

GO-OP Co-operative AGM 2018 Election Profiles

Chris Phillimore

Chris is MD of TIR Ltd, a multi-disciplinary Consultancy Business specialising in Rail. For ten years he worked in the construction industry managing a variety projects and specialised in civil engineering and services procurement and delivery. Chris trained initially as an architect and undertook a Management Diploma in 2001/2.

Chris specialises in the management of complex and highly regulated businesses with an emphasis on project development and delivery against tightly defined delivery schedules. Throughout his adult life he retained a strong commitment to Rail as the most efficient and environmentally sound mode of mass transport.

Barbara Rainford

Barbara was elected as a Director of the Midcounties Co-operative in 2013, she represents Midcounties on the Board of Co-op Futures and the Co-op Press (which publishes Co-op News). She is currently a board member of Young Enterprise in Shropshire and was Secretary for the Shropshire branch of the Federation of Small Businesses for over 5 years. In this role she became involved in the formation of the Wrexham/Shropshire/Marylebone train service and this experience engendered an interest in the possibility of a co-operative train service. She is now a member of the FSB Innovation Enterprise & Trade Policy Unit.

Barbara's background includes accountancy as well as marketing and PR; she has run her own business since she was 18 and was one of the first women members of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce. She is currently a partner in Strawberry Fields, a digital marketing consultancy.

In her time as Director of Midcounties she has become a staunch supporter (and defender) of co-operation, attending Congress, Future Coops, Ways Forward and Co-op College conferences and The Co-op Group AGMs.

Kate Whittle

Kate is one of the founder members of GO-OP Co-operative and was GO-OP Secretary from 2010 to 2015. She has been working in and with co-operatives of all kinds for over 25 years, both in the UK and in the Dominican Republic, where she worked as a volunteer with a federation of co-operatives in the Cibao.

From 1999 to 2004 she was an Associate at the Co-operative College. From 2003 to 2005 she served on the Board of the Phone Co-op. In 2003, together with Bob Cannell and David Dean, Kate founded Co-operative Business Consultants aiming to promote participative and co-operative management.

Together with Nathan Brown and Alex Lawrie of Somerset Co-operative Services, Kate developed and taught the Understanding Co-operative Enterprise Unit of the ILM accredited VRQ Level 5 training programme for UK co-operative business advisers.

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In 2010 Kate authored the popular 'From Conflict to Co-operation' series of booklets, aimed at helping community enterprises cope with the inevitable conflicts that arise and avoid unnecessary conflict by developing good co-operative skills.

In 2013 together with Nathan Brown she founded 'Co-operantics' - a co-operative support body aiming to improve co-operative skills (including communication skills, running effective meetings, decision-making, coping with conflict, negotiation and team working) in co-operatives and to promote and develop co-operative skills throughout all sectors of the economy and sections of society.