



## **UK Society for Co-operative Studies**

(Registered charity, number 1175295)

### **Annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024**

#### **Page Contents**

|  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
|  | Trustees' annual report           |
|  | Receipts & payments account       |
|  | Statement of assets & liabilities |
|  | Notes to the accounts             |

## **UK Society for Co-operative Studies Trustees' annual report for the year ended 31 March 2024**

**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        | – Secretary   |
| Francesca Gagliardi | – Trustee   |
| Ruth Hall           | – Vice-Chair  |
| Janette Hurst       | – Membership Secretary                                  |
| John Maddocks       | – Treasurer   |
| Elisavet Mantzari   | – Co-opted May 2023                                     |
| Nick Matthews       | – Trustee   |
| Jan Myers           | – Resigned October 2023                                 |
| Rory Ridley-Duff    | – Resigned June 2023                                    |
| Mike Wistow         | – Chair   |
| Anita Mangan        | – Ex-officio (Editor in Chief of the <i>Journal</i> )   |
| 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.

## **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.

## **Annual General Meeting**

We held our Annual General Meeting (AGM) as a standalone event in the evening of 2 October 2023. We presented our annual report and accounts for the year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, and held trustee elections.

## **Membership Type and Contact with Members**

On March 31<sup>st</sup> 2024, UKSCS had 101 Individual Members and 6 Organisational Members. The Constitution allows for a 'grace period' of six months between subscriptions falling due and Membership being terminated. [It may be worth noting that, at the time of writing (July 2024) a number of overdue Memberships have been successfully followed up since that date.]

We are also pleased to note that Members have received two – three e-mailed Briefings each quarter. This has been a significant increase on earlier years and has covered both notification of upcoming events and reporting back on UKSCS activities. The following pages give an overview of activities that UKSCS has undertaken in the 2023 – 2024.

## **Public benefit statement**

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit (PB1, PB2, and PB3).

## **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 Lecture
- Organising the annual Co-operative Studies Conference
- Hosting the Co-operative Conversations 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.

2023-24 has been a busy and productive year for those of us involved in the production of the *Journal* with two open issues and one special issue. The new editorial team has established itself and a productive working relationship has been established with the international Editorial Advisory Board.

The most significant development in 2023 is that following consultation with the *Journal's*



Editorial Advisory Board, the UK Society for Co-operative Studies Board opted to remove the six-month embargo on publications and to add DOIs (Digital Object Identifiers) to all new papers. Our green open access policy means that neither readers nor authors are charged fees. As an international peer-reviewed *journal*, we think that this is an important way of supporting the co-operative ecosystem because it makes published research accessible to readers, while also ensuring that prospective authors do not face prohibitive costs. The 56(3) Winter issue was the first with DOIs and without a six-month embargo period. Volume 57 will be the first full year of green open access without an embargo period and with DOIs on all papers. Work is ongoing to add DOIs to the recent archive.

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. The UKSCS website has received 22,931 views (18,776 in 2022-23) from 116 countries over the year. There has been an increase in traffic for all countries in the last year. The *Journal* pages remain the most popular first visit with 1,751 file downloads of current and past issues of the *Journal*, and related material.

The open call Summer issue ([Vol 56, No. 1](#)) featured articles about Canada, South Korea, England, and Wales, written by both academic and practitioner authors. Themes included the potential for worker co-operatives to provide social care, the connections between the Hansalim Life Movement and New Cooperativism, co-operative publishing, the evolution of the Centre for Alternative Technology, and the joys and difficulties of worker co-operatives.

The Autumn issue ([Vol 56, No. 2](#)) was also an open call, but the papers were broadly similar in that they all addressed the future of co-operatives by investigating areas such as the sustainable development goals (SDGs), business models, Strategic Renewal, and the role of education in promoting social transformation. Examples came from Turkish co-operatives, Irish credit unions, consumer co-operatives around the world (UK, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Italy, France, Canada, Australia, South Korea, and Japan), and the Preston Cooperative Education Centre.

We received positive feedback on the Winter issue, *Robert Owen and co-operation*, ([Vol. 56, No. 3](#)) which was a special issue produced to mark the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Robert Owen's birth. The issue showcased the global reach, diversity, and continued relevance of Owen's work. It explores Owen's legacy, adult and co-operative education, utopian and realism in co-operatives, land reform, civil rights, co-operative and labour movements, and a co-operative model of entrepreneurship. The special issue was guest edited by Professor Chris Williams, who brought together an impressive group of scholars from around the

world. The Editorial Team were shocked and deeply saddened to learn of his untimely death. Chris brought vast knowledge, skill, friendship, and co-operative spirit to the special issue. He was also a valued member of the *Journal's* Editorial Advisory Board.

During the year, we also issued [calls for papers](#) for special issues on co-operative education (schedule for Autumn 2024), worker co-operatives (scheduled for 2025), and co-operative futures in China (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 Lecture**

In December 2023, we hosted co-operative law expert, Ian Snaith, in 'Reflections on Co-operative Law'. The event took place online during the day on Monday 4 December 2023, with the recording available on our website and YouTube Channel:

<https://www.ukscs.coop/events/reflections-on-co-operative-law-with-ian-snaith>

Ian gave his reflections on the field of co-operative law, and his thoughts for the future, with a Law Commission review of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 underway.

### **Organising the Annual Co-operative Studies Conference**

Our 55<sup>th</sup> conference took place on March 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024. It was held in Lichfield and UKSCS was supported by Central Co-op with venue and arrangements. The Conference title was "*Sustainability Of The Co-Operative Ecosystem: The Role Of Secondary Co-Operatives And Federations*"

The keynote presentation was from the Chief Executive of Central Co-op and the subsequent Panel Session consisted of senior representatives from: the Federation of Worker Co-ops; the Building Societies Association; the Strategy & Intelligence function in Co-op Group.

The Conference is intended to be a national focus for Co-operative practitioners and researchers and the format included the opportunity to visit/discuss: Central Co-op community stores; the city of Lichfield and the reasons for the location there of the new Central Co-op office buildings; Central Co-ops apprenticeship schemes.



These discussions were followed in the evening with the opportunity for networking, a session from Co-operative Education, a presentation on worker co-ops in Catalonia, and a presentation on the work of Central Co-op in Malawi.

Day 2 continued to provide a focus for networking and considered discussion, with the focus on recent academic insights from leading Co-operative academics from the Ireland and India as well as the United Kingdom.

Though attendance was smaller than the previous year, feedback was positive and the Conference was financially successful.

### **Hosting of a Co-operative Conversations Series**

UKSCS has developed an online conversation format, which is now 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.

During the year Conversations have been held with:

- Laura Dunne, *Head of Marketing & Membership at Lincolnshire Co-op*, and Tom Blount, *Science Park Director, Lincoln*
- Rory Ridley-Duff, *Professor of Co-operative Social Entrepreneurship at Sheffield Hallam University and former UKSCS Chair*
- Henry Leveson-Gower, *Founder and CEO of Promoting Economic Pluralism*
- Rose Marley, *Chief Executive of Co-operatives UK*
- Tanya Noon, *Director of Central Co-op, Director of Co-ops UK (amongst others)*
- Graham Boyd, *Founder of Evolutesix*,

### **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.

The Editor in Chief represented the Journal at a 'Co-operative publishing' session at the ICA Conference, University of Dundee, 24-26 June 2024.



## Indication of Reach

It is not possible, nor probably useful, to be statistically encompassing about the reach of UKSCS – one idea from one conversation with a particular individual might significantly change an approach to national policy, for example. However the UKSCS website does provide us with numbers and the following are some of the key ones for the year April 2023 – March 2024:

| Measure  | Number | Comment  |
|--|--------|--|
| Number of users .....  | 5,900  | Up from 4.2k the previous year   |
| Total views of pages and screens .....                                   | 22,931 | Up from 18,776 the previous year   |
| Top five pages viewed  |        | The importance of the website as a means of accessing the <i>Journal</i> is also highlighted when looking in detail at the number of interactions (ie clicking a button or submitting a form etc, rather than passively viewing a web page) which was more than 11,000 |
| <i>Journal of Co-operative Studies</i> .....                             | 3499   |  |
| UKSCS .....  | 3235   |  |
| UKSCS – Home .....   | 1559   |  |
| UKSCS Conference 2024 .....  | 910    |  |
| About us .....   | 771    |  |
| International Reach (Users)  |        | The figures to the right are the top five from a list of 116 countries identified.   |
| UK .....   | 2076   |  |
| USA .....  | 950    |  |
| Poland .....   | 423    |  |
| Canada .....   | 245    |  |
| India .....  | 223    |  |
| File Downloads   |        | The figures to the right are the top five identified from a total of 1,751   |
| JCS, 55(1) 2022 Special issue: Johnston Birchall – An appreciation ..... | 188    |  |
| Conference 2024 .....  | 143    |  |
| JCS, 55(3) 2022 Special issue: New cooperativism .....                   | 123    |  |
| JCS, 54(3) .....   | 100    |  |
| JCS 55 (2) .....   | 95     |  |

## The Executive Committee Attendance at Committee Meetings

We held four meetings during this reporting period, all taking place online.

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

## 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

## Financial Review

The Society achieved a surplus for the financial year ending March 2024, with net receipts of £3,383. The charity's main income sources continue to be a mix of grants and donations, membership fees, events and journal orders. There is, though, some change in the mix with a noticeable shift away from print and towards digital versions of the journal. Membership income has remained fairly steady while the 2024 annual conference achieved a healthy surplus. Overall the Society continues to find itself in a sound financial position, due in no small part to the continuing contribution of volunteers in developing and sustaining the various activities of the organisation.

## 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 £2,000 (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 2023 -2024

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:



Mike Wistow, Trustee and Chair

Date: 15/12/2024

**UK Society for Co-operative Studies**  
**Receipts & payments account**  
**for the year ended 31 March 2024**

| 2023          |   |               | 2024          |
|---------------|---|---------------|---------------|
| Total         |   | Unrestricted  | Total         |
| Funds         |   | Funds         | Funds         |
| £             | Note                                    | £             | £             |
|               | <b>Receipts</b>                         |               |               |
| 2,000         | Grants & donations                      | 2             | 2,000         |
| 3,260         | Membership                              | 3,170         | 3,170         |
| 600           | Journal receipts                        | 120           | 120           |
| 6,280         | Conference receipts                     | 3,870         | 3,870         |
| 50            | Other events                            | -             | -             |
| -             | Sundry receipts                         | -             | -             |
| <b>12,190</b> | <b>Total receipts</b>                   | <b>8,160</b>  | <b>9,160</b>  |
|               | <b>Payments</b>                         |               |               |
| -             | Volunteers' expenses                    | 4             | -             |
| 325           | Accounting software & support           | 324           | 324           |
| 283           | Bank charges                            | 222           | 222           |
| 480           | Office expenses                         | 540           | 540           |
| 781           | Internet & web site                     | 1,054         | 1,054         |
| 2,436         | Journal                                 | 837           | 1,837         |
| 4,916         | Conference                              | 1,656         | 1,656         |
| 144           | Other events                            | 144           | 144           |
| -             | Sundry payments                         | -             | -             |
| <b>9,365</b>  | <b>Total before transfer of funds</b>   | <b>4,777</b>  | <b>5,777</b>  |
| 2,825         | <b>Net receipts</b>                     | 3,383         | 3,383         |
| 27,799        | Cash funds at start of this period      | 30,624        | 30,624        |
| -             | Transfers between funds                 | -             | -             |
| <b>30,624</b> | <b>Cash funds at end of this period</b> | <b>34,007</b> | <b>34,007</b> |



**UK Society for Co-operative Studies**  
**Statement of assets and liabilities**  
**at 31 March 2024**

| 2023          |   |      | 2024          |
|---------------|---|------|---------------|
| £             |   |      | £             |
| 30,624        | <b>Cash assets</b>  | Note |               |
|               | Bank accounts   |      | 34,007        |
| -             | Cash in hand  |      | -             |
| <u>30,624</u> |   |      | <u>34,007</u> |
|               | <b>Other monetary assets</b>  |      |               |
| -             | Debtors   | 5    | -             |
| 10            | Shares  | 6    | 10            |
| <u>10</u>     |   |      | <u>10</u>     |
|               | <b>Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>  |      |               |
|               | The charity does not have any items of equipment or other assets retained for the charity's own use |      |               |
|               | <b>Liabilities</b>  |      |               |
| -             | 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. [Signature] Date 13/12/24  
, Trustee

**UK Society for Co-operative Studies**  
**Notes to the accounts**  
**for the year ended 31 March 2024**

**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<br>£ | Restricted<br>£ | Total<br>£   |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 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<br>balance<br>£ | Receipts<br>£ | (Payments)<br>£ | Transfers<br>£ | Closing<br>balance<br>£ |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Unrestricted designated funds</b> |                         |               |                 |                |                         |
| Operating reserve                    | 8,000                   | -             | -               | -              | 8,000                   |
| Journal                              | 6,000                   | -             | (837)           | (163)          | 5,000                   |
| Conference                           | 2,000                   | -             | -               | -              | 2,000                   |
|                                      | <u>16,000</u>           | <u>-</u>      | <u>(837)</u>    | <u>(163)</u>   | <u>15,000</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, mainly 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. Trustees' 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.