

News from South West Co-operative Party – Somerset Branch

the co-operative party

December 2014

Advance Notice Our next Branch Meeting

Hi All,

The Branch activity has been quiet since I have taken sabbatical from Branch secretary role for personal and health reasons and Martin our Chair has had an eventful and sad year caring and for his mother and having to deal with her passing, also his health is also not.

The good news is we have sorted out date at last for next meeting of South West Co-operative Party.

This will be on **Saturday 31st January** at **11am** venue likely to be at Cree-town House top of Albemarle Road, Taunton,

Details, agenda etc nearer the time. We hope to see you there.

MERRY XMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL.

AND OFFICERS LOOK FORWARD TO SEE YOU ALL IN THE NEXT IMPORTANT (ELECTION) YEAR

2015 Year of Decision: Government and the Co-operative Movement

Above is title and theme of the next and always successful, popular annual Weekend School organised and run by The South Western Party Council and as usual this will be held at Brunel Manor, Torquay, Devon on 24th to 25th January 2015.

The south west weekend school is a great opportunity to meet with people interested in co-operative politics from across the South West, South Wales, Cornwall and beyond you can spend time learning from speakers and develop ideas informally and at formal sessions.

Among Speakers confirmed are **RT Hon Alun Michael**, **Rt Hon Lord (Larry) Whitty**, **Michael Harriott** (Co-operative Group)

Karin Christiansen General secretary Co-operative Party

Enclosed you will find Booking form and programme (return to Treasurer by **10th January latest please**) we are hoping to give opportunity to as many branch members to attend we can support between 4 and 6 partially subsidised places, if you cannot attend whole weekend, why not just attend on Saturday, if interested in being delegate from branch return form (**with cheque this will be partial or full refunded later depending on how many delegates want to attend**) to the Treasurer: Richard Tomlinson 11 The Malthouse, Canon street, Taunton ta1 1ru or tel 01823 271648 or e-mail rtomlinson@live.co.uk

Local Government Elections 2015

We are looking for ANY prospective candidates who would like to consider joining the **Co-operative Panel**. A small grant would be available to assist during election and of course any other help the branch can give, forms available from Acting/secretary Chairman.

The Co-operative Party stands for:

Enterprise

A sustainable economy and society

Empowerment

a culture of citizenship

Accountability

socially responsible business

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NEW NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM FROM JANUARY 2015

A lot of changes I will try to summarize, hope it's right !!

FROM JANUARY 2015

All members should have been contacted on around 17th November about this new system which means higher subscriptions but can be paid over the year with Direct debit (Like associate Party Labour):

Standard rates £33 or £3 per month

Unwaged: £20 or £2 a month all these apply only if paid by 31st March 2015!!

You can still pay by cash but again only up to 31st March This has changes for how branches /party councils etc are funded

You can renew on Party website also

www.party.coop

I have attached a membership form

If you want more details will try to help

Contact details below

Membership Secretary

Ian Grady

2 Lower Meadow Road,

Minehead TA24 6AN

Tel: 01643 704112

Or e-mail

ian@madasafish.com

'Have Your Say' survey results

Summary copy available via link on Co-op group website

Commenting on Have Your Say Gareth Thomas MP, chair of the Co-operative Party said:

"Co-operatives – including the Co-operative Group – have always believed in a different way of doing business which puts people ahead of short-term profits for shareholders. That is why they created the Co-operative Party almost 100 years ago to champion that vision."

"At a time when trust in big business and politics is at an all time low it's not surprising that people don't like the idea of "big business" donating to political parties. But a Populus poll undertaken at the same time as 'Have Your Say' shows that in fact only 11% of the public think it is inappropriate for the Co-operative Group to make financial contributions to the Co-operative Party and more than double the number of people think it is appropriate for them to do so."

"Further, a substantial majority of the HYS respondents want the Co-operative Group to champion national issues. Just as the Party and the Group have done – working together – for the last century."

Websites for interesting mutual downloads and resources.

www.compassonline.org.uk

www.policy-network.net

www.ippr.org

Check our own South West local party website:

www.swcoopparty.org.uk

South West Co-operative Party – Somerset Branch

Chair: Martin Jevon. Secretary **VACANT** Treasurer: Richard Tomlinson

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