

This section is new for the 2009 Report and has been produced for stakeholder feedback<sup>1</sup>

## Inspiring young people

### Indicators

Community investment

Co-operative education

Campaign activity

Opportunities for young people

### Target 2009

- Review current Co-operative activity supporting young people, and develop an 'inspiring young people' strategy.

### Targets 2010

- Launch and implement an 'inspiring young people' strategy during 2010.
- Launch 'Green Schools' during 2010.
- Launch The Co-operative Academy of Manchester and The Co-operative Academy at Brownhills in Stoke-on-Trent in September 2010.
- Launch a campaign in 2010 to lower the voting age to 16.
- Begin work to enable the launch of The Co-operative Apprenticeship Academy in 2011.

### Background

Almost a third of the UK's population (19 million) are young people<sup>2</sup>. There is widespread belief amongst young people-focused NGOs that a growing economic and cultural gap exists between young people and older age groups<sup>3</sup>. In many respects, it is a challenging time to be a young person in the UK; people in this group have been more affected than other age groups by unemployment during the recent recession<sup>4</sup>, with the youth unemployment rate standing at 17.6 percent in February 2010<sup>5</sup>, and 16 to 25 year olds are the age group most likely to be living in disadvantaged areas.

### Materiality and strategy

In 2008, 53,000 members and customers responded to a consultation to develop The Co-operative's Community Plan and 95%<sup>6</sup> of them endorsed a commitment to 'nurture and support children and young people to make a positive contribution in their communities'. Following the consultation, the Values & Principles (V&P) Committee (page 10) agreed that 'inspiring young people' was adopted as one of the Plan's three priorities.

### Community investment

The proportion of total community investment<sup>7</sup> dedicated to supporting children and young people rose from £1,382,000 in 2008 to £1,992,500 in 2009, a 44% increase.

#### Top three 2009 investments in young people

The Co-operative Foundation's Truth about Youth	<b>£912,008</b>
Green Energy for Schools	<b>£710,785</b>
The Co-operative StreetGames Young Volunteers	<b>£228,034</b>

⊙ In July 2010, a series of commitments was announced to achieve The Co-operative's vision to help to create a cultural shift in the way young people are viewed and treated in the UK.

#### Commitments: July 2010 announcement

The Co-operative will:

- Initially create 2,000 new Co-operative apprenticeships at a cost of £9m over two years with a view to extending the scheme to all young starters.
- Invest £1m to support the rapid expansion of Co-operative Trust Schools bringing the total number to 200.
- Invest a further £1.5m in Green Schools, the biggest Green Schools programme of its kind in the UK.
- Invest £2m in Truth About Youth, a national programme that will challenge and change the widespread negative perceptions of young people.
- Invest £1m in the Co-operative StreetGames Young Volunteers, a national programme that will support 3,000 young people from the most disadvantaged areas to deliver sport coaching for children in their communities.
- Engage staff to raise £5m for a national charity that inspires young people.
- Invest £0.5m in a campaign to lower the voting age to 16 to give young people the voice they deserve.
- Invest a further £1m in Sports Opportunities and Arts Opportunities, programmes.

The Co-operative considers the following to be spheres of influence through which it can inspire and support young people: Education, Opportunities and Campaigning.

### Education

In 2009, work continued with schools. Some £388,000 was invested in programmes that bring co-operation into education, and a further £470,223 was invested into the Green Schools projects.

### Co-operative Trust Schools

In 2009, over 100 schools opted to become co-operative Trust Schools, and a national co-operative schools network was launched, enabling the schools to collaborate and share good practice (page 93).



Ashley, 18, attended the UK's first Co-operative Trust School.

### Business and Enterprise Colleges

Support is provided to 10 Business and Enterprise Colleges (page 93).

### Co-operative academies

The Co-operative is lead sponsor of two academies, in Manchester and Stoke-on-Trent, where it provides business expertise and funds community work (page 93).

### Schools Co-operative Society

Work is underway to establish a Schools Co-operative Society<sup>8</sup> which will seek to meet the needs of co-operative Trust Schools, academies and Business and Enterprise Colleges. The aim of the Society is to share resources that bring co-operation and co-operative values into today's education system through curriculum work and school management.

The work undertaken with Trust Schools and Specialist Schools is in partnership with the Co-operative College.

### Green Schools

The Co-operative invests in a number of community programmes which seek to raise awareness amongst young people about the environment. During 2010, Green Energy For Schools, Waste Works, Walking Buses, The Co-operative Travel Sustainable Tourism Project, Energy Works and From Farm to Fork will be brought together under one umbrella programme called 'Green Schools'.

### Green Energy for Schools

The Co-operative's Green Energy for Schools (GEFS) programme provides financial support to schools for the installation of solar panels, small wind turbines, biomass boilers and ground source heat pumps (page 65).

### WasteWorks

The Waste Works education facility, based at the Manchester recycling centre, offers a curriculum-linked programme to Key Stage two school pupils (page 74).

### Walking Buses

The Walking Buses initiative provides schools with advice, support and resources to set up a walking bus to help children walk to school together in safety (page 65).

### The Co-operative Travel Sustainable Tourism Project

The Co-operative Travel is working to develop children's knowledge of sustainable travel through a unique education programme that teaches children about responsible tourism and provides an insight into how a travel agency operates. As part of the project, Travel managers visit their local school and encourage Year 5 children to produce a holiday scrapbook, highlighting actions they have taken to make the trip more sustainable. A total of 19 schools participated in the pilot that took place from July to September 2009. The project will be offered to a further 25 schools in 2010. It is estimated that, by September 2010, almost 550 young people will have benefitted from the project.

### From Farm to Fork

From Farm to Fork enables children from primary schools to visit one of The Co-operative's working farms, to learn about how food crops are grown and harvested, and how important healthy eating is (page 39).

### Financial education

The Co-operative Financial Services (CFS) promotes two financial education schemes, Fit4Finance<sup>9</sup>, that helps to improve the financial skills and awareness of secondary school students, and Number Partners<sup>10</sup>, that brings together business volunteers and primary schools to improve numeracy skills (page 49).

### Opportunities

The Co-operative is opening up opportunities for young people to make tangible differences to their lives, from gaining qualifications, skills and experience, to challenging the widespread negative perceptions about their age group. To this end, the business often works in partnership with specialist, often charitable, organisations to develop and fund community investment projects.

### The Co-operative Foundation's Truth about Youth

The Co-operative Foundation<sup>11</sup>, an independent charitable trust, was set up in 2000 and is solely funded by The Co-operative. Since 2000, £12.8m has been donated to the Foundation (page 17).

In January 2009 a new grants scheme was developed with the aim of enabling The Co-operative Foundation to: make grants across the whole of the UK with the existing funding of £1m per annum<sup>12</sup>; reduce the number of applications received, support the voluntary sector and reduce administration costs to the business; identify a unique selling point enabling the Foundation to stand out amongst its corporate foundation peers; gain maximum community impact for each grant made; and spend time measuring and evaluating that impact.

The new grants scheme focuses on inspiring young people, and is called 'Truth about Youth'. Its objectives are:

- To support young people to deal positively with the challenge of growing up in a culture that has a widespread negative perception of youth.
- To increase levels of interaction between young people and adults, to develop projects in which they all have an interest and which have a lasting benefit.
- To engage young people in identifying and setting up their own co-operative projects which address their needs and demonstrate young people's value to society.
- To successfully communicate the outputs and outcomes of the projects to as wide an audience as possible.

Seven grants have been awarded to organisations working in cities across the UK. By the end of 2009, grants had been awarded to three organisations: Envision in Birmingham, YWCA in Cardiff and Regional Youth Work Unit in Tyne and Wear.

The remaining four grants were made in the first half of 2010, to The Prince's Trust in Bristol, Young Scot in Glasgow, The Oval House Theatre in London and The Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester.



Maryam, 19, is challenging and changing negative perceptions about young people, with The Co-operative Foundation's Truth about Youth programme.

### The Co-operative StreetGames Young Volunteers

The Co-operative StreetGames Young Volunteers programme gives young people aged 16–25 the opportunity to develop their sports coaching and community leadership skills through volunteering (page 49).

### Performance benchmark

The Beyond Sport Awards<sup>13</sup> seeks to celebrate the best sport and development projects from across the world. Its panel of judges is made up of ambassadors, including Lord Sebastian Coe, and is chaired by former Prime Minister, Tony Blair. In 2009, The Co-operative StreetGames Young Volunteers was shortlisted for the Best Corporate Social Responsibility in Sport Award. In June 2010, The Co-operative and StreetGames won The Business Charity Award for the best UK project.

### The Co-operative British Youth Film Academy

In March 2009, The Co-operative announced a three-year, £500,000 partnership with the British Youth Film Academy (BYFA). BYFA was established to provide a solid link between the commercial film industry and all branches of media education. It co-ordinates film summer camps, which offer professional training and vocational experience, which, twinned with students' academic study, helps to prepare them for progression into the workplace.

BYFA summer camps operate over five weeks during the summer holidays, focusing on producing a full-length feature film. Key artistic and technical roles are all undertaken by the young people, guided by professional actors and filmmakers and representatives from BYFA.

In 2009, BYFA became a co-operative in its own right. It has a membership of 16 Further Education and Higher Education institutions in the North West, West Midlands, East Midlands and Yorkshire. One member of each region is elected to sit on the national Board.

### The Co-operative Young Filmmakers

The Co-operative Film Festival gives young people, aged 19 and under, the chance to have their short films shown in the cinema of a landmark national venue, the National Media Museum in Bradford.

Through the festival, young people are given the opportunity to tell others about what they think of the world and have their voice heard through the films. The films cover a range of topics, including issues faced by young people, such as violent crime and bullying.

In 2009 approximately 1,000 young people attended the festival.

### Membership of The Co-operative

The Co-operative offers membership to customers aged 16 and over who share the co-operative Values & Principles and wish to become part owners of the business. All members have the ability to vote and are actively encouraged to stand for election and participate in the democratic governance structure.

In 2009, the number of young members increased by almost 200,000, and in early 2010, young people represented 5% of the total membership population. The increase, in part, reflects the merger of CFS with Britannia (page 6), when 110,000 Britannia young members were transferred into The Co-operative membership.

### Employment

The Co-operative employs more than 31,000 young people across its family of businesses<sup>14</sup>. In addition to direct employment, it offers a range of opportunities for young people to gain business skills and experience, including: work experience for Year 10 students; summer internships; The Co-operative Travel apprenticeships; and 6-week training placements for young people with learning disabilities.

In 2009 a 12-month undergraduate placement programme was launched, which spans the family of businesses. Five undergraduate students joined the organisation in July 2009, in various departments, from Energy and Environment to Employee Engagement, working on business-critical projects. Five new students will join in July 2010. Following the launch of the programme, The Co-operative has been accredited with the National Council of Work Experience Quality Mark.

In 2010, it was announced that The Co-operative Apprenticeship Academy would be launched, initially benefiting 2,000 young people over five years.

### Graduate scheme and work placements

The Co-operative offers one-year work placements for students and a graduate scheme<sup>15</sup>, that provides the tools and exposure for graduates to drive their career paths (page 103).

### Campaigning

Customers, members and colleagues are encouraged to take action on a variety of topical issues, including saving the honeybee and taking a stand against climate change.

During 2010, The Co-operative joined a campaign for the voting age to be lowered to 16, to help boost democratic and parliamentary renewal in the UK and energise young people to better engage in society.



Matthew, 17, is campaigning for Votes at 16.

### North West Young Citizen's Action Agenda

The Co-operative's North West and North Midlands membership team provided sponsorship and in-kind support totalling over £25,000 to the Institute for Citizenship<sup>16</sup> in order to enable the first North West Young Citizen's Action Agenda in 2009. The event aimed to help young people to develop skills to have a voice in their school and community and culminated in a debate with key decision-makers from Greater Manchester.

### Influence and action

#### Engaging young people

The Co-operative hosted a panel debate on engaging young people at the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat party conferences in 2009.

#### Read more in this Report

- Policy on sweets at checkouts (page 38).
- Community Plan (page 15).
- Co-operative Trust Schools (page 93).
- Business and Enterprise Colleges (page 93).
- Co-operative academies (page 93).
- Green Energy for Schools (page 65).
- WasteWorks education facility (page 75).
- Walking buses (page 65).
- From Farm to Fork (page 39).
- Financial education (page 49).
- The Co-operative Foundation's Truth about Youth grant scheme (page 17).
- The Co-operative Streetgames Young Volunteers (page 49).
- Graduate scheme (page 103).

#### Accompanying notes

- 1 Feedback is invited via the feedback form at: [www.co-operative.coop/sustainabilityreport](http://www.co-operative.coop/sustainabilityreport), or by e-mail: [sustainability.report@co-operative.coop](mailto:sustainability.report@co-operative.coop)
- 2 The Co-operative defines young people as those aged 16–25. The figure presented here is from the Office for National Statistics, and relates to under 25s. [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme\\_social/social\\_trends39/st39\\_ch01.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_social/social_trends39/st39_ch01.pdf)
- 3 For example, research by volunteering charity, V.
- 4 The rise in unemployment rates since the recession started has been 5.4 percentage points for young people, 2.3 points for the 25–49 and 1.9 points for the over-50s. Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion: [http://www.cesi.org.uk/statistics/previous\\_months/statistics+feb+2010](http://www.cesi.org.uk/statistics/previous_months/statistics+feb+2010)
- 5 Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion: [http://www.cesi.org.uk/statistics/previous\\_months/statistics+feb+2010](http://www.cesi.org.uk/statistics/previous_months/statistics+feb+2010)
- 6 Based on responses scanned and analysed up to November 20th 2008.
- 7 Community contributions as calculated using the London Benchmarking Group model, [www.lbg-online.net](http://www.lbg-online.net)
- 8 [www.school.coop](http://www.school.coop)
- 9 [www.britannia.co.uk/fit4finance](http://www.britannia.co.uk/fit4finance)
- 10 [www.fsa.gov.uk/financial\\_capability](http://www.fsa.gov.uk/financial_capability)
- 11 The Co-operative Foundation is a trading name of The Co-operative charitable foundation registered in England and Wales with charity number 1080834.
- 12 Previously donations were only made to the former United Co-operative region.
- 13 [www.beyondsport.org](http://www.beyondsport.org)
- 14 Figure correct, as at May 2010.
- 15 [www.altogetherdifferent.com](http://www.altogetherdifferent.com)
- 16 [www.citizen.org.uk](http://www.citizen.org.uk)