

# Meet your candidates

## Election of Directors 2025

**Have a say,  
your vote  
matters!**

East of  
England  
**CCOP**

# Election of Directors 2025

This year we have 10 candidates standing for five vacancies on our Board of Directors. Our Board is made up of our members and play a key role in the success of our co-op.

As part of this year's nomination process, we asked candidates to provide an outline of the skills, experience and attributes that they would bring to the Board, including:

## **Board Skills -**

This relates to the skills needed to oversee the long-term success of a co-operative. Skills and experience may include financial management, co-operative governance, people and performance or change management.

## **Personal attributes, knowledge or experience -**

This is intended to capture our candidates involvement and passion in the co-operative movement as well as any relevant sector experience. They may evidence experience of leadership, analytical thinking and communication, as well as practical experience of promoting constructive challenge and a culture of openness and debate.

Please take the time to read the details of each candidate before casting your vote.

## **Board Information**

The Board are non-Executive. The normal term of office is four years with Directors retiring by rotation each year. To find out more about the current Board of Directors, please visit [www.eastofengland.coop/board](http://www.eastofengland.coop/board)

East of England Co-op and Civica Election Services have made every effort to ensure that the candidates' election statements have been reproduced as they were submitted. The views expressed are those of the candidates and do not necessarily reflect those of the East of England Co-op or of Civica Election Services.

**Your chance  
to make a co-op  
difference, your  
vote matters!**

# Meet your candidates

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The results for the Election of Directors 2025 will be announced at our Annual Members' Meeting on 23rd May 2025.

## Marguerite Haddrell



### Board skills

I have previously worked at Director level in the housebuilding industry lastly Persimmon Homes 2001. I have also previously been a school governor at St. Mary's School Colchester this was for a period of 21 years between 1997 to 2018 the last three years of which I was chair of governors. I set up my own business in 2001 which I have just retired from. I have sound financial acumen and am used to regulatory controls necessary for an organisation to operate effectively.

### Personal attributes/knowledge/experience

I have had experience of the co op both from food retail and also the funeral section. I have year of business experience which began at a young age observing my father running his own retail operation. I have also had experience working in large organisations during my working career; Colchester Borough Council, Wimpey Homes, Bellway Homes, Beazer Homes / Persimmon. This is working within teams and ultimately leading teams.

### Why do you want to join our Board of Directors?

I think the co-op is an excellent organisation - but i think it could be better particularly on the retail side. I believe I have valuable business experience and experience of the co-op as a consumer which makes me well placed to make a positive contribution to the organisation

## John Cook



Society Director  
May 2012 to May 2024

### Board skills

I used my experience as an employer and in financial management, during 12 years as a director of the Society. Our co-op faced challenges as experienced senior colleagues retired and new structures developed, and I was able to help manage these changes. I have experience of all four main committees, and as chair and vice-chair, of two of them. I have worked in retail, public and voluntary sector work and ran an Ipswich based membership organisation for twenty years. I now work supporting member engagement in a co-operative organisation. I am committed to our Society and our members.

### Personal attributes/knowledge/experience

My great-grandfather was a baker with the Norwich Co-op, and growing up, my family still used his dividend number. Raised with co-op values and principles, I joined the Society over 40 years ago. Moving to Ipswich in 2000, I became involved in co-operative education, arranging speakers on fairtrade, credit unions, co-op housing and other topics, promoting co-operative principles and encouraging the involvement of others. I've attended many events as a member and represented the Society across our trading area. I chaired the National Consumer Council which brings retail co-operatives together to share ideas and best practice.

### Why do you want to join our Board of Directors?

Co-operative values and principles are as relevant today as they were in the days of the Rochdale Pioneers. We work together. We support fairtrade and work with local suppliers, as an intrinsic part of what is right for our community and for developing nations. Thank you for your support.

## Esme Cole

Society Director  
May 2021 to date



### Board skills

I have served with pride on our Coop's Board since 2021, through a period of major transformation. I am Chair of the Remuneration and Search Committee, was Vice Chair of the Committee for 2 years and served on the Performance Review Committee. I am Board Chair of Colchester Borough Homes, providing social housing and homelessness care for Colchester City and sit on the Governance and Remuneration Committee. I use skills obtained during my Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration, CIPD Level 7 in Organisation Development and Design and NEDonBoard Board Masterclass certification to constructively challenge strategy, change management and performance.

### Personal attributes/knowledge/experience

I am proud to be part of the Coop movement that seeks to disrupt the increasing needs in communities and society. I sit on the Board of Coops UK and held a seat on The Coop Group's National Members' Council and their Ethical and Sustainable Leadership Committee. Outside of the movement I work as a Strategic Change consultant for Citizens Advice, helping each individual charity face increasing funding cuts, to become more sustainable and resilient to ensure the most vulnerable in society receive the support they desperately need. Prior to this I held roles focussed on leadership and organisational development.

### Why do you want to join our Board of Directors?

As a purpose driven, passionate change agent I would be delighted to be elected to support the next phase of our Coops transformation. I am excited to see how it can grow and continue to commit to the ethics of Fair Trade, supporting local suppliers and helping our communities thrive.

*The following information has been provided by the Secretary:*

Board service since the last AMM (May 2024)

Board Meetings: 9 of 9

Remuneration and Search Committee: 8 of 9

## Jess Taylor



### Board skills

I care deeply about creating cultures where people thrive and businesses grow. With over 20 years of leadership experience, I've focused on aligning people strategies with business goals across Tech, Retail and Distribution sectors. I've shaped strategies, overseen budgets and governance frameworks, helping build strong, successful businesses that put people at the heart of their growth. I have experience of board RemCo, where I contributed to remuneration decisions. I've been part of a successful business exit, giving insight into commercial strategy and long-term value creation. I offer strategic oversight while staying grounded in the realities of business growth and change.

### Personal attributes/knowledge/experience

I'm passionate about the Co-op movement and live the company values:

**Do the right thing:** I've project managed the build of our eco home in Suffolk to reduce our environmental impact.

**Unstoppable:** I always champion psychological safety, encouraging openness and healthy challenge to help ideas and businesses to grow.

**Stronger together:** I lead a women's well-ness book club where we explore topics together and leave inspired and supported.

**A place for people to grow:** I have designed and delivered award winning development programmes.

**Respect for the individual:** Studying neuroscience gives me a deeper understanding how individuals think, work and connect.

### Why do you want to join our Board of Directors?

I'm inspired by the Co-op's values and its commitment to community, sustainability and long-term impact. I'd love to bring my experience in creating positive, values-led cultures to support the Co-op's success while learning from and contributing to a Board that shares my belief in business as a force for good.

## Roger Grosvenor



### Board skills

I have 50 years experience within the Co-operative Movement from shop floor to Boardroom level with the East of England Society, the Federal Retail Trading Services and two local charities. As Joint C.E.O. I was responsible to the Co-op Board for 3,000 colleagues across retail services sectors with an annual turnover of £400 million. I worked closely with the Senior retail team when reviewing weekly performance set against budgets, developments and customer satisfaction. We always had Governance and Co-operative principles in mind when doing so. This collective approach developed colleagues and invited constructive engagement which would test every decision.

### Personal attributes/knowledge/experience

I led a number of ground breaking initiatives which were developed with colleagues, highlighting the Society as a leading organisation within areas of sustainability and the environment. The launch of Locally Sourced Food, the removal of single use carrier bags and the Co-op guide to dating (selling food past its best before date for 10p) amongst many others. I was responsible for the vast majority of the Society's businesses and have an in depth knowledge of the Co-operative movement financially, commercially, its ethics and governance. My experience also extends to being a joint founder of two local charities.

### Why do you want to join our Board of Directors?

The Co-operative Movement is extremely important to me having spent my working life within the organisation I love. When decision making, a Co-operative has to constantly balance commercial accountability within social responsibility for its Members, the Community and its Colleagues. I would continue to uphold these principles if elected.

## Suzanne Hawkes



Society Director  
May 2024 to date

### Board skills

Having already served a year on the Board, I have gained a huge amount of knowledge and insight that will enable me to continue to give valuable input and contribute to discussion on the vital decisions that will need to be made going forward to enable the East of England Co-op movement to progress and thrive in this currently challenging marketplace. As a Suffolk woman who has worked in both financial and creative roles in the retail and charity sector for the past 20 years, I also bring a lot of local experience, passion and management ability to the table.

### Personal attributes/knowledge/experience

The Co-op movement was founded on the core values of locality, diversity & equality, and education - values that I have always embedded in the organisations I have led. I head up my own Suffolk based theatre company, which brings locally inspired drama to the heart of the community. Our core aims are education with entertainment, supporting local practitioners, and embracing diversity. In 2019 I opened Two Sisters Arts Centre on the Felixstowe peninsular - which I run as Artistic Director heading a board of Trustees. These roles mean I can bring leadership skills, people skills and performance management to this role.

### Why do you want to join our Board of Directors?

My first year has given me real understanding of the processes and challenges of the role. With the climate crisis and unsettled international relations this is a time of change. I would be honoured to help steer this great institution through choppy waters to the next level of success.

*The following information has been provided by the Secretary:*

Board service since the last AMM (May 2024)

Board Meetings: 8 of 9

Audit and Risk Committee: 1 of 3



## Joy Burnford

Society Director  
May 2021 to date



### Board skills

I am proud to have been elected as the Society's President in December. If I have the opportunity to serve a second term, I will continue to shape an inclusive, collaborative, and effective Board. Relevant skills gained during my 28-year career include strategic leadership, talent development, stakeholder engagement, governance, coaching, innovative thinking, and marketing. I thrive under pressure and assertively challenge others to achieve the best results. I am also the CEO and Founder of Encompass Equality, a published author, podcast host, and a proud wife and mother with two children and a dog!

### Personal attributes/knowledge/experience

My time on the Board as Vice-President and President has enhanced my understanding of the retail sector and the co-operative movement. I have been an active member of the Membership and Remuneration Committees and have been very involved in the recent leadership restructure. Community is extremely important to me. I volunteered as Chair of Kelvedon school PTA for six years (raising £100,000), and helped set up the church Teddy Bear Club. Equality, equity, and other core co-operative values drive my passion for inspiring future aspirational leaders, and I aim to embody the co-op spirit in everything I do!

### Why do you want to join our Board of Directors?

It has been a privilege serving as a Director for the past four years, and I would be extremely honoured to continue for a second term. I am passionate about making an even greater impact in our communities and improving the service we provide to you, our valued members.

*The following information has been provided by the Secretary:*

Board service since the last AMM (May 2024)

Board Meetings: 9 of 9

Remuneration and Search Committee: 9 of 9

## Pam Ransome



### Board skills

I bring strong board-level skills in financial oversight, leadership, and change management as a Purchase Ledger Supervisor, leading a team of five and overseeing two finance package transitions. My Diploma in Leadership and Management and Level 3 AAT qualification enhance my ability to drive performance, implement strategy, and ensure effective governance. With expertise in financial controls, co-operative governance, and people management, I am committed to overseeing long-term success and strategic growth. My experience in change leadership and performance monitoring equips me to contribute effectively at the board level.

### Personal attributes/knowledge/experience

I love the Co-op, I've been here for 15 years and I've learnt so much, led some great teams and played a part in our success so far, I really feel that my knowledge, skills and experience would be helpful and make a difference. I have developed strong financial leadership and analytical skills. I have led two finance system changes, running workshops to engage stakeholders and ensure smooth transitions. I come alive in environments that encourage debate and accountability. Committed to driving positive change, I bring a strong financial background and a dedication to inclusivity and shared success.

### Why do you want to join our Board of Directors?

I am passionate about shaping our Co-Op for the future. I feel I can bring an enthusiastic diverse experience in change and feel I can contribute to the Board to ensure we live the values and support the long term goals and vision.

## Martin Catchpole

Society Director  
May 2024 to date



### Board skills

Firstly, I would like to thank those who voted for me last year. I have learned much in regards to how the society operates & the reasons for both the success & failures of the past. I have actively participated in every Board, Audit & Risk committee meeting speaking up as per my statement last year, attending as many Community Cares events as I could to witness our impact in the community. I have developed all my board skills from scratch, especially in who to approach & how to ask key questions to those accountable for upholding our values & principles.

### Personal attributes/knowledge/experience

As a former Carer of fifteen years, I built working relationships with each person as a base to the trust, respect & dignity required to provide care. Due to personal circumstances I lost a lot of trust over the past five years in others and myself. In my year here with the society I have met fellow co-operators who have shown me much trust & patience as I developed into my role, exhibiting to me the importance of the co-operative working approach of which I had little experience other than the shared ethics, principles & values from being a member.

### Why do you want to join our Board of Directors?

It's been a challenging first year. I still feel members need to be listened to & communicated with better, I will keep pushing for this. I would like to ask the membership for their vote to continue being a voice for them (without our members, we are not a co-operative).

*The following information has been provided by the Secretary:*

Board service since the last AMM (May 2024)

Board Meetings: 9 of 9

Audit and Risk Committee: 3 of 3

## Steve Shaw

Society Director  
May 2015 to Nov 2020



### Board skills

Fellow East of England Co-op members, I am seeking your support to re-join the board of directors. I am deeply invested in the success and well-being of our co-op. I believe my skills and dedication will be valuable assets to our community. I understand and embrace the core principles of our co-op. I am passionate about the future of our East of England Co-op. I am eager to contribute to strategic planning, explore innovative ideas, and ensure we remain adaptable and responsive to evolving member needs and market conditions. I ran my own business for many years.

### Personal attributes/knowledge/experience

I am a strong advocate for our members. I will listen to your concerns, representing your interests, and working collaboratively to find solutions that benefit everyone. I understand the time commitment required of a board member and I am ready and willing to dedicate the necessary time and energy to this role. I will be committed to upholding these values in every decision we make. I am dedicated to ensuring the long-term health and prosperity of our co-op, so it can continue to serve our community for generations to come.

### Why do you want to join our Board of Directors?

I believe in the power of our co-op to create a positive impact in our community. I am ready to work alongside my fellow members to strengthen our co-op, ensure its long-term success, and uphold the values that make us unique. I respectfully ask for your vote please.



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**To find out more visit:**  
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