brave and seek to improve and learn from the best.

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

I have worked in many public sector and NHS organisations and have been part of developing values and principles with staff and stakeholders and putting them into practice. My view is that there is no point applying to be a Council Member unless I want to carry out the role to the best of my ability. To do so will mean aligning myself to the values and principles. The principle of being a member-owned organisation is fundamental to why I want to be a Council Member, to hear from Co-op Members and make sure that their voice is heard, and views are shared nationally and locally. I really believe that the Co-op's values, shared with co-ops around the world, are core to the success of the organisation. As a Council Member, I would want to hold the Board to account for living the values and embedding them in the organisation. I think self-help is one of the most important values and to see this embedded at board level, as well as at community grass roots level, is very important.

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

I am a qualified accountant and governance professional. I have been on the board of an NHS hospital trust and a trustee on a multi academy trust. I am aware of how boards and governing councils work and how to work within the delegated and constitutional powers of a council. I would bring my leadership experience and skills to use to ensure that members' views were heard and used effectively within the organisation. I would be curious about how the Co-op works and I would not be afraid to say if I did not understand something or needed advice. I will give my time and energy to be the most effective Council Member that I can and represent the North East. I will live the Co-op's values in my work and ensure that the progress and work of the Co-op is inclusive and fair to all.



Shah Yaseen Ali

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?

With it being the UN International Year of Co-operatives and a new government in place with its commitment to doubling the size of the co-operative and mutual sector, our most important priority is growing the Co-operative Movement in line with this target. To achieve this, we need to leverage our strengths, connections, and—most importantly—our member-owners to grow the sector and engage them in its development. This includes involving them in the consultation process so they can directly contribute to the government's plans for doubling the size of the sector. Additionally, to achieve this we need to embed co-operative thinking and ways of operating in business, education and the third sector. This includes collaborating further with higher education institutions and building upon our university franchise store model to reach younger members alongside schools and colleges to bring co-operation into the curriculum and clearly communicate what sets the Co-op apart from our competitors and the fact that the Co-op is more than just a convenience store.

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

My commitment to Co-operative Values and Principles can be seen in many ways. One such way is my passion for supporting my local community. This includes volunteering as a school governor and has previously included volunteering at a local charity shop and hospice.

Furthermore, I am passionate about making a positive difference to the people I represent and bringing about equity. This can be seen during my tenure as President of Newcastle University Students' Union (NUSU), where I introduced the 'Rate Your Landlord' platform to Newcastle to improve transparency in the student rental market so that students were better informed before entering into a tenancy agreement. Also, I seek to promote Co-operative Values and Principles to attract the next generation. For example, I have taken part in promoting Fairtrade Fortnight to university students and met with the Co-op Policy Team to discuss how we can better communicate sustainability to younger members and explore how we can raise awareness of co-operatives at Newcastle University.

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

My experience gives me a strong understanding of how student unions and universities operate, this will aid promoting co-operation/co-operative values. For example, at NUSU, I led several initiatives to support students including securing

£6,000 to support them through the cost-of-living crisis, which included free pasta across campus. This involved creating an action plan, developing strong relationships and communicating effectively with key stakeholders and seeing through the execution of the scheme. Thus, demonstrating my ability to get things done and build positive change based on co-operative values.

Likewise, I have actively engaged in my Council role. For example, I visited member-owners at the Birtley distribution centre to understand the various arms of our co-operative to help better represent members. Additionally, I completed a tour of some stores in the North East region with an eventual aim to visit all the stores in the region.



THANKS FOR MAKING YOUR VOICE COUNT

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