



UK Society for Co-operative Studies

(Registered charity, number 1175295)

Annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

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UK Society for Co-operative Studies Trustees' annual report for the year ended 31 March 2023

Full name: The UK Society for Co-operative Studies

Organisation type: Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Registered charity number: 1175295

Principal address

Holyoake House
Hanover Street
Manchester
M60 0AS

Trustees

Ian Adderley	Trustee
Francesca Gagliardi	Secretary
Ruth Hall	Deputy Chair
Janette Hurst	Membership Secretary (Co-opted Jan 2022, elected Aug 2022)
John Maddocks	Elected 2023 (Treasurer from July 2022)
Elisavet Mantzari	Trustee (to Oct 2022)
Nick Matthews	Trustee
Jan Myers	Ex-officio up to January 2023 (Editor in Chief of the Journal); Co-opted January 2023
Rory Ridley-Duff	Chair to October 2022
Hirsch Sharma	Treasurer to July 2022; Resigned July 2022 (Co-opted Jan 2022)
Mike Wistow	Chair from October 2022
Anita Mangan	Ex-officio (Editor in Chief of the <i>Journal</i> since January 2023)
Gillian Lonergan	Ex-officio (Production Editor of the <i>Journal</i>)

Governance and management

The charity is operated under the rules of its constitution adopted 1 September 2017. Trustees are all members of the charity and apart from ex-officio officers are appointed by members at the AGM. The trustees may also co-opt members to the executive committee during the year. Co-opted trustees must stand for election at their first AGM following co-option to confirm their appointment.

This year, two trustees were co-opted – the previous Editor of the *Journal* and a former Trustee who had been on maternity leave from her work.

Objects and activities

The society's objects are to advance the education of the public concerning all aspects of the co-operative movement, and co-operative forms of structure, and, in particular, to assist, commission and/or identify and publish research into the aforementioned areas, and to promote the exchange of information and experience on co-operative studies and research.

The main activities of the society include production of the *Journal of Co-operative Studies*, supporting study networks, organising seminars, online conversations and hosting a conference.

Public benefit statement

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit:

Main activities during the financial year included:

- Publication of the *Journal of Co-operative Studies*
- Hosting a Co-operatives Fortnight Lecture
- Organising the annual Co-operative Studies Conference
- Hosting the Co-operative Conversations Series
- Making available the videos of the New Co-operativism research seminar series
- Supporting other events across the Co-operative Movement

Summary of the main achievements during the period

We are grateful to our members for their continued support and additional subscribers to the society's *Journal*. In particular, we recognise the many hundreds of hours put in by volunteers across all aspects of the activities described below.

Publication of the *Journal of Co-operative Studies*

The *Journal of Co-operative Studies* is published three times a year. It is a journal that accepts both peer-reviewed articles from academic contributors and short articles from practitioners. It is distributed in Canada in co-operation with the Canadian Association of Studies in Co-

operation (CASC) and in Ireland in co-operation with the Irish Society for Co-operative Studies. While one role of the *Journal* is the dissemination of the results of research, we remain keen to ensure that its contents also reflect the role of the UK Society for Co-operative Studies in acting as a bridge between theory and practice in advancing knowledge and understanding of co-operation.

2022-23 has been a busy and productive year for those of us involved in the production of the *Journal* with two special issues and welcoming a new editorial team and editorial advisory group members. In January 2023, [Dr Jan Myers](#) stood down from her role as editor of the *Journal* after nine years first as co-editor and then editor-in-chief. She has continued to support the development of the *Journal* as a co-opted member of the UKSCS Board and as a member of the *Journal's* editorial advisory board. After working alongside Jan for several months, we were pleased to announce that as of January 2023, [Dr Anita Mangan](#) is now the new editor of the *Journal*. She will be supported by a new deputy editor – [Dr Francesca Gagliardi](#) – and an [international advisory board](#).

We are continuing to promote the *Journal* through our website and social media channels and to improve access and visibility both for those publishing in the *Journal* and to potential readers and subscribers. We remain committed to providing open access to the *Journal* (subject to a six-month embargo) on the UKSCS website, which has received 19000 views from 125 countries over the year. The *Journal* pages remain the most popular first visit with just under 900 file downloads of current and past issues of the *Journal*, and related material.

The 2022 editions of the *Journal* consisted of two special issues and an open call issue. We received positive feedback on both specialist issues, particularly the Summer issue ([Vol. 55, No. 1](#)) which was produced to mark the contribution and work of Johnston Birchall, past Editor of the *Journal*; a special thank you to a great champion of co-operation and member-owned businesses and supporter of UKSCS who died in 2020. The issue featured appreciations from friends and colleagues, and reproduction of articles published in the *Journal* from 1984-2011 together with a bibliography of his work.

The Autumn issue ([Vol. 55, No. 2](#)) also featured an appreciation of another fellow co-operator and champion of both co-operation and adult education – Nigel Todd, who died in 2021. In addition, we featured articles from the USA, Nepal, the UK and a review of a new publication of workers' self-management in Argentina. Themes included worker autonomy, the role of co-operatives and broader issues of co-operative contributions and solutions in relation to sustainable development, and social care and the impact of the cost of living crisis on the British credit union and community lender sector.

Our second special issue of the year ([Vol. 55 No. 3](#)) was guest edited by Professor Rory Ridley-Duff (Sheffield Hallam University/FairShares) and Dr Mary O'Shaughnessy (University College Cork) and focused on 'new cooperativism'. It was produced together with a series on online seminars available on the UKSCS website with input from the EMES International Research Network (EMES) and the European Research Institute for Co-operative and Social Enterprise (EURICSE). The guest editorial board included Professor Linda Andersen (Roskilde University), Dr Nicole Göler de Ravensburg (Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences), Silvia Sacchetti (University of Trento), and Marcelo Vieta (University of Toronto).

During the year, we also issued [calls for papers](#) for a special issue for 2023 on Robert Owen and Co-operation with guest editors Professor Chris Williams and Nick Matthews, and an issue celebrating the centenary of the Woodcraft Folk due in 2025. Also in the planning stages are special issues focused on co-operative education (scheduled for 2024), and worker co-operatives (scheduled for 2025). All the suggestions from the last AGM on potential contributors / contributions were gratefully received and have been followed up for inclusion in future issues.

Finally, thanks go to all contributors, and everyone involved in reviewing, editing, proofing, printing, and distributing both the online and hard copy editions of the *Journal*.

Hosting a Co-operatives Fortnight Lecture

On 30 June 2022 we hosted a lecture in memory of the late Professor Johnston Birchall. David Rodgers explored the origin of humanity's capacity for Co-operation and conflict and why we must foster and develop the former to prevent the latter. Drawing on Professor Birchall's works including 'Co-op the People's Business' and 'Resilience of the Cooperative Business Model in Times of Crisis', the lecture set out why Co-operatives are necessary for economic stability and addressing the growth of inequality.

The lecture, 'The Origin of Co-operation' was well attended and is [available to watch online](#) (<https://youtu.be/xLHGk9J1xUQ>). Accompanying [lecture notes](#) are also available.

Organising the Annual Co-operative Studies Conference

Our 54th conference took place on 24-25 February 2023 at the Double Tree by Hilton in Lincoln, hosted by our Conference Chair Dr Francesca Gagliardi on the theme of "Consumer Co-operation: What Works Well". The conference programme is accessible at <https://www.ukscs.coop/pages/ukscs-conference-2023>.

The first keynote was given by Debbie Robinson, CEO at Central England Co-operative, who addressed the conference theme with a talk entitled “A Members’ Owned Business Today”. The second keynote was given by Tony Webster, Professor in History at Northumbria University. He addressed the conference theme by providing some examples of strategic renewal in consumer co-operation.

The conference attracted 45 delegates and included some international speakers from Canada and India. The feedback provided by delegates during and after the event suggested high levels of satisfaction with the overall conference experience.

With receipts of £6,280 and expenses of £4,916, the event generated a healthy surplus of £1,364.

Making available the videos of the New Co-operativism Research Seminar Series

In line with the Society’s charitable object to “to promote the exchange of information and experience on co-operative studies and research”, the videos from the New Cooperativism seminars have been reviewed and made available in on the UKSCS website:

<https://www.ukscs.coop/articles/co-operativism-seminar-series>

Hosting of a Co-operative Conversations Series

During the various restrictions on movement and meeting up during the pandemic, the Society developed an online conversation format, which came to be called ‘Co-operative Conversations’. This hour-long evening event involves interviewing a member of the co-operative movement about their personal history and contribution, supplemented by broader discussion amongst members.

Initially Conversations were held with UKSCS Trustees, but towards the end of the previous reporting period for the year 2021 - 2022, the Conversations series was opened more widely to include Steve Stanley, former Chair of the national research body in the Probation Service and Paul Gerrard, Campaigns & Public Affairs Director at the Co-op Group.

During 2022 - 2023, Co-operative Conversations have been held with Russell Gill, Ruth Cohen, Jan Myers & Anita Mangan. A summary of the background and focus of the interviewees, and therefore the Conversations, is included below:

- Russell Gill – Head of Membership & Co-operative Relations, The Co-operative Group:**
 Russell Gill manages The Co-op Group's relationship with the wider co-operative movement, Chairing Co-op Academies Trust, has been a trustee of Co-op College, member of Eurocoop's Board sub-committee on co-op identity, trustee of the People's History Museum, and instrumental in establishing Co-op Heritage Trust. During his 30 years at The Co-operative Group, Russell has been involved with its Governance, Membership and Community activities. He has lived and worked through the transitions that have led it to the Society we know today.
- Ruth Cohen - Author:**
 Ruth Cohen is the author of Margaret Llewelyn Davies: With women for a new world (Merlin Press), summarised in Andrew Bibby's Review as "Margaret Llewelyn Davies was much more than a leading co-operator of her time. She was a socialist with a strong commitment to trade unionism and a lifelong fighter for women's rights. She also became, in the years after the First World War, a tireless campaigner for pacifism. Her story is an important one, and Ruth Cohen's biography is a significant contribution both to co-operative history and to women's history".
- Anita Mangan & Jan Myers - Current and Former Editors of the Journal of Co-operative Studies:**
 Dr. Anita Mangan works in the University of Bristol Business School. Her research is broadly themed around social justice. Her main focus is on co-operatives and credit unions as alternative forms of organising which offer a counter-narrative to neoliberalism and austerity. She is also interested in community activism and volunteering processes.

 Dr. Jan Myers recently concluded a long and successful period as Editor of the Journal of Co-operative Studies. Jan has a background of working in and with co-operatives, third and public sector organisations. She worked with self-help and mutual aid organisations both in the UK and internationally before moving into higher education. She was until recently Associate Professor in Business & Society and is now Visiting Fellow at Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University.

Supporting other events across the Co-operative Movement

This year, the Society has actively worked with other organisations in the co-operative movement in support of its charitable objective to advance the education of the public concerning all aspects of the co-operative movement, and co-operative forms of structure, and, in particular, to assist, commission and/or identify and publish research into the

aforementioned areas, and to promote the exchange of information and experience on co-operative studies and research.

The Editor-in-Chief of the Journal and the Associate Editor (Production) are members of CoRNet, the co-operatives research network <https://www.ukscs.coop/pages/cornet->

The Board has had an initial contact from the Irish Society for Co-operative Studies about the potential for developing further the two societies. The broad areas to explore would be:

- whether there might scope for some future discussion of potential projects we might work on?
- Whether there might be scope for a joint event at some stage.

The Executive Committee Attendance at Committee Meetings

Name	Actual	Possible
Ian Adderley	5	5
Francesca Gagliardi	5	5
Ruth Hall	2	5
Janette Hurst	3	5
Gillian Lonergan	5	5
Hirsch Sharma	2	2
John Maddocks	5	5
Anita Mangan	1	1
Elisavet Mantzari	1	2
Nick Matthews	4	5
Jan Myers	5	5
Rory Ridley-Duff	5	5
Mike Wistow	5	5

Valuing our Volunteers

The society could not function without the generous support of its volunteers. Volunteers organised and participated in a setting up, running and reviewing a variety of activity and events during the year including:

- the AGM
- production of the annual report
- editing and producing the *Journal*
- administering and fulfilling journal orders

- planning and running the Conference
- administering membership
- keeping Members informed through the website, e-mails, Co-operative Conversations, individual conversations and the many small interactions which keep any membership organisation running
- managing funds
- bookkeeping and financial management
- liaising with partner organisations
- all the activities associated with facilitating and supporting committee meetings

Membership Type

Membership as at 31st March 2023:

Individual members	82
Co-op organisations	13
Associate members	19
Total	114

Following the generally successful bedding in of the website and a number of other discussions, not least during the February UKSCS Conference, the Society is reviewing the nature, content and timing of contact with Members during 2023/24.

Financial Review

In some respects, this financial year has seen a return to 'normal' in terms of expected levels of income. Membership income has returned to a similar level as that in 2019. While conference income is similar to that achieved in 2019 (the last time the Society had a face-to-face conference), conference costs are substantially lower, and this appears to be due to a change in venue and time of year (moving from August/September to February).

Grants and donations income is much higher than in 2022 although a little lower than in 2020 and 2021 and substantially lower than in 2019. Reasons for this variability are mainly to do with the extent to which grant funding was or was not sought or required in any particular year.

On the expenditure side, one continuing trend is the drop in volunteer expenses which is a legacy of the move to zoom meetings and the related drop in travel expenses. Accounting/bookkeeping costs are a little higher than previous years, due in part to a rise in the costs of the annual software license but also, for a short period, the Society tried an alternative accounting software package. The Society has since returned to the original software used.

Bank charges are higher than in the previous year mainly because of the return to a face-to-face conference and related booking transactions. Even so, it is worth noting that booking transaction charges are much lower than for previous face to face conferences because the Society is now able to process bookings through the UKSCS website rather than through Eventbrite or similar.

The increase in office expenses relates to payment for use of the registered address. This includes access to franking facilities, which the Society uses for distribution of print copies of the Journal. Increases in internet and website costs are linked to increasing use of the website including the number of members and other users of the site. Journal costs are lower than in 2022 in part because of being up to date with no need to print journals for earlier years.

Overall, the society achieved a healthy surplus which is the result of the various factors mentioned above, along with the very important contribution made by volunteers in all areas of the Society's activities, and without which the Society would cease to be financially viable.

The charity's policy on reserves

The charity has three unrestricted designated funds established to support the activities of the charity:

- Operating reserve £8,000 (to cover up to 12 months core activities),
- Journal production and distribution fund £6,000 (to meet commitments),
- Conference bursaries fund £2,000 (to offer free or discounted places),

Thanks

Thanks to all the society members and trustees for their support and work over the year. Also, thanks to funders, the co-operative societies and all with whom UKSCS have worked over the year 2022 -2023

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Wistow', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mike Wistow, Trustee and Chair

Date: 3/10/23

UK Society for Co-operative Studies

(Registered charity, number 1175295)

**Financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2023**

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UK Society for Co-operative Studies
Receipts & payments account
for the year ended 31 March 2023

2022			Unrestricted	Restricted	2023
Total		Note	Funds	Funds	Total
Funds			Funds	Funds	Funds
£			£	£	£
	Receipts				
5	Grants & donations	2	1,000	1,000	2,000
2,825	Membership		3,260	-	3,260
330	Journal receipts		600	-	600
105	Conference receipts		6,280	-	6,280
20	Other events		50	-	50
-	Sundry receipts		-	-	-
<u>3,285</u>	Total receipts		<u>11,190</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>12,190</u>
	Payments				
-	Volunteers' expenses	4	-	-	-
288	Accounting software & support		325	-	325
128	Bank charges		283	-	283
6	Office expenses		480	-	480
581	Internet & web site		781	-	781
3,168	Journal		1,436	1,000	2,436
171	Conference		4,916	-	4,916
-	Other events		144	-	144
1,972	Wheels for co-operation project		-	-	-
-	Sundry payments		-	-	-
<u>6,314</u>	Total before transfer of funds		<u>8,365</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>9,365</u>
(3,029)	Net receipts		2,825	-	2,825
30,828	Cash funds at start of this period		27,799	-	27,799
-	Transfers between funds		-	-	-
<u>27,799</u>	Cash funds at end of this period		<u>30,624</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>30,624</u>

UK Society for Co-operative Studies
Statement of assets and liabilities
at 31 March 2023

2022			2023
£	Cash assets	Note	£
27,799	Bank accounts		30,624
-	Cash in hand		-
<u>27,799</u>			<u>30,624</u>
	Other monetary assets		
-	Debtors	5	-
10	Shares	6	10
<u>10</u>			<u>10</u>
The charity does not have any items of equipment or other assets retained for the charity's own use			
	Liabilities		
-	Creditors	7	-
120	Advance receipts - journal orders		120
<u>120</u>			<u>120</u>

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

Signed M. Wistow , Date 3/2/23

Mike Wistow, Trustee

UK Society for Co-operative Studies
Notes to the accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Receipts & payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts contain a summary of money received and money spent during the period and a list of assets and liabilities at the end of the period. Usually, cash received, and cash spent will include transactions through bank accounts and cash in hand.

2. Grants & donations

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Co-operative Group	1,000	1,000	2,000
	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>2,000</u>

3. Funds analysis

	Opening balance £	Receipts £	(Payments) £	Transfers £	Closing balance £
Unrestricted designated funds					
Operating reserve	8,000	-	-	-	8,000
Journal	6,000	-	-	-	6,000
Conference	2,000	-	-	-	2,000
	<u>16,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>16,000</u>

UK Society for Co-operative Studies

Notes to the accounts - continued

4. Volunteers' expenses

During the accounting period, no reimbursements relating to trustees' travel and meeting expenses arose because all meetings took place online via Zoom rather than face to face.

5. Debtors

There were no debtors at year end.

6. Shares

The shares are in Co-operative Press Limited and have a nominal value of £10.

7. Creditors

There were no creditors at year end.

8. Remuneration

None of the trustees were paid any remuneration during the period.

9. Glossary of terms

Advance receipts: These are amounts received by the charity in the accounting period, for use in a future period.

Creditors: These are amounts owed by the charity, but not paid in the accounting period.

Debtors: These are amounts owed to the charity, but not received in the accounting period.

Restricted funds: These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but within the general objects of the charity.

Unrestricted designated funds: These are unrestricted funds set aside by the trustees for specific purposes.