

We build a better world

Welcome to the first newsletter showcasing our work in celebrating the United Nations International Year of Co-operatives 2012.



Next year is a momentous occasion in one of the most important years since co-operatives began and The Co-operative Group is at the heart of work underway across the UK and internationally to talk about our unique business.

This newsletter is designed to bring you up to date with just some of the plans already in place for the year and hopefully to inspire you to think about doing something yourself.

Should you have any questions or queries regarding any aspect of this newsletter simply visit our website ww.co-operative.coop/2012, if you are an employee check out our 2012 area on the intranet – look under secretariat, membership.

You can also contact the 2012 team:

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Co-operatives United 31 October - 2 November 2012

In 2012, thousands of overseas and UK-based co-operators will flock to Manchester to take part in the global culmination of International Year of Co-operatives.

Welcoming all, venue Manchester Central will be a hive of activity featuring a Global Expo and Forum, School's Conference, The Co-operative Enterprise Hub and Co-operative Congress 2012, and more. Our 'Home Town' zone will feature a life-size interactive co-operative town demonstrating how co-operatives 'build a better world.' We're also linking up with Marketing Manchester for an exciting range of fringe events across the city, including music, theatre and film screenings.

Please put the dates in your diary now, more information will be coming soon.

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It's happening near you

Across the country The Co-operative Regional Membership teams are hosting a whole host of exciting events and activities, especially for our members.

From pop-up shops to product tastings, conferences to Robert Owen celebrations, family fun days to festivals, there's something

for everyone to get involved in. Look out for our special International Year tour that will roll out the co-operative message across the whole of the UK using our unique IYC camper van. Track the tour online, come along and take part and enter our interactive competition.

Visit www.co-operative.coop/membership and **click on 'local communities'**



Leaving a legacy

We believe that co-operatives are the future. That's why we're working with the International Co-operative Alliance and The Co-operative College to set up a multi-million Global Development Fund. Co-operatives across the world will donate to the Fund which will strengthen co-operative development across the globe and make a significant difference long beyond 2012.



Where it all began



In 1844, co-operation began at Toad Lane in Rochdale.

2012 sees the transformation and updating of the inspirational Rochdale Pioneers Museum in Toad Lane. New visitor facilities and spaces for educational and community activities will form part of a £2.3m makeover, part-funded from a heritage fund set up by The Co-operative Group. The reopening of the Museum, and its surrounding exciting events and activities, will see Rochdale become an important focal point for co-operators the world over.

The word on the streets

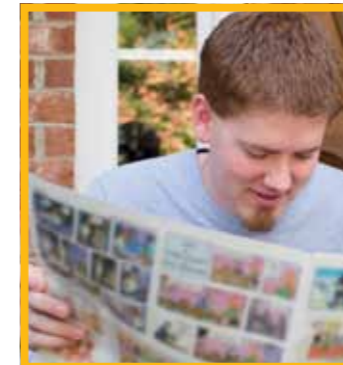
A dramatic touring street gallery tells the story of co-operation and its amazing history, scale and scope, using stunning imagery and interesting facts from across the world.

Visiting major locations, the gallery will bring the strength and diversity of co-operatives to life on the high streets of the UK.



Read all about it

A specially commissioned graphic novel tells the story of the beginning of co-operation. With striking eclectic illustrations and a casual narrative style, the novel is designed to entertain, inform and move readers of all ages, particularly younger audiences. It will embolden those who are already part of the Co-operative Movement and inspire others to join it.



A hub of debate

Our exciting year-long partnership with The Guardian online will ensure that lively, thought-provoking and educative debate on all matters co-operative has a permanent presence on the site. A co-operative and mutuals hub featuring topical and engaging content will sit within The Guardian's Social Enterprise Network. Visit www.guardian.co.uk/social-enterprise-network and click on the co-operative and mutuals hub.



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In store support

Our businesses are behind the 2012 work this year too with a range of opportunities being planned to bring the 2012 message to our members and customers.

We have developed a new style creative which will see our key 2012 messages being weaved into our usual marketing plans. This way we can target our members and customers with messages that mean something to them and which reference our key differences.

Our year will be split into quarters which will see our focus, and that of the wider UK movement, change over the year to help highlight what makes co-operatives unique.

**Quarter 1: Jan Feb Mar:
Co-operatives are local and global**

**Quarter 2: Apr May Jun:
Co-operatives share their profits**

**Quarter 3: Jul Aug Sep:
We are owned by our members**



The Rochdale Pioneers – on film

New film, The Rochdale Pioneers, brings the dramatic events surrounding the foundations of the co-operative movement to the big screen. Inspired by historical co-operative film, Men of Rochdale (1944), The Co-operative British Youth Film Academy will recreate the story of how in impoverished Rochdale in 1844, 28 Pioneers started a worldwide movement. As the film is developed, co-operators and film makers will be able to follow and get involved in the film's production online.

[f Search The Rochdale Pioneers – Film](#)
[@RochdalePioneer](#)



A new generation

From inviting 2,000 young people to attend the Co-operatives United event at Manchester Central to the ICA Coop' Art competition, The Co-operative Film Festival to IYC activity in schools, we are taking the opportunity of the international year to encourage young people to discover why co-operatives are a better way of doing business.

The **co-operative** good for everyone