A report on the UK’s democratic economy
#CoopEconomy
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With sincere thanks to all those organisations and people within them that have contributed towards the data and content of this report including: Association of Financial Mutuals (AFM); Building Societies Association (BSA); Co-operative Development Scotland (CDS); Cwmpas; Employee Ownership Association (EOA); Financial Conduct Authority (FCA); International Cooperative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF); The RM2 Partnership; White Rose Employee Ownership Centre.

Thanks also to our fantastic members, for bringing to life the wonderful impact of co-operatives on people and places including: Co-op Group; Equal Care Co-operative; Friends of the Star of Greenwich; Great Western Credit Union; Grimsby Community Energy; Pink Lane Jazz Co-op (The Globe); West Granton Housing Co-operative.
FOREWORD

The Co-operative and Mutual Economy 2023 is the only comprehensive report on the UK’s democratic economy. That sounds like big news – and it is. But what is the democratic economy, and why should we even care?

Democracy is important. We see it as a fundamental right, perhaps with most clarity when we vote. Collectively we have the power to make a difference. Yet increasingly it feels like we have less and less control. Less control or influence over the economy, broken systems like social care and housing, the climate emergency...

The democratic economy is all those businesses and organisations that give people, collectively, genuine control and ownership. It is co-operatives, mutuals, employee owned businesses, friendly societies. And it is important. Because of their democracy these businesses do more for people and their communities. They put their members first – giving people a fair share in the wealth they help create – not profit (whatever the cost) and distant shareholders. I say distant with some justification. Record-breaking levels of UK shares are held overseas – 56.3% of the value of the UK stock market in fact!
“You cannot find a comprehensive exploration, year-on-year, of the democratic economy – until now. We don't know if, for example, government measures in Scotland are making a difference. So that's why we've come together to start measuring, mapping out and growing – alongside our counterparts in the financial and mutuals sector – the Co-operative and Mutual Economy. Let's set those baselines.

We're predicting, not least based on 179 years of co-operation, that as we enter the fourth industrial revolution, we really are coming full circle, and that co-operation is going to be at the heart of economic growth. Everywhere in modern business, from AI to farming and culture to data, there are co-ops. We'll show the growth and the movers and shakers in terms of sectors. Will it be housing, tech, pubs, clubs... workers, communities, consumers. And this report will evolve over coming years as we look to explore how co-operatives positively impact on the nation's social fabric as well as economic benefits.”

Rose Marley
CEO, Co-operatives UK
Co-operatives, mutuals, and building societies act in the best interests of their members, ensuring that decisions and profits benefit those directly involved, rather than distant shareholders focused solely on financial gain. People are invested in the democratic economy – with memberships surpassing 74 million. It reflects the strong desire for genuine membership that offers joint ownership and control of businesses aligned with individuals’ values and priorities.

Beyond membership, the democratic economy employs over 410,000 individuals, with a focus on providing rewarding, empowering, and well-being-enhancing livelihoods.

Co-operatives represent 83.2% of businesses in the democratic economy, generating a combined, annual income of £40.8 billion – a 3.7% increase from 2022 levels. Co-operative resilience is further highlighted with an 83.3% survival rate for new-starts over five years; more than double other start-up businesses.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report underscores the unique characteristics of co-operatives, emphasising their focus on people, values, and principles. They offer innovative solutions across various sectors, from social care to housing, contributing to a just transition to net zero, and enhancing worker well-being through empowering livelihoods.

The remarkable growth in employee owned businesses is revealed, with a 37.7% increase in just 12 months. Data trends for credit unions and community owned pubs also prove that rapid growth is possible, if enabling frameworks are in place.

However, The Co-operative and Mutual Economy 2023 also highlights that the potential of co-operatives and mutuals in the UK remains largely untapped.

The Co-operative and Mutual Economy 2023 provides the only examination of a combined, comprehensive dataset on the democratic economy. It examines all those businesses that prioritise member participation. It offers a baseline to track growth. And it presents a compelling case for harnessing the full potential of co-operatives and mutuals in the UK, not only for economic growth, but also the betterment of society and communities.

These democratic businesses distinguish themselves across diverse industries, from farming to finance and energy to education, they collectively contribute an annual income exceeding £87.9 billion.
KEY FINDINGS

- £87.9 billion income and 74 million memberships in the democratic economy: Demonstrating the value people place on genuine ownership and control

- Resilience and longevity: Twice as likely to survive the early years of trading when compared to other start-up businesses

- Sector growth: The number of employee owned businesses increased by 37.7% in just 12 months

- Community impact: A remarkable 62.6% increase in the number of community-owned pubs over the past five years

- Sustainability: Co-operatives are well-positioned to contribute to a just transition to green energy, with the number of co-operatives operating in the energy and environment sector increasing by 18.58% over the last five years

- Policy advocacy: Leading co-operatives are advocating for policies that support co-operative growth, with a policy platform urging political parties to commit to co-operative expansion

More data and insight on the democratic economy is also needed. This report sets the baselines to track growth and trends, with scope to evolve and encompass additional key findings, beyond economic, including social impact.

This report evidences that co-operatives and mutuals play an increasingly vital role in the UK economy. They are characterised by resilience, effectiveness, job creation, and a unique potential to address systemic challenges. A thriving democratic economy, with co-operatives and mutuals at its core, is crucial to achieving inclusive, responsible, and well-being-enhancing growth. And enabling government policies can unleash the potential of the democratic economy.
There are 9,113 independent businesses operating across the UK's democratic economy. They are co-operatives. They are building societies. They are financial mutuals. They can be employee owned businesses.

The democratic economy helps build an inclusive, growing and diverse economy by offering a competitive alternative to shareholder-owned businesses. They do good. They have social impact. They share profits and reinvest in the communities in which they serve.

There are more than 74 million memberships within the democratic economy. Incredibly, it is a number larger than the UK's population, demonstrating the value people place on genuine membership which offers joint ownership and control of businesses that matter to them.

THE DEMOCRATIC ECONOMY

74 MILLION
Memberships in the democratic economy

£87.9 BILLION
Total income

9,113
Co-operative and Mutual Economy 2023
Nationwide Building Society is the world's largest building society, run for the benefit of those members and the communities it serves, with around 16 million customer members. It is the world's largest building society, with around 16 million customer members. It is run for the benefit of those members and the communities it serves. In 2023, Nationwide launched its Fairer Share scheme, a new reward which returned £340 million in £100 payments to eligible members.

Nationwide also launched a Fairer Share Bond for existing members, with a 4.75% interest rate, and announced the return of over £1 billion to members in the form of preferential rates and incentives.

The democratic economy employs over 410,000 people across the UK. Because of how they operate, democratic businesses work towards providing more rewarding, empowering, wellbeing-enhancing livelihoods.

We now have a starting point—a baseline—to track growth across business type and within the democratic economy. The untapped potential of democratic businesses is huge. They are a fraction of the immense scope of democratic businesses, understood, despite boasting household names like Co-op Group and Nationwide within their ranks.

The thirst for an economy that does business better; that does more for people and communities, remains unquenched. Yet the answer is already here in businesses that empower their members: in the democratic economy.

2. Nationwide (www.nationwide.co.uk/about-us/fairer-share/)
Co-operatives lead the way, with 83.2% of businesses in the democratic economy falling under the co-operative banner. Co-operatives generated income of £40.9 billion in 2022.

Financial mutuals and employee owned businesses produced income of £28.5 billion and £23.1 billion respectively. The UK's 43 building societies added a further £7.4 billion.

The biggest shift in business numbers is witnessed in the employee owned sector, with an incredible 37.7% leap in just 12 months (1,030 businesses to 1,418). Over the same time period, combined income from the top 50 employee owned businesses increased by more than 7.1%, to £23.1 billion (21.6 billion in 2022).

Of the democratic economy's 74 million memberships, 80.7% are those benefiting from services provided by financial mutuals and building societies (33.9 million and 25.8 million memberships respectively). Meanwhile, employee owned businesses give 180,000 people a stake and say in how they work.
CO-OPERATIVES

There are 7,586 independent co-operatives operating across the UK, an increase of 1.1% from 2022. In sharp contrast, the number of businesses overall dropped by 1.7% as company deaths outstripped births by almost 50,000.

Despite a challenging economic outlook, co-operatives posted a combined turnover of £40.8 billion, an increase of 3.7% on 2022.

Millions of people own and control the nation's co-operatives, as opposed to shareholders focused on profit as the number one objective. Who are these members? Co-operatives are flexible businesses so its members could be consumers, workers, residents, suppliers or even have a combination of different types of owners.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) provided the data for the number of co-operatives and their turnovers. The data is sourced from Business demography, quarterly experimental statistics, UK; www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/activitysizeandlocation/datasets/businessdemographyquarterlyexperimentalstatisticsuk.
When loved ones need support from a care system struggling through chronic under-investment, people are often left feeling powerless. That lack of control extends beyond those needing care and their families to care workers, operating on low wages and shackled by inflexible and impersonal rota systems.

Equal Care Co-op, in West Yorkshire's Calder Valley, is breaking the mould by giving control both to the people who need care, and also those giving it. It is unique, it is innovative, and it works.

Henry Drumm, a 26-year-old care worker at Equal Care Co-op, emphasised the core principle of the organisation. He said: “The relationship between people is most important at Equal Care. It’s people-centred care; a relationship-centred service that’s much more holistic. It’s more meaningful.”

Equal Care Co-op proudly claims the title of the UK’s first platform-based social care and support co-operative. Their online platform, which is collaboratively developed with and owned by their members, empowers the people receiving support to build and manage their own team. That team can consist of family members, paid care workers, volunteers, neighbours and friends. Roles are spread across the team, from creating and administering rota systems to providing different levels of physical and remote care and support.

As versatile businesses that put purpose in line with profit, co-operatives are an innovative way to help solve many of today’s problems. Co-operatives are about people. With a common set of values and principles at their heart, they are created to serve their members’ needs and aspirations. They demonstrate on a daily basis that doing the right thing and success can and should go hand in hand. And they are fairer because they share profits among members, rather than rewarding distant shareholders.

Shirine Khoury-Haq
CEO, Co-op Group

11 Co-operative and Mutual Economy 2023
This focus on empowerment, collaboration and relationships means that the co-operative works to ensure a mutual match between those receiving care and those providing it. All involved need to be happy, which helps create meaningful, resilient and consistent care-giving relationships. The contrast with government-funded care could not be more stark.

Henry said: “It is difficult to imagine a sector where a human-centric approach is more important than in social care. With Equal Care Co-op people feel listened to; they feel empowered and in control of their care.”

For carers it can be demanding, with increased responsibility along with a more diverse role. Equal Care Co-op is a Real Living Wage employer, while self-employed workers can charge a higher hourly rate to cover the costs of self-employment. But the rewards go beyond financial incentives, which include being paid for travel time.

Henry said: “People are individuals, so every individual care package is bespoke. As a care worker, because I’m also in contact with friends and relatives, you’re more closely connected. If you’re more involved, you’re more responsive. It is more fulfilling and a more genuine way of delivering care.”

Equal Care Co-op is owned by its members, who can be supporters, workers, investors or advocates. It offers all kinds of support, ranging from personal care to mental health and wellbeing support.

Emma Back, co-founder of Equal Care, said: “Equal Care started because there is a problem with power in social care. It sits with the people who are not at the heart of what the entire system is built around and for – and that is the people getting support and people giving support.

Fundamentally, at the heart of social care there is a relationship that has been ignored, exploited and venture capitalised. We set out to rebalance the power dynamic in favour of the people who are getting and giving support. It’s about relationships.”

Michele Rashman turned to Equal Care Co-op after being disillusioned with the level of council-funded support provided to her mum, who suffers from dementia. Serious concerns included a lack of continuity of care, which caused levels of distress, and limited care provision due to time constraints on her mum’s care workers.

Michele said: “With Equal Care we have this team of three or four people and I know who is coming and what time they’re coming. And I know loads about them. I like the continuity of care and a system where the care workers aren’t being exploited.”

“The relationship between...”

Henry Drumm
Equal Care Co-operative
Co-op Resilience

Co-operatives stand the test of time. They are resilient. Co-operatives are over twice as likely to survive the early years of trading when compared to other start-up businesses. More than three quarters of co-op start-ups (83.3%) are still flourishing after the difficult first five years.

Other businesses are far less likely to survive, with just 38.4% of new companies making it beyond the end of year five.

This is not a blip. Co-operative resilience has been evidenced over many years in successive Co-op Economy reports.

Why are co-ops so resilient? Co-operative purpose, ownership and governance all dictate long-termism. In tough times it is the members calling the shots, in their collective, long-term interests. Co-operatives patiently build-up and reinvest reserves and use members’ capital wherever possible, rather than piling on debt to achieve faster growth.

There is inherent resilience in economic institutions that harness our natural co-operative instincts, which are themselves a powerful evolutionary adaptation that has been critical to human survival for a more than a million years.

---

4. Office for National Statistics (ONS); November 2022; Business demography, UK: 2021; www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/activitysizeandlocation/bulletins/businessdemography/2021
The vast majority of the UK’s co-operatives are based in England. Those 6,170 businesses, up 0.85% from 2022, provide 90% of the total annual turnover.

While starting from a lower baseline, co-operative development in Scotland and Wales is enhanced by more enabling government policy to support businesses.

Numbers in Scotland have increased by 3.17% (602 to 621) and Wales by 2.16% (509 to 520), with new co-operative pubs prominent in both devolved nations. Northern Ireland has witnessed a more modest 1.61% (equivalent to four co-operatives).

The bulk of consumer retail co-operatives, including Co-op Group, are based in England. The retailers spearhead the year-on-year increase in memberships, driving numbers up by over 250,000.
David Quinn has an acute medical condition and requires care and attention on a weekly – and often daily – basis. For the 31-year-old, social housing needs go beyond bricks and mortar, and that is where West Granton Housing Co-operative in Edinburgh comes in. David has been a member tenant since November 2021. This means he is a part-owner in the co-operative, with a say in how the business operates. He said: “They’ve done nothing but help me. Everybody is really helpful, absolutely amazing – I can’t fault them. It’s a community working together.”

For David it is often the little things that have the biggest impact, like knowing an eye is being kept on his home when attending appointments. Maintaining the local area and community engagement are also important. He said: “I don’t get any trouble. It’s a great community. The co-operative looks after the place and the parks.”

WGHC has a social housing stock of 372 ‘general needs’ properties. It is a not-for-profit organisation, with all surpluses used to benefit its member tenants.

Larke Adger is CEO of the social housing provider. She said: “It’s all about quality and making a difference. We’re not a housing association, we’re a housing co-operative. There’s a difference.”

In terms of turnover, agriculture remains the dominant sector in Scotland with organisations including First Milk and United Farmers. While a sector in decline, 44.8% of co-operatives in Wales are in the membership associations, social clubs and trade unions category. Associations, social clubs and trade unions also playing an important role.

NEW STARTS PER 1 MILLION POPULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Start Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Ireland</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
everything we do. We’re here for them. A lot of housing associations do good work... but everything we do is about our tenants. That comes across in our service and we’re here for all our members.”

That holistic service has included providing air fryers, fuel top-ups, food vouchers and warm spaces over the last year. Larke added: “Let’s do things which work for our tenants. Let’s give people a bit of dignity. Sometimes it’s those little things that make a big difference.”

"The tenants tell us how they want to be governed. They come to the table with a business hat on, but they’re also members. They live here. Our board members see the immediate impact of decisions.

“The turnover of properties is very, very low. We provide a community, an environment that’s pretty and that’s safe. People take pride in their homes. When people visit, they’re shocked that it’s social housing.”

The biggest surprise is that Scotland does not have more co-operative housing stock. There are just 54 housing co-ops at the start of this year, an increase of only seven since 2019. And that list is not limited to social housing, for which the picture is even bleaker.

Larke said: “I’d love for co-operatives to have a much bigger impact in the social housing sector. We demonstrate that tenant-led solutions work. I think we need to find a way to increase the amount of co-operatively owned social housing stock.”

Larke Adger
CEO, West Granton Housing Co-operative
The growth in the number of community owned pubs is dramatic. Numbers have increased by 62.6% over the past five years, and 15.9% from 2022.

The growth of community owned pubs is an example of how people power can drive social change. Through community shares, which are a unique form of finance available to co-operatives, communities can raise funds while also delivering shared, local ownership. To date, £210 million has been invested by 130,000 people in 540 community businesses and organisations through a total of 710 share offers.

The increased distribution of ownership is clear, with over 100% more people enjoying a stake and say in the future of their local pub from 2019 to 2023 (an increase in memberships from 34,562 to 69,535). Community shares is also driving the increase in local shops and other services, with a 7.4% uplift over the past five years. It is this ability to provide unique solutions that needs to be fostered in other sectors: in a care system that is failing its users; in a platform economy that enriches the few but is used by the many. Across sectors including social care and digital, media and communications, the business figures are static.
While there is a decrease in the number of credit unions, the sector boasts a 13.5% increase in year-on-year revenues from £224.1m to £254.2m. There are also in excess of 40,000 more members, as people seek out fairer, more inclusive banking.

The strongest sector in relation to turnover remains retail, driven by Co-op Group, alongside other successful and long-standing independent, consumer-owned retailers. Turnover has grown by £135.4 million over the past year and the sector represents 69.7% of total annual turnover within the co-operative economy.

Co-operatives can help power a just transition to green energy and reduced emissions. If we are to succeed, the UK's population must be invested in a national effort to reach net zero. Ownership and control, through community ownership and co-operatives, enables that buy-in. The number of co-operatives operating in the energy and environment sector – including community energy and retrofit co-operatives – has increased by 18.58% over the last five years. Turnover is up 45.36% over that same time period (£26.68 million to £38.78 million).

“More and more people are struggling, but there's still a demand for a fairer, more inclusive, way of banking that benefits local communities and local economies. The cost-of-living crisis presents challenges for us, in new lending due to affordability issues. At the same time, the co-operative advantage of focusing on support for members is increasingly coming to the fore. “Tech developments and a strong value proposition – to the customer and to credit unions – are increasingly coming to the fore.

“Tech developments and a strong value proposition – to the customer and to credit unions – are increasingly coming to the fore.

James Berry
CEO, Great Western Credit Union

Credit Union annual income

- Members of credit unions: £254.2m (2023) vs. £224.1m (2022)
- Employees: 2,490 (2023) vs. 2,185 (2022)

Credit union annual statistics - 2022
www.bankofengland.co.uk/statistics/credit-union/2022/2022
### NUMBER OF CO-OPS AND TURNOVER BY SECTOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Number of Co-ops</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>£8.5bn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and culture</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>£11.4m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>£10.2m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>£577.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy and environment</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>£38.8m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>£273.7m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food service and pubs</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>£58.9m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and social care</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>£179.8m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>£636.9m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>£472.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social clubs and trade unions</td>
<td>2,484</td>
<td>£479.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and legal services</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>£104.8m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>£28.5bn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports and recreation</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>£797.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>£9.2m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>£190.2m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Star of Greenwich

People and communities are often left feeling powerless when valuable local assets – from pubs to cinemas to post offices – shut down.

The Star of Greenwich, in the heart of London’s East Greenwich, was established in the early nineteenth century.

Local resident James Peet said: “Since the 1820s and for most of that time it has been an important part of the local community places that were once so common in the area.”

It closed in 2021 before the freeholder decided to sell up. James added: “As an asset of community value, they had to put out a notice to do that. A couple of us regulars saw the notice and went about getting a moratorium on the sale of pub.”

The team garnered local support, including their MP and councillors, and were able to prove to the freeholder the value of preserving the pub.

“aré BR édé BRÉ ÉÉ á dré a BRÉ ÉÉ EQ person public meetings – and used that to demonstrate that if the pub were sold to be turned into flats, it would be a loss to the community.”
James and his fellow campaigners set up a co-operative, using the community benefit society model, and came up with a business plan. He said: “It was to run it, not just as a pub, but also as a community centre. The freeholder bought into our vision and we negotiated a lease.”

With a successful crowd-funding campaign that raised more than double their original target, the team re-opened the pub in April 2023 and began to realise their vision.

He said: “We took on The Star of Greenwich with the aim of making it a place where people meet other people they wouldn’t normally run into, in an incredibly diverse neighbourhood.

“Research shows that vibrant, safe, happy communities are ones where people with different backgrounds, opinions and experiences spend time with each other. The community becomes a nicer place to be.”

Community support, in addition to selling booze and food to the public, helps support mental health across the borough by bringing people together.

“The London Marathon runs down the end of the road. We held a big event with lots of different people coming together,” said James. “We also host book clubs, parents’ groups and had a summer party for a local residents’ association.

James and the team are now planning a community share offer to take the pub into community ownership. With funds raised from the share offer and their application to the government’s Community Ownership Fund, they hope to buy the premises outright and continue to build on their good work.

“People have been prepared to share their skills and experience and invest time and money when we’ve really needed it.”

Stephen Ferrell
The UK's consumer retail co-operatives are some of the most well known and recognised businesses on the high street, including Co-op Group, Midcounties Co-operative and Central Co-op. They continue to grow, contributing £16.1 billion to the UK economy in 2023, an increase of 3.4%.

Co-op membership is very different to a store or loyalty card. It means the businesses are owned by their members, who have a genuine say in how their co-operative operates. The retail societies have a community focus and stand up for what their members believe in. More than 12.9 million consumers benefit from having a stake and say in co-operative retailers – an increase of over 270,000 since 2022 (2.2%).

Concern for community is one of the seven Co-operative Principles all co-operatives abide by. Profits are used to provide member value and support community focus and stand up for what their members believe in. More than 12.9 million consumers benefit their members, who have a genuine say in how their co-operative operates. The retail societies have a community focus and stand up for what their members believe in. More than 12.9 million consumers benefit from having a stake and say in co-operative retailers – an increase of over 270,000 since 2022 (2.2%).

## ANNUAL TURNOVER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2023</td>
<td>£16.1bn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>£15.6bn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>£16.0bn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>£15.5bn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>£15.1bn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## MEMBERSHIPS OF CO-OPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2023</td>
<td>12.9m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>12.7m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>12.7m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scotmid Co-operative is a £400 million business employing nearly 4,000 people across Scotland with food stores, post offices, chemists and funeral directors. Through its democratic structures, Scotmid's 150,000 plus members participate in decisions about how to distribute profits, including how to channel more than £500,000 to community organisations in 2023.
Worker co-ops are those co-operatives owned and run by the workers. Turnover suffered a year-on-year drop (-2.8%) in 2023, though is up 28.0% over the past five years. There are 396 worker co-ops operating across the UK, a reduction from 407 in 2022 (-2.8%). It is imperative this downward trend is reversed, by supporting the creation of new worker co-operatives and by transitioning existing businesses to worker control.

The benefits are substantial. While comparatively small in number, worker co-operatives in the UK have a greater propensity to create jobs than UK businesses generally. Proportionally they are much more likely to have 5-9, 10-19 and 20-49 employees.

Worker co-ops can be more productive, motivated and committed than other firms because they align the interests of the workers with the success of the business. They have flatter management structures, more motivated workers and a stronger culture of solidarity and self-responsibility.

Suma is an award-winning wholefoods warehouse and distribution business, with a turnover of £59 million. It is also the largest equal pay worker co-op in Europe – so no gender pay gap – and sustains rewarding and empowering livelihoods. Suma’s warehouse workers earn 45% more per hour than the average for similar roles in West Yorkshire and more than £5 per hour, above the Real Living Wage – plus substantial cash dividends each year from the profits they create. Workers members have an equal say in everything Suma does, and set its strategic direction.
Co-operatives can help power a just transition to net zero. There are already great examples of local authorities partnering with communities to generate renewable energy and reinvest proceeds back into those communities. Plymouth City Council convened community and private sector partners to help set up Plymouth Energy Co-operative, a multi-stakeholder co-operative active in renewable energy deployment and low carbon housing.

FIT FOR PURPOSE

Co-operatives provide solutions. From helping fix broken markets like social care and housing, to engaging people in a just transition to net zero, to improving worker well-being through more empowering livelihoods.

Co-operatives are flexible. They can be set up in many different ways, using a variety of legal forms, with different types of member-owners. There are 267 co-operatives comprising self-employed workers. Despite offering protection from precarious employment by pooling resources and skills, numbers remain almost the same as in 2019.

Other co-operative ownership models can include employee trusts, enterprises, self-employed and multi-stakeholder.
Grimsby Community Energy (GCE) has been dedicated to bringing green energy to the local area since 2016. With 73 members and six solar panel installations – on local properties totalling 200kW – GCE's work is reducing CO₂ emissions while saving consumers money.

GCE Community Energy Manager, Vicky Dunn, said: “Our solar panels have saved 143 tonnes of emissions – that’s tens of thousands of pounds for charities and social enterprises we’ve saved on their bills.”

YMCA Humber and a fundraising charity shop for the Rock Foundation, which supports children and adults with learning disabilities, are among the buildings with solar power installations.

Funds for solar panel installations are raised via community share offers, which attract investment from local people and organisations while spreading ownership and awareness. It then sells the cheaper, cleaner energy, to the building owners and offers a return to investors.

“Since January of this year, we’ve also been working with North East Lincolnshire Council and local social enterprises on the Smarter Energy NEL project,” added Vicky. “The aims are to help small and medium sized enterprises make a real difference to their carbon footprint and positively reduce energy costs.”

Bristol Energy Co-operative (BEC) develops renewable energy and energy efficiency projects with, and for the benefit of, local communities. With 1,500 members – local residents, community organisations and local businesses – who have invested £8.5 million to fund its activities, resulting in 10.5 MW of energy generation. BEC is responsible for the equivalent of 33% of Bristol’s solar energy generation.

The co-operative focuses on green energy projects that enable stakeholders to benefit directly from renewable generation. This includes medium sized enterprises that enable stakeholders to benefit directly from renewable generation. This includes medium sized enterprises that make a real difference to their carbon footprint and positively reduce energy costs.”
CONCLUSION - BRILLIANT BUSINESS (UNTAPPED POTENTIAL)

Government policy can unleash co-operative and mutual potential. The UK's leading co-operatives have backed our Call for Co-op Growth, a policy platform urging political parties to commit to co-operative growth at the next election.

The platform sets out the evidenced and significant benefits within the UK's grasp if co-operative potential is unleashed — and four policy priorities to enable co-operative growth. See uk.coop/CoopGrowth.

The Mutuals Prospectus, a collaboration between leading mutual sector bodies, will also make the case for the next government to back mutuals. The prospectus will be published later in 2023.

Co-operatives and mutuals are an increasingly significant contributor to the UK economy. This is important and positive because they are brilliant businesses. They are resilient, effective, job creators, with huge potential to fix broken systems like finance, housing, care and energy. The democratic economy contributes to inclusive, responsible, well-being-enhancing growth.

A combined annual turnover of £87.9 billion is a big figure. However, by international comparisons, the mutual economy here in the UK is small and only growing slowly. We have huge, untapped potential. The data proves that rapid, year-on-year co-operative and mutual growth is possible. It is evidenced in the employee owned sector; in credit unions; in community pubs and community shares more generally.

Investment in practical support for co-op development is making a significant difference. Government funded co-operative development, over many years, is having an impact, with start-up rates markedly higher in Wales and Scotland than Northern Ireland and England.

The right legal and tax ecosystem is another major factor. The success of the employee ownership trust model, driving a 37.7% increase in employee owned business numbers, in 12 months (283.2% over five years), demonstrates this powerfully.

Yet the baseline remains small in the context of the UK's business mix. Co-operatives and mutuals are still a 'best-kept-secret'. We must find ways to increase societal awareness and interest in co-operatives and mutuals.

We need to inspire communities to take ownership and control of the economy; to empower young people; and to reach businesses and people at critical junctures — with the right support — to help them adopt democratic models.

A thriving democratic economy with co-operatives and mutuals investing, innovating and reaching their potential is pivotal to those ambitions. However, more evidence of the importance and impact of the democratic economy is required. This report can address that in future years by examining key areas beyond the economic focus, including social impact.
# Democratic Economy - Top 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Industry sector</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Royal London Insurance Group</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>£11,833,000,000</td>
<td>8,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Co-op Group</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£11,480,000,000</td>
<td>4,410,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>John Lewis Partnership</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£10,534,000,000</td>
<td>76,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Foresters Life</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>£5,771,000,000</td>
<td>1,575,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nationwide</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>£3,860,000,000</td>
<td>16,300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Arla Foods</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£2,493,835,000</td>
<td>2,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A+v</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£2,383,215,000</td>
<td>2,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>National Merchant Buying Society</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£2,251,210,000</td>
<td>1,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>NFU Mutual Insurance Group</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>£2,010,000,000</td>
<td>1,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mott Macdonald Group Limited</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>£1,805,503,000</td>
<td>172,625</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# CO-OPERATIVES - TOP 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Industry sector</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Co-op Group</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£11,480,000,000</td>
<td>4,410,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>John Lewis Partnership*</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£10,534,000,000</td>
<td>76,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Arla Foods</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£2,493,835,000</td>
<td>2,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>National Merchant Buying Society</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£2,251,210,000</td>
<td>1,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Central Co-operative</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£944,038,000</td>
<td>2,007,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Midcounties Co-operative</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£676,459,000</td>
<td>640,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Openfield Group</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£669,668,000</td>
<td>4,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mole Valley Farmers</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£615,460,000</td>
<td>107,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Dale Farm Co-operative</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£591,635,000</td>
<td>1,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Southern Co-operative</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£447,441,000</td>
<td>172,625</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Co-operative status under review*
## CO-OPERATIVES BY NATION - TOP 5

### Scotland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2021</th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Industry sector</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Scottish Midland Co-operative Society</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£403,276,000</td>
<td>158,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>First Milk</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£331,077,000</td>
<td>693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ANM Group</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£142,949,000</td>
<td>4,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>United Farmers</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£119,580,299</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tarff Valley</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£99,387,852</td>
<td>1,245</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### England

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2021</th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Industry sector</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Co-op Group</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£11,480,000,000</td>
<td>4,410,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The John Lewis Partnership</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£10,534,000,000</td>
<td>76,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Arla Foods</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£2,493,835,000</td>
<td>2,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>National Merchant Buying Society</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£2,251,210,000</td>
<td>1,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Central Co-operative</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>£944,038,000</td>
<td>2,007,747</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Northern Ireland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2023</th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Industry sector</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dale Farm Co-operative</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£591,635,000</td>
<td>1,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fane Valley Co-operative</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£301,352,680</td>
<td>1,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>LacPatrick Dairies (NI)</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£248,395,376</td>
<td>Undisclosed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>South Armagh Farming Enterprises</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£24,046,130</td>
<td>3,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hilltown Farmers Attested Sales</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£10,490,075</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2023</th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Industry sector</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>South Caernarvon Creameries</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£71,528,236</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Clynderwen and Cardiganshire Farmers</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>£67,034,027</td>
<td>7,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Trivallis</td>
<td>*Èòôô</td>
<td>£56,730,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Trivallis</td>
<td>*Èòôô</td>
<td>0 ( )</td>
<td>2,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bron Afon Community Housing</td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>£48,944,000</td>
<td>2,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cartrefi Cymru Co-operative</td>
<td>Heath and Social Care</td>
<td>£33,202,651</td>
<td>Undisclosed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CO-OPERATIVES BY SECTOR - TOP 5

### Agriculture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Arla Foods</td>
<td>£2,493,835,000</td>
<td>2,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Openfield Group</td>
<td>£669,668,000</td>
<td>4,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mole Valley Farmers</td>
<td>£615,460,000</td>
<td>107,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dale Farm Co-operative</td>
<td>£591,635,000</td>
<td>1,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>First Milk</td>
<td>£331,077,000</td>
<td>693</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Digital, Media and Communications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Community Channel</td>
<td>£1,661,278</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Developer Society</td>
<td>£1,151,114</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Calvert's North Star Press</td>
<td>£1,109,128</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Outlandish Co-operative</td>
<td>£974,424</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Peoples Press Printing Society</td>
<td>£854,643</td>
<td>41,876</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Energy and Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bath and West Community Energy</td>
<td>£2,037,800</td>
<td>815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Westmill Solar Co-operative</td>
<td>£1,960,134</td>
<td>1,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Heart of England Community Energy</td>
<td>£1,709,788</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>High Winds Community Energy Society</td>
<td>£1,271,812</td>
<td>1,164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bristol Community Energy</td>
<td>£1,261,020</td>
<td>1,508</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Health and Social Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Local Care Direct</td>
<td>£36,211,973</td>
<td>583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cartrefi Cymru Co-operative</td>
<td>£33,202,651</td>
<td>Undisclosed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Community Dental Services</td>
<td>£28,167,000</td>
<td>Undisclosed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>South East London Doctors’ Co-operative (SELDOC)</td>
<td>£13,783,413</td>
<td>Undisclosed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>BARDOC</td>
<td>£13,093,632</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Retail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Co-op Group</td>
<td>£11,480,000,000</td>
<td>4,410,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The John Lewis Partnership</td>
<td>£10,534,000,000</td>
<td>76,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>National Merchant Buying Society</td>
<td>£2,251,210,000</td>
<td>1,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Central Co-operative</td>
<td>£944,038,000</td>
<td>2,007,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Midcounties Co-operative</td>
<td>£676,459,000</td>
<td>640,989</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Eastlight Community Homes</td>
<td>£78,599,000</td>
<td>Undisclosed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rochdale Boroughwide Housing</td>
<td>£57,080,000</td>
<td>15,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Trivallis</td>
<td>£56,730,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bron Afon Community Housing Society</td>
<td>£48,944,000</td>
<td>2,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Watford Community Housing Trust</td>
<td>£38,550,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Periods

The co-op economy year runs from February 1 to January 31. Where a year is referenced, it is the year that the final day of the period falls. For example, the economic year that runs from 01/02/2022 to 31/01/2023 is called 2023.

Geographic Data

Geographic data is based on the organisation's registered address.

Sources


Credit union data from the Prudential Regulation Authority's 'Annual Credit Union Statistics' and Co-operative UK's own list of credit unions.

Building society data from the Building Societies Association's 'BSA Yearbook' augmented with data from building society annual reports.

Numbers of employee owned businesses from 'WREOC Employee Owned Sector Profile' produced by the Employee Ownership Association and White Rose Employee Ownership Centre.

METHODOLOGY

Financial information on employee owned businesses is included in the year that the 'year end' reported in the accounts falls. Where there is missing data for a given year we use previously reported figures.

Inclusion of Co-operatives In Given Year

Typically a co-operative will be included in data using its Registration Date/Deregistration Date on their registrar's page. In some circumstances we may use different dates if, for example, we become aware that a co-operative has ceased trading but has not officially shut down.

Replacement Rate Figures

https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/activitiesizeandlocation/bulletins/businessdemography/2021

Turnover/Employees/Number of Members reported in the accounts falls. Where there is missing data for a given year we use previously reported figures.
Glossary of Terms

Association of British Credit Unions

The trade body that represents mutual and not-for-profit credit unions in the UK.

Association of Financial Mutuals (AFM)

The trade body that represents mutual and not-for-profit insurers, friendly societies and other financial mutuals across the UK.

Building Society

A building society, or mutual, is owned by its members who bank, save or have a mortgage with the society. A building society is not run for the benefit of shareholders in the same way that banks are.

Building Societies Association

The trade body for all 42 UK building societies as well as seven credit unions.

Charitable Community Benefit Society

When the activities of a community benefit society fall under one of the 13 charitable purposes, and the governing document is wholly charitable, then the society can apply to HMRC for exempt charity status.

Community Land Trust

Community land trusts – or CLTs – are democratic, non-profit organisations that own and develop land for the benefit of the community. CLTs can, if fulfilling the criteria, be co-operatives.

Community Benefit Society

A community benefit society is a legal form, registered as a cooperative society that serves the broader interests of a community, in contrast to co-operative society that serve the interests of its members. A CBS can also be a co-operative, with thousands of co-operatives across the UK taking this legal form.

Community Energy

Community energy is the delivery of community-led renewable energy, energy demand reduction and energy supply projects, whether wholly owned and/or controlled by communities or through a partnership with commercial or public sector partners. Community ownership and control is often delivered through community shares.

Community Owned

Ownership and control lies with members of the community which the organisation operates.

Community Shares

Community shares is a user-friendly name for withdrawable, non-transferable share capital; a form of equity uniquely available to co-operative and community benefit societies. Community shares is a flexible and effective way to raise finance and provide co-operative ownership to people and communities. It is an interest-bearing, patient, form of equity investment.

Community Shares Unit

Co-operatives UK is at the heart of the Community Shares Unit (CSU), a long-standing partnership with Locality and Plunkett Foundation, and funding partners Power to Change and Access – the foundation for social investment. The CSU works to develop the community shares market through innovative programmes and market intelligence and promotes best practice, embedded through its Community Shares Standard Mark.

Community Shares Standard Mark

The Community Shares Standard Mark is awarded to community share offers that meet national standards of good practice.

Consumer Retail Society

A type of retail co-operative owned by its customers. Co-op Group is one of the world's largest consumer co-operatives, owned by millions of members.

Co-operative

A business or organisation that is owned and controlled by its members, to meet their shared needs. Every co-operative shares and adheres to the same Co-operative Values and Principles. Co-operatives can take any legal form (e.g. a PLC, community benefit society, community interest company, partnership, FSE, Ltd, SC, CIC) providing it can satisfactorily evidence adherence to the International Co-operative Alliance-ratified values and principles.
Co-op Economy Report
The nation's only comprehensive report on the UK's co-operative sector and forerunner to The Co-op and Mutual Economy.

Co-op Group
Co-op Group is one of the world's largest consumer co-operatives, owned by millions of members.

Co-operative Movement
Co-operatives operate across the globe and collectively form the Co-operative Movement. The Co-operative Principles are the foundations upon which all co-operatives operate and underpin ways of doing business. While revised and updated, the Principles remain essentially the same as those practiced by the Rochdale Pioneers in 1844.

Co-operatives UK
As the voice of the UK's Co-operative Movement, Co-operatives UK empowers and supports co-operative enterprise with specialised knowledge and expertise, to grow the co-operative economy and create a fairer society.

Co-operative Values and Principles
There are seven co-operative principles that define how a co-operative operates as ratified by the International Co-operative Alliance. Co-operatives are also based on 10 values. See uk.coop/ValuesPrinciples

Credit Union
A credit union is a financial co-operative which provides savings, loans and a range of services to its members. It is owned and controlled by its members.

Employee Owned
Employees can take three forms. Through direct employee ownership, employees are registered individual shareholders. Indirect employee ownership is when shares are held collectively on behalf of employees, normally through an employee trust. Employee ownership can also take place through a combination of individual and collective share ownership.

Employee Ownership Trust
A trust that enables a company to become employee owned. It can be set up by a company's existing owners, perhaps as part of their succession strategy, or founders starting a new employee owned business. It was created by the Finance Act 2014 with significant tax breaks.

Federals
Federal organisations are usually themselves a member organisation that represent a certain sector of The Co-operative and community benefit societies registered under The Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, must register with the FCA.

Freelancer Co-operative
A freelancer co-operative is usually made up of self-employed or sole trader businesses that come together and form a single entity in order to enjoy collective benefits such as shared costs, resources, knowledge and expertise.

Friendly Society
A friendly society is a mutual association for the purposes of insurance, pensions, savings or financial conduct authority.

Financial Conduct Authority
The FCA is an independent, financial regulatory body. Any organisation carrying out regulated business, whether co-operative or not, must provide certain information to the FCA. This includes details of their business and any associated risks to consumers.

End of glossary.
Housing Co-operative
There are several different types of structures for a housing co-operative. All models revolve around the owning, renting or management of residential properties. Housing co-operatives can be either fully mutual, where all tenants are members (and vice-versa) or non-fully mutual, which can have a wider membership base.

International Co-operative Alliance
The apex body representing co-operatives, which are estimated to be around three million worldwide, at a global level. It provides a global voice and is a forum for knowledge, expertise and co-ordinated action for and about co-operatives.

Member
A member is a person or organisation (see secondary co-operative) that trades with or benefits from the activity of a co-operative or mutual. Examples include customers, workers, suppliers and tenants.

Membership Shares
Transferable but are forfeited when the member leaves the organisation. These are the typical form of the shares in most common ownership co-operatives.

Multi-Stakeholder Co-operative
Multi-stakeholder co-operatives are one type of membership class such as consumers, producers, workers, volunteers, community supporters, and public bodies.

Mutual
As defined by the Mutuals Manifesto, mutuals are organisations that are owned by, and run for the benefit of, their current and future members. Unlike most financial services organisations, mutuals have no shareholders to pay.

Unincorporated Co-operative
An unincorporated co-operative is a co-operative not registered as a corporate body (legal entity). As such, the law does not recognise any distinction between the organisation and the members, so members have unlimited, personal liability.

Retail Consumer Co-operative
A type of retail co-operative owned by its customers. Co-op Group is one of the world’s largest consumer co-operatives, owned by millions of members.

Secondary Co-operative
An organisation whose members are organisations of ‘natural persons’.

Share Offer
The name for an individual equity-raising offer by a co-operative or community benefit society using community shares.

Transferable Share
Transferable shares can be sold to any company or individual, and so can increase or decrease in value.

Withdrawable Share Capital
Withdrawable shares are worth no more than the price paid.

Values and Principles
See Co-operative Values and Principles

Worker Co-op
A worker co-operative is an organisation democratically controlled and collectively owned by its workers. Suma is the largest worker co-op in the UK.
Federal Bodies - full list

- ACE Credit Union Services
- Association Of British Credit Unions (ABCUL)
- Association of Conservative Clubs
- Association of Financial Mutuals
- Club and Institute Union
- Community Energy Association (England)
- Community Leisure UK
- Community Owned Asset Management
- Confederation of Co-operative Housing (CCH)
- Co-operative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN)
- Co-operative Housing in Scotland
- Co-operative Personal Management Association
- Country Markets
- Energy Local
- Energy4All
- National Farmers' Retail and Markets Association
- National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners
- National Market Traders Federation
- Plunkett Foundation
- Radical Routes
- Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society
- Scottish League of Credit Unions
- Student Co-operative Homes
- Supporters Direct Scotland
- The Building Societies Association
- The Football Supporters' Association
- The National Federation of Tenant Management Organisations
- The Schools Co-operative Society
- UKCreditUnions
- Workers.coop.