

# PiES NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PEOPLE IN EMPLOYMENT SETTINGS RESEARCH GROUP

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## Welcome to the 1st Issue of PiES News

This newsletter will provide a quarterly update to members of the PiES research group. The idea of the newsletter is to keep all members informed of what is happening in the group: key events (internal and external); information on group members and their activities; information on opportunities, and provide a source of communication.

The People in Employment Settings (PiES) Research Group draws on expertise across the University and collaborates with local, regional and national organisations.

As a key focus, the group seeks to promote research into the modern experience of individuals and their place in organisations across all areas of the economy. Key research areas include (but are not limited to): leadership; motivation; human resource management (HRM) and human resource development (HRD); employability; psychological and sociological approaches to the world of work, workplace behaviours and work practises, particularly given the prevalence of such areas as key sites for challenging issues of social justice.

Operating as an umbrella group, PiES seeks to challenge and encourage researchers to develop research in a safe space and be accountable for raising the profile of the group and York St John University within associated communities.

The full list of members can be found [here](#).

**“Research means that you don’t know, but are willing to find out” - Charles F. Kettering**

Check out the PiES blogsite siate at <https://blog.yorks.ac.uk/pies/>

## Introduction to:

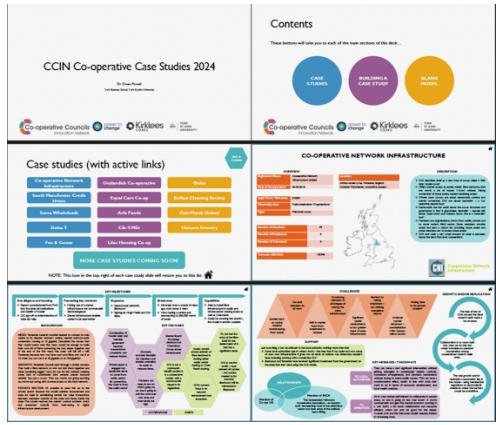


Dr. Owen Powell  
York Business School

Dr Owen Powell is a Lecturer in Human Resource Management at York Business School. He is a former Research Fellow at Birmingham Business School and the Institute of Local Government Studies at University of Birmingham, UK. In 2021, he completed a PhD at Bangor University, Wales, exploring the challenge of sustaining horizontal collectivist organising across time and scale in worker co-operatives. Between 2019 and 2022 he worked as a freelancer in York and beyond across social innovation, events, music, design, manufacturing, and community-led housing. He continues to support grassroots organisations and is engaged in multiple action research projects.

Over the past year, Owen been working on a project funded by the Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network (CCIN) and Power to Change. A group of UK local authorities, led by Kirklees Council, have developed a framework and toolkit. The toolkit emphasises the importance of nurturing existing assets, fostering a supportive culture, and adopting an entrepreneurial mindset. Work was commissioned to address the absence of specific tools to a) strengthen the evidence base for co-operatives in a developed economy setting and b) increase awareness of the breadth of co-operative businesses. To address the latter, Owen has developed a set of case studies that use a standardised, information-dense, yet flexible framework with a view to informing and inspiring councillors, officers, and stakeholders. The case studies are accompanied by a 'do it yourself' guide for conducting the interview and working with the graphics. The toolkit and case studies are set to be launched

Owen has also been working with Joseph Rowntree Foundation's (JRF) Emerging Futures Team, local councillors and council officers, as well as external collaborators, to develop a holistic approach to understanding what a fairer future might look like. On 31st January 2024, the first Fairer Future for York event brought together 24 co-operative development experts, strategic stakeholders, councillors, and grassroots community organisers from York and around the country. You can read a summary and download the first report. This project will continue into



2024/25, with plans currently being developed for further engagements. Owen is keen to supervise student research projects addressing the theme of a 'fairer future (for York)' as well as find opportunities to collaborate with staff across the University.

**LINKS**

Link to JRF blog post (includes link to full report: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/neighbourhoods-and-communities/introducing-a-fairer-future-for-york>)

Direct link to the full report: <https://jrf-jrht-brand.frontify.com/share/EbH5hMoDDCeJbPoapiuj>

Owen will be delivering at a PiES Presents event in 2025.

**PiES Presents**

Tuesday 3rd December @ 12:00 **From the sage on the stage to the bore on the floor..... Why developing a pedagogy of compassion matters.** Gillian Bishop, Jane Neal-Smith and Bob Townley

Wednesday 4th December @ 17:00 **Bouncing Back: The Power of Resilience in A Modern World.** Susie Walsh *NOTE: This is an online event.*

Wednesday 17th December @ 14:00 PiES Presents: **Experiments for HRM and Organisational Studies Research.** Dmytro Moisieiev

Contact Alan Johnston for further details about PiES presents

**PiES Highlights**

Members of the PiES Research group successfully bid to host two conferences to be held at York St John University. The Leisure Studies Association Conference will take place in July 2025 and the UFHRD Conference will take place in June 2026.

Did you know PiES members contributed over 30 publications in the last academic year including 29 peer reviewed articles, 3 book chapters and 2 reports.

Members of PiES are working with the NHS Integrated Care Board for the Humber and North Yorkshire on developing and evaluating a Good Experience Communications Charter.

**Can I contribute to PiES:**

Of course you can. We are a membership group. All members can get involved. Contact Steven (s.cock@yorks.ac.uk) or Alan (a.johnston@yorks.ac.uk) to see how you can be involved

**Contributing to the newsletter**

Do you have anything you want to put in the newsletter?. Send your items to Alan (a.johnston@yorks.ac.uk)

We plan to publish quarterly at the beginning of the month:  
 Winter - December  
 Spring - March  
 Summer - June

**An interesting Read**

Johnston, C. and Boak, G. (2024). Twenty years of action learning in the journal Action Learning: Research and Practice. *Action Learning: Research and Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767333.2024.2409578>