

Our impact

in 2013



The true test of Co-operatives UK, as of any organisation, is a question – what would happen if we were not here?

This report answers that question by tracking, for the fourth year running, the impact that we achieve for our members.

Co-operatives UK is the national trade body that campaigns for co-operation and works to grow the co-operative economy through action to promote, develop and unite co-operatives. We have a unique role as a trade association for co-operatives. We aim to bring together all those with a passion and interest in co-operative action.

This report is a test of the difference that we make. Of course, almost everything we do, we do in co-operation, primarily with our members but also with others, such as allies, funders and government departments. Any impact we are able to achieve is usually a shared one. But just as none of what we do would have been possible without the backing of our members, so we are careful to limit what we include in this Impact Report – focusing on those things that simply would not have happened without Co-operatives UK.

It is a measure of our value and of our return. If you are a member or a partner in this work, thank you. This report shows you what we have been able to achieve together.



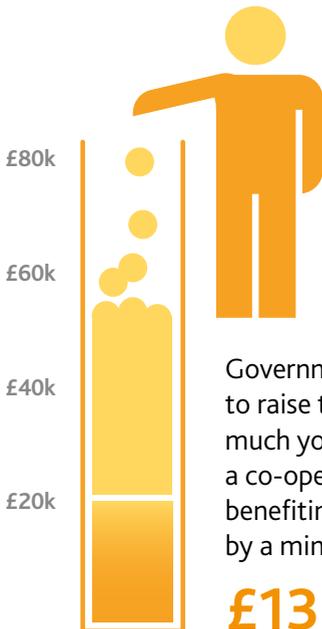
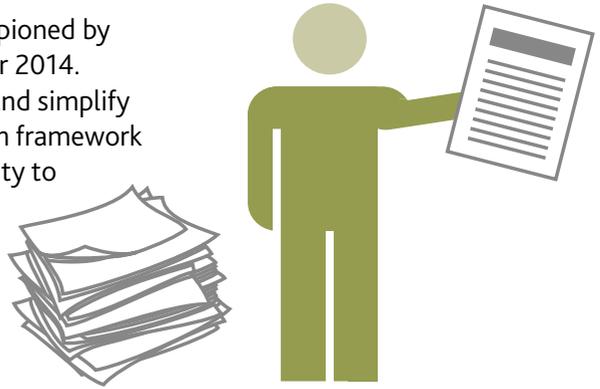
Chris Herries
Chair, Co-operatives UK

Promote

“Given current trends, it is perfect marketing to highlight that co-operatives are local, loved and trusted.”

Celine Riverain, Head of International Research at retail analysts IGD

A new **Co-operatives Bill**, championed by Co-operatives UK, is promised for 2014. This will consolidate legislation and simplify **seventeen acts into one** modern framework – cutting costs and giving certainty to co-operative societies.



Government has agreed to raise the limit on how much you can invest in a co-operative society, benefiting the sector by a minimum of

£13 million

We have responded to

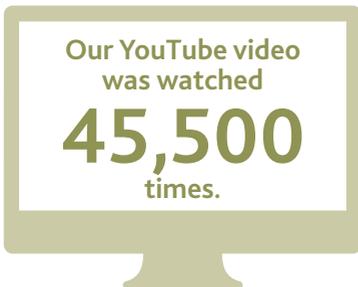
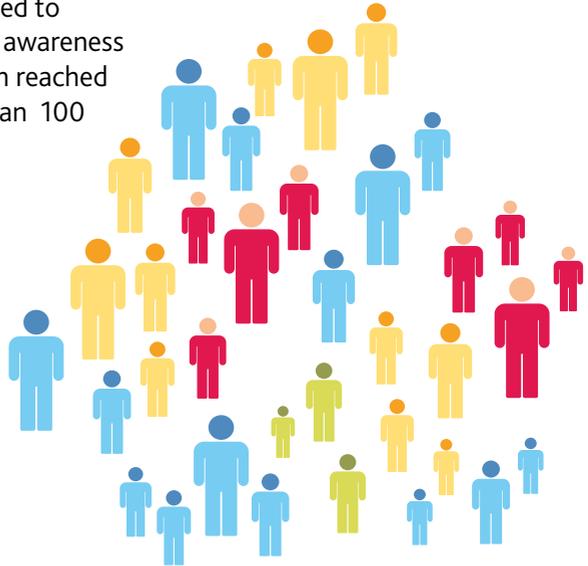
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key consultations this year on behalf of the co-operative and mutual business sector.

co-operatives = companies

Co-operatives will now be given, at no extra cost, the same protection as companies in relation to pensions, when businesses fail.

Co-operatives Fortnight helped to trigger a 4% increase in public awareness of co-operatives. The campaign reached **38m people** through more than 100 media articles.



Our YouTube video
was watched
45,500
times.

We reached via twitter
2.6m people about co-ops during
Co-operatives Fortnight

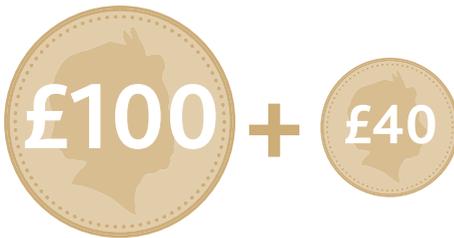
 **#coop14**



Co-operatives Fortnight included a new event within it this year, **Employee Ownership Day** launched by the Business Secretary, Vince Cable MP.



We persuaded the Government to drop plans that would have allowed rogue companies to use the term 'co-operative' or 'mutual' whatever their form of ownership.



Our research with **Lincolnshire Co-operative Society** showed how co-operative businesses boost the local economy, generating an additional £40 for local suppliers, customers and employees for every £100 of sales.

Co-operatives UK is now recognised as one of the top 500 business brand names in the UK. Co-operatives UK joined the list of the UK's top 500 businesses brands alongside global names such as Apple, British Airways and Google in the Superbrands Top 500 Business list.

"Co-operatives UK award of Superbrand status is testament to its growing reputation within the UK and especially amongst business professionals and marketing experts. The award is indicative of an organisation that is building a first class reputation and that is increasingly recognised and respected for its work in promoting the co-operative movement and supporting co-operative enterprises, both large and small, throughout the country."



Stephen Cheliotis, Chief Executive of The Centre for Brand Analysis



Our 2013 survey reported that members are very positive about perceptions of co-operatives.

85% 'agree' or 'very much agree' that being a co-operative gives them an advantage. 85% also actively market themselves as a co-operative (or mutual).

This year, we won a successful amendment to the energy bill to double the size of energy co-operatives that are eligible to access Feed-in Tariffs.

Following this we secured a commitment to a new '**Community Feed-in Tariff**' focused on their needs.

This year, on the back of wide alliance that we helped to form, including Forum for the Future, Friends of the Earth, Community Energy Scotland, the National Trust and the Church of England, we won a change to the Energy Bill to double the size, from 5MW to 10MW, of community renewable energy projects able to access these Feed-in Tariffs. Following this, we have won a new commitment to cut the regulatory burden for community energy projects, with a standard set of document that will be accepted by all authorities.



“Without them, our voice as co-operatives simply wouldn’t be heard.”

Member comment, **Reputation Audit 2013**

Develop

“Co-operatives UK now offers an excellent advice service.”

Third Sector magazine, July 2013

The Welsh Government has agreed to look at a potential **co-operative rail franchise** for the Wales and Borders region, due for renewal in 2018.



Our research showed that two thirds of people in Wales think that passengers should have a greater ownership stake in train companies.

We have helped to register

192

co-operative and mutual enterprises

We have provided advice to

359

co-operative and mutual enterprises

We have helped launch **44 community share issues**, already raising

£5.6m



Stroud Woodland Co-operative went from a standing start to raising capital within three weeks, thanks to our advice.





We supported local people who wanted to conserve the heritage of an iconic pub in Bath, the Bell Inn, by forming a co-operative and raising more than

£775,000

through community shares. The campaign was backed by a host of celebrities from the music industry including Robert Plant, The Stranglers, Portishead and Clare Teal.

Through our **Microgenius community shares platform** we have been helping villagers in Norfolk to save their local pub the King's Arms, Shouldham. A tweet to support the campaign from celebrity Stephen Fry resulted in a 17 fold increase in the number of visitors to the website.

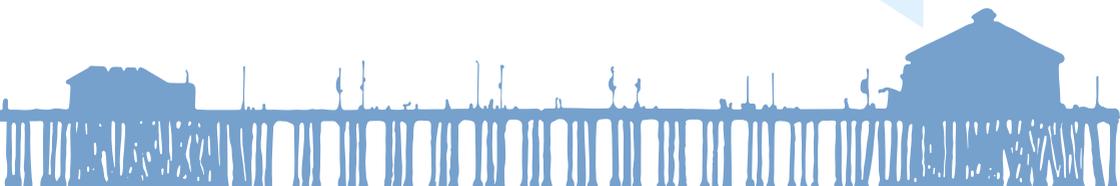


In partnership with Carnegie UK Trust, we ran eight events across the UK to look at how local newspapers could be revived through co-operative ownership. Our first **Co-operative Innovation Prize** went to Hastings Online Times, an online newspaper with 4,500 local readers.

We received 200 media articles about our proposal to encourage more seaside communities to support local piers through co-operatives ownership.

"We are engaged in creating a unique operating model for the Pier and I can honestly say we could not be doing this work without the support of the Community Shares Unit at Co-operatives UK."

Simon Opie, Chief Executive, Hastings Pier



Unite

“Co-operatives UK is the unifier and campaigner of the co-operative movement.”

Member comment, **Reputation Audit 2013**

By the end of the International Year of Co-operatives, there had been **one million impressions of the Twitter hashtag** that we helped set up.

 **#IYC2012**

Co-operatives UK welcomes co-operatives delegations from around the world – in 2013 we hosted **six international visits**.



1,000

people took part in the **2013 Co-operative Congress** in Cardiff.

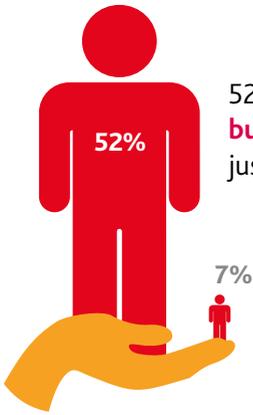
Satisfaction with **Co-operatives UK events** is high, at

88%



The Energy Saving Co-op secured **investment of £100,000** through contacts made during one of our events.

We help the sector to tell its own story through our unique database and statistics on the **Co-operative Economy**. Our research shows that:



52% of people describe **co-operative businesses as trusted**, compared to just 7% for PLCs.

The public perception of **co-operatives as innovators** has risen by 16 percentage points over recent years.



on average, **one new co-operative starts every working day** of the week.



"Members of the co-operative lead busy lives and can't always get to meetings. If you've got to take the kids to school, do the shopping, look after elderly parents and maybe even have some time to relax then running a co-operative can be challenge. By using online technology to run the co-operative we know that more of our members will be more actively involved, which can only be good for our future success."

Kirsty McCaskill, Calder Community Kitchen

Anyone can now run a co-operative using an **online platform we have developed**, making it easier to form and steer a co-operative. Members can propose, amend and vote on resolutions, elect officers and take all the key decisions involved in running a successful business online.

We reached a **historic agreement with the TUC** on a joint set of best practice guidelines to ensure that public service mutuels are based on genuine employee ownership and democratic representation.



We proposed and helped to pioneer a new international **Co-operative Marque**, launched in November 2013 at the International Co-operative Alliance General Assembly in Cape Town.

The marque was designed by UK based worker co-operative Calverts.

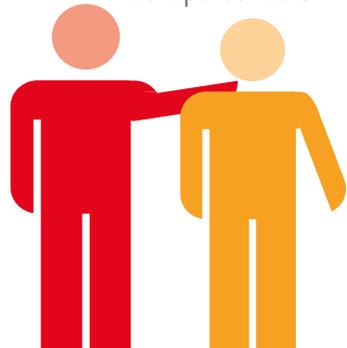
“The consensus view on the organisation is that it is an essential unifier of the co-operative movement, pivotal in the future success of co-operatives and ultimately therefore each member’s own business.”

Centre for Brand Analysis, **Co-operatives UK Reputation Audit 2013**

Staff satisfaction at Co-operatives UK stands at 79%, above the benchmark of 76% for UK high performing businesses. Over 80% of staff say that:

“I have a good understanding of our strategy and objectives.”

“I am proud to work for Co-operatives UK.”



Overall, the **majority (72%) of members surveyed this year are satisfied** with their relationship with Co-operatives UK.



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