



----- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -----

150 years of Co-op News

- **UK based publication Co-op News celebrates 150 years of independent co-operative journalism**
- **The member-owned magazine and news website serves the 3 million co-operative businesses in every sector around the world**

UK-based Co-op News reached an important milestone today [2 September] as it celebrates its 150th anniversary. First published in Manchester in 1871 as The Co-operative News, the publication is the world's oldest co-operatively owned newspaper.

Its long history can be traced back to 10 June 1871, when a meeting of society representatives and individual co-operators resolved that a Co-operative Newspaper Society be set up. About £400 in capital was promised, mostly by individuals, with a quarter coming from the Co-operative Wholesale Society (now Co-op Group). On 2 September 1871, the first issue of The Co-operative News was published, as “A Record of Industrial, Political, Humanitarian, and Educational Progress”.

The paper was an immediate success and circulation increased from 7,000 to 15,000 within 18 months. Other milestones followed, including buying its own printing machinery in 1887; building new premises at 22 Long Millgate, Manchester in 1895 and launching new publications such as Millgate Monthly, Our Circle, Women’s Outlook, Co-operative Youth and Sunshine Stories (as well Reynolds News/Sunday Citizen newspapers).

The society’s first chair Thomas Hayes placed a strong emphasis on the paper’s independence, telling the 1873 Congress that “the board of the News believes that its perfect independence should be preserved and that it should be above the suspicion of being controlled by an organisation other than its own.”

Today Co-op News is based at Holyoake House, the building which also houses Co-operatives UK, the Co-operative College and the Co-operative Heritage Trust. Throughout its long history, Co-op News witnessed huge changes within the co-operative movement, both in the UK and internationally, as well as wider changes in technology, communication and the role of the media. As society and co-operatives have evolved, so, too, has Co-op News. Following the launch of its website in 2011, the publication started publishing a digital Co-op News edition. In recent years a greater emphasis has been placed on digitisation and expanding membership.

In 2021, the co-operative has a growing number of organisational and individual members around the world. Last year, its website was visited by someone in every single country in the world (except three). In addition to publishing a print and digital magazine, Co-op News also provides a range of communication and design services to co-operative organisations, social enterprises and other for-purpose businesses.

Co-operative News has had just 15 managing editors in its 150-year existence including a father and son who held the post for 46 of the publication's first 50 years – and just two women, Lily Howe and current executive editor, Rebecca Harvey.

Ms Harvey says: "Celebrating 150 years of Co-op News is an incredible achievement for us. While the way in which we deliver stories may have changed from those early days, our ethos remains the same – Co-op News strives to be the number one source of information and analysis for co-operators in the UK and abroad. We will continue to connect co-operatives, champion their successes and challenge their misdemeanours in the years to come. Those wishing to support independent journalism about co-operatives in the UK and around the world can become members and help to shape our future."

To celebrate its anniversary, Co-op News is offering a 15% discount to print and digital subscriptions to all those signing up as individual members during September 2021. Sign up at thenew.coop/join using the coupon code 15%off.

Notes to editors

About Co-op News:

- Co-ops are organisations that are owned by their members. There are 3 million co-ops around the world with 1.2 billion members. In the UK alone, over 7,100 co-ops contribute £37.7bn to the economy. Co-ops are part of a global movement as well as a type of business.
- Co-op News is based in the UK, but its mission statement is to connect, champion and challenge the global co-operative movement, through fair and objective journalism and open and honest comment and debate.
- Established in 1871, Co-op News is published by Co-operative Press Ltd, an independent registered co-operative society. It is registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 as a bona fide co-operative, registration IP 1585R
- Membership of Co-operative Press is open to individual readers as well as to other co-operatives, corporate bodies and unincorporated organisations.

The most recent issue of Co-op News can be viewed online at:

<https://online.flippingbook.com/view/830546444/>

The first edition of Co-op news can be viewed in full online at:

<https://online.flippingbook.com/view/616761297/>

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