



## **Transfer of Engagement - Creating a new Society**

### **Joint Statement between Midcounties Co-op, Central Co-op and Usdaw**

Following the members voting for the merger of Central Coop and Midcounties Coop, the transfer of engagement has now been formally approved.

Both Midcounties and Central are now actively engaging with Usdaw to ensure they are fully aware of Midcounties and Central Co-ops plans so that they have all the information needed to offer support to members where required and they can raise any questions or concerns on colleague's behalf.

We are pleased to confirm that the third consultation meeting took place on 15 January 2026. Jayne Allport, National Officer from Usdaw was accompanied by Keith Lewis, Kate McLeod and Stevie Cassidy, Area Organisers who support both Midcounties and Central. Senior Usdaw Shop Stewards, Shell Whitehead from Midcounties also attended. Susan Barguss, Chief Operating Officer - People attended from Midcounties Co-op. Tracy Roberts, Head of People Operations attended from Central Co-op.

The following was discussed as part of the joint consultation meeting.

- Central and Midcounties talked through the plans for day one which includes a letter which confirms the contractual change of employer for all Midcounties colleagues to Central England Co-operative Limited. There will also be Managers Briefing Pack to support all managers in their conversations with colleagues along with a question and answer documents. A Support Centre guide will be available for both the Warwick and Lichfield offices to ensure that colleagues are fully aware of what to expect and are prepared when visiting these sites. These documents will be shared with Usdaw once finalised.
- Usdaw updated that colleagues continue to raise the query in relation to pay. It was agreed that we would re-share the update that was included in the Joint Statement issued on 21 October 2025. This Joint Statement detailed that pay rates will remain unchanged from 26 January 2026 and pay negotiations will take place for Midcounties, Central and Chelmsford Star in February 2026 in readiness for 1 April 2026. A temporary Joint Collective Bargaining Agreement has



been prepared for the 2026 pay negotiations. Usdaw advised that Local Agreements currently in place for Midcounties, Central and Chelmsford Star will be reviewed over time.

- Usdaw asked, from a geographical perspective, if Shop Stewards could represent members from different Societies. It was explained that whilst policies and procedures were different across Midcounties, Central and Chelmsford Star this would not be practical and therefore representation would need to be kept specific for the relevant Society. To support clarity of Usdaw Shop Stewards across the three Societies, Usdaw will collate a list of all Shop Stewards and share it with Area Organisers, Shop Stewards and the People Teams. In summary, should any members require support they should continue to reach out to their respective Usdaw Regional Office.
- Usdaw advised that a drop-in session had been held at Midcounties Warwick Support Centre. Usdaw explained that colleagues were feeling uncertain and felt it would be helpful to be able to provide clarity on any timelines moving forward. Usdaw explained that they did answer a number of questions raised and reassured members that they would be kept fully informed as the integration process continues.
- A drop-in session at Lichfield Support Centres for Usdaw members to meet with an Area Organiser to discuss any questions that they may have has been arranged for 4 February. Central will ensure that Support Centre colleagues are aware of this visit.
- Central and Midcounties assured Usdaw that there is no change for colleagues on how Usdaw membership subscription is processed.
- Usdaw confirmed that they were happy for collective consultation to conclude in relation to the Transfer of Engagement. Midcounties and Central Co-op thanked Usdaw for their contribution, support and input during this period. Should any individual queries be raised these will be dealt with directly with the colleague.
- Midcounties, Central and Usdaw agreed to maintain regular joint meetings to ensure that everyone is kept up to date as the integration in creating a new Society progresses. It was



agreed that the meetings will be held monthly and more regularly should there be matters that need to be discussed.

Colleagues are reminded that they should continue to submit any questions via the email addresses given below.

Email addresses - [ask@midcounties.coop](mailto:ask@midcounties.coop) and [askus@centralcoop.co.uk](mailto:askus@centralcoop.co.uk)

Tracy Roberts  
**Head of People Operations**

Susan Barguss  
**COO - People**

Jayne Allport  
**National Officer - Usdaw**

20 January 2026