

JOIN IN

Central England Co-operative

Winter
2017

FREE

#beingcoopy

Find out about how we give
back to our communities

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making a real difference with our
defibrillator campaign

NEWS

We are proud of the many ways our members and colleagues support their local communities - here are some great stories showcasing co-operation in action

COMMUNITY DIVIDEND ROUND-UP



Community Dividend Fund awardees celebrate getting their cheques in Derby

Thirty charities and groups celebrated sharing £50,000 in the latest pay-out from our Community Dividend Fund.

A wide range of projects picked from across 16 counties have been handed funding, with the largest single amount given being £5,000.

The Padley Group, in Derby, has been handed the highest amount possible to pay for a suite of iPads to help homeless and disabled people in a variety of ways.

Gartmore Riding School, based in Hammerwich, will use a grant of over £2,000 to buy new equipment ranging from soft mats that will allow disabled riders to be seated on the floor alongside able bodied riders to safety equipment such as hats and boots.

Nearly £5,000 will be spent on installing

two sensory gardens for good causes in Birmingham.

Nene Park Trust, in Peterborough, has been handed £1,700 to support a project that will see the launch of a plant production nursery where volunteers can grow their own plants from seeds and cuttings.

Grants of between £100 and £5,000 are handed out every three months to a wide range of applicants.

The fund guarantees that at least one per cent of the Society's trading profits are invested in local communities in a bid to help projects thrive across our trading area of 16 counties from the Midlands to the East Coast.

Since being launched in 2007, the fund has handed out over £2 million and helped hundreds of good causes.



Youngsters from Rykneld School enjoy their new books

CASE STUDY

Our Community Dividend Fund helps support a wide range of projects across our communities.

A great example of how it can help people is the funding boost handed to a school which has allowed youngsters to read a wide range of books.

Teachers at Rykneld Primary School, in Branston, sought out funding in a bid to stock the shelves of their expanded library following a major multi-million upgrade.

This, however, resulted in the stock of books, particularly non-fiction, being low and the funding application was made in a bid to ensure children have the widest selection possible.

The funding, worth £2,000, was also used to pay for an expanded range of dual language books as the school has an increasing number of pupils with English as an additional language.

Fabien, 8, said: "The library is good for our education and is really good for when you want to get stuck into a book."

Venetia Sharratt, literacy co-ordinator at the school, said: "The children absolutely love it and they are thrilled to bits."

"The Community Dividend Fund showcases really good community links and that Central England Co-operative is a trustworthy business that wants to make links with the local area."

Members and customers can apply for funding by heading online and visiting www.centralengland.coop/community



Funeralcare colleagues help open the bereavement garden

HELPING HAND

A special garden designed to help those who have lost a loved one has now been officially opened thanks to a grant from Central England Co-operative Funeralcare.

Dennis Easton Funerals, based in St Ives, handed over £1,500 to Hinchingbrooke Hospital as part of an effort to help create the bereavement garden.

Funeral Director Brendan Smith was the driving force behind securing a donation for the hospital.

He said: "We are proud to be part of the community and we jumped at the chance of being able to help this great project in whatever way we could."

"We managed to secure a donation of £1,500 and the money has been spent on

plants, pots, seating, artificial turf and a host of features for the walls that surround the garden.

"The money has also helped to pay for a wishing well and a gate to ensure that people using the garden have as much privacy as they need."

The bereavement garden was officially opened with a special ceremony involving local dignitaries including representatives from Central England Co-operative Funeralcare.

A spokesman from the hospital said: "The butterflies and angels garden is the result of a great deal of hard work and generosity from staff at the hospital, as well as the Central England Co-op Funeralcare and local garden centres."



Head of HR Kellee Torr and Chief Executive Martyn Cheatle with Colleague of the Year Arthur Bedford

LEADING BRILLIANCE

We recently celebrated our highest performing colleagues at our annual Leading Brilliance Awards event.

Arthur Bedford, from Sawtry Retail, was named Colleague of the Year for all of his hard work.

He said: "I feel like I have only been doing my job, and to be recognised for doing what I enjoy is a great feeling."

"I have always felt proud to work for the society at the Sawtry store, and look forward to looking after our customers for many years to come."

The award for Charity Advocate of the Year went to Brandhall Retail, Oldbury. The store has continuously raised funds for the Society's corporate charity.

Store Manager Jamie Joyce said: "We are all really pleased at winning the award and it has made us want to push harder this year for more charity events."

Debbie Bishop, Funeral Administrator at Gorleston Funeral Home, was rewarded for her efforts by being named Community Advocate of the Year.

She said: "I am thrilled to bits to have won this award, and that my efforts in the community are being recognised at such a level."

Giving recognition to our brightest stars, the Leading Brilliance event celebrates outstanding achievement, service and commitment to the values of Central England Co-operative, and our place as a retailer that benefits the lives of those in its local areas.

CHARITY

We are proud to help charities that have a major impact in our communities – find out how our link-up with Dementia UK is supporting people in need



Dementia UK Chief Executive Hilda Hayo talks about the charity to funeralcare colleagues

COLLEAGUES AND CUSTOMERS SUPPORT DEMENTIA UK

Colleagues, customers and members have been working together to raise funds for our new corporate charity, Dementia UK.

Everything from special Time for a Cuppa fund-raising events to the running of marathons has taken place to try and support families living with dementia.

So far, over £30,000 has been raised – funding which will be used to help pay for hundreds of hours of support via the Dementia Helpline or towards employing more Admiral Nurses and their on-going training.

Admiral Nurses work alongside people with dementia and their families offering one-to-one support, expert guidance and practical solutions so they can face dementia with more confidence and less fear.

The nurses can be found based in the community, as well as operating out of hospitals and care homes.

The Dementia Helpline is available to anyone and is staffed by Admiral Nurses who offer support with any dementia-related problems and ensure people are able to get the best possible care and advice that they need.

Central England Co-op Chief Executive

Martyn Cheadle said: "I am very proud of the amazing amount that our colleagues, customers and members have helped raise so far for Dementia UK.

"It is a testament to their dedication and support for such a great and worthwhile cause.

"But we need to keep the momentum going and continue to help making a real difference to families living with the effects of dementia."

Throughout the partnership, Dementia UK will be working with the Society to deliver vital training to colleagues providing the information needed to help people with this life-changing condition.

Hilda Hayo, Dementia UK Chief Executive, said: "Everyone at Dementia UK would like to say 'thank you' to everyone who has played a part in the fund-raising so far.

"We have been blown away by the level of support and continue to be impressed by the enthusiasm for the partnership."

Customers and members can support Dementia UK by donating via collection tins when they visit food stores, funeral homes or travel shops and also getting behind a range of different fund-raising activities taking place in the coming months.



DementiaUK
Helping families face dementia

For support with dementia please call **0800 888 6678** or visit **www.dementiauk.org/get-support**



TEA AND CAKE HELP RAISE FUNDS

Colleagues at Central England Co-operative Funeralcare raised over £7,000 by hosting dozens of World's Biggest Coffee Morning events for Macmillan Cancer Support.

A total of 78 Funeral Homes took part in the annual fund-raising event for the cancer charity – raising £7,000 in the process by selling tea, coffee and cakes.

Kevin Crute, Head of Funeral at Central England Co-operative, said: "Our Funeralcare colleagues raised over £7,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support by hosting coffee mornings across our trading estate from the Midlands to Norfolk.

"By holding events such as these we not only raise money for charity, but also give people the opportunity to see that all of our Funeral Homes are welcoming and friendly places.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank our guests for giving so generously at the coffee mornings and my colleagues for their time and support."

The 78 events saw people enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a slice of cake while having a good catch up.

Across the entire country millions of pounds have been raised as part of the annual flagship fundraiser.

Pauline Lewis, fund-raising manager for Macmillan Cancer Support, said: "One in two of us will face a cancer diagnosis in our life time.

"The money Central England Co-operative raised at their coffee mornings will have a massive impact on the vital cancer services we are able to provide to support people affected by cancer.

"We can't thank them enough for their support."



Funeralcare colleagues helped raise over £7,000 by hosting World's Biggest Coffee Morning events

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The team at Central England Co-operative are proud to be a part of our communities and our #beingcoopy campaign is all about colleagues, customers and members making an impact

Central England Co-op is invested in making a difference everywhere we have stores and homes.

This Christmas one of the ways we focused on this was by launching our #beingcoopy campaign.

We have worked with our colleagues, customers and members to give something back to people who go above and beyond to make a difference for all those around them.

The campaign included giving away 10,000 golden stocking carrier bags to say 'thank you' to people who make a difference in their communities, a renewed effort to drive up foodbank donations to help those need as well as plenty of volunteering opportunities to give a little back.

The following stories shine a light on this great campaign and how we can all play a part in making a difference.

#beingcoopy



Liisa Hollis showcasing our Christmas Stocking campaign



Generous customers and members donated to our Christmas Foodbank Appeal

FOODBANK APPEAL

The Society works with hundreds of foodbank providers in hundreds of food stores across the year to provide emergency food and support to individuals and families in crisis.

But, during the festive season, Central England Co-op launched a renewed effort to encourage people to drop off one or more items into store foodbanks.

The items were then collected and distributed among our communities.

Martyn Cheatle, Central England Co-operative Chief Executive, said: "As a Society we are committed to working with local foodbanks across our trading area to provide emergency food and support to individuals and families in crisis throughout the year."

During Christmas 2013, we trialled an

in-store food bank collection which was so successful that the Society now has permanent food bank collection points in hundreds of stores.

The store foodbanks have resulted in thousands of people every month from Birmingham to Norfolk being given enough food to cook healthy meals.

Following the launch of the renewed appeal during the festive season, customers and members are being encouraged to continue supporting their local foodbanks by donating an item or two when they pop into store throughout 2018.

Items that can be donated include shopping basket staples from tea, sugar and cereals to other essentials such as toiletries and hygiene products to ensure people can maintain their dignity during times of crisis.

FESTIVE ACTS OF KINDNESS

We decided to celebrate customers who make a real difference and do good deeds in their community in a unique way this festive season.

Special gifts were given out by store staff to deserving local people in the run up to Christmas in a specially designed golden Christmas stocking packed full with Co-op treats.

Colleagues from the Society were spotted popping up to surprise local community members who showed consistent acts of

kindness throughout 2017.

Examples of #beingcoopy included breaking the cycle of loneliness for someone by visiting them to share a cup of tea and have a chat, helping someone who struggles to get out to do their Christmas food shopping, volunteering for a local good cause, or trying a new Fairtrade product.

The idea was to give back to those who went the extra mile and to come together as a community to help support those that are lonely, alone or in crisis.

KEY ITEMS NEEDED BY FOODBANKS

- Cereal
- Tinned food
- Sugar
- Rice
- Dried pasta
- Sauce
- Biscuits
- UHT milk
- Juices
- Tea
- Instant coffee
- Toiletries



Watch our specially created Foodbank film at www.centralengland.coop/beingcoopy



Board member Max Hunt helped out at the Hope Centre, in Derby



Graeme Watkins, Society Board Director helps pack foodbank parcels

GIVING UP TIME TO GIVE A LITTLE BACK

Volunteering is a vital part of the community ethos at Central England Co-op.

Whether it be donating time to clear up a play area or sparing a few hours to teach youngsters about the importance of healthy eating, hundreds of colleagues donate hundreds of hours each year to giving something back.

Inspired by the #beingcoopy campaign, colleagues and members of the Society Board took time out of their roles to visit the Hope Centre, in Derby – a vital organisation that relies on donations from our in-store foodbanks to feed people of all ages who are in crisis.

Centre Director Paul Brookhouse said: “The centre was established in 2012 in a bid to make a difference in the community.

“People needing help cover a wide range of society and we have to remember that all these people in difficult situations need our assistance.

“The support we get from Central England Co-op is vital to ensure that we can continue to help people via the foodbank.

“We also have had support in terms of volunteering and this is another vital part of our relationship with the Society – it provides a helping hand to pack our foodbank parcels and serve in our community café.

“Both the Hope Centre and Central England Co-op are dedicated to working hard to help people in need and we could not be prouder than embarking on this journey together.”

Through a link-up with Central England Co-op, the centre now provides over 80 food parcels of varying sizes every week to people in need.

Graeme Watkins, Society Board Director, said: “Being part of a co-operative revolves around giving back to our communities and one of the best ways of doing this is by volunteering.

“It was an honour to join our colleagues who regularly give up their time to support great people and projects like the Hope Centre.

“I cannot think of a better way to showcase true co-operation than giving back by volunteering or as we call it #beingcoopy.”



Funeral Director Maureen Hill chats to a foodbank patron



Volunteer Amy McCallum was all smiles while helping out

OUR SOCIETY

Central England Co-op is made up of a variety of businesses. Here we take a closer look into how funeral colleagues are making a difference and the impact our major investments are making



Dawn Priestley has spoken of her amazing connection with Central England Co-operative Funeralcare

CLIENT TO COLLEAGUE: HOW DAWN'S LOSS OF A LOVED ONE ENCOURAGED HER TO HELP OTHERS

Dawn Priestley, Funeral Administrator at Allenton Funeral Home, in Derbyshire, has spoken of how the Society's support following the loss of a loved one encouraged her to help others in need.

The 55-year-old's journey with the Society started last year following the passing of her father and has now resulted in her landing a job with Central England Co-operative Funeralcare.

She said: "After my dad passed away, I was looked after by Kate Spencer and the amazing team at Sinfin Funeral Home. They were absolutely fantastic and helped so much during such a difficult time."

Following her dad's funeral, Dawn noticed that her mum needed some additional support and so got back in touch with Kate at the funeral home to see if there was anything they could do to help.

Dawn said: "I spoke to Kate to see if there was any kind of friendship or bereavement group that my mum could attend."

"As there wasn't anything available I suggested that we set one up and Kate said it was an idea she had wanted to do for some time."

"Within a matter of weeks we got the green light and the Forget Me Not friendship group was launched."

The group offers help, friendship and support to those who have lost a loved one and brings people together who have lost someone, to talk about their loss but also to socialise and create lasting friendships.

Dawn said: "I am so proud of the Forget Me Not groups."

"It helped me and my family so much, but more importantly it has helped and continues to help so many other people as they struggle following the loss of their loved one."

However, Dawn's link with the Society did not stop there as during one of the group meetings a senior colleague said that she was so impressed with her efforts, her passion and her caring nature that she wanted her to apply for a role with Central England Co-operative Funeralcare.

Dawn said: "I knew that this was something that I wanted to do – it would allow me to help people during their time of need."

"I love my job and love being able to help people – we have a great team at Allenton and across all parts of Central England Co-operative Funeralcare in Derbyshire."

"This is not just a job for me, it is a vocation. I am proud to head into work every day and make a big difference."

Find out more about Dawn and Central England Co-operative Funeralcare by visiting www.centralengland.coop/funeral

NEW STORES & REFITS

Customers and members will have noticed the opening of a raft of new and refurbished food stores and funeral homes across our trading estate during 2017.

We have opened over 10 new food stores and funeral homes and revamped a further 25 sites in work that has stretched right from the Midlands to Norfolk.

During this time we have also joined forces with Wooldale Co-operative Society to welcome three new stores and over 40 colleagues into Central England Co-operative.

We have celebrated the arrival of new food stores by holding Golden Ticket Giveaways with customers winning everything from Co-op vouchers to big screen TVs and we have pioneered the launch of new funeral booking offices in great locations for our customers and members.

Most recently, the Society celebrated the opening of a brand new food store in

Marston Moretaine, Bedfordshire, as part of a £1.2 million investment in the area.

The new site includes the latest in pioneering energy efficient refrigeration technologies to minimise environmental impact and LED lighting.

Marston Moretaine Store Manager Luke Ficken said: "Our team were so excited to finally allow our members and customers to see our new store. The store looks fantastic and already customers have been making many positive comments."

The Society has also opened a brand new travel store in St Ives – creating five new jobs.

2017 has seen millions invested in the communities we serve on new stores, funeral homes and refits – creating dozens of new jobs in the process.

This will continue throughout 2018 with an ambitious food store and funeral home development programme already under way.



Find your nearest store by visiting our website www.centralengland.coop/stores

GIVING BACK TO OUR COMMUNITIES

Our Membership and Community Relations Officers (MCROs) work hard to create and grow links with local people and organisations

Our MCROs work closely with our Membership and Community Councils (MCCs) to get more people involved in the local community by creating and growing links.

As part of their work, MCROs undertake a wide range of activities from

visiting schools and educating children to putting on different classes from cake decorating to keeping fit.

Let's find out about what our three MCROs have been up to out and about in our communities in an effort to make a real difference.

In future editions we will give you updates on the events and activities run by our teams and volunteers

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Email us at member.community@centralengland.coop or visit your local Central England Co-operative food store

JAMES KNIGHT

MCRO FOR THE WESTERN REGION

Some activities James has recently delivered for members include:

- Organising a health day in Staffordshire, which involved several organisations and saw members of the public given free health MOTs and advice
- Helping provide information about membership and community at the Society sponsored Lichfield Food Festival

Youngsters across Birmingham can now learn all about bees and how important they are thanks to Central England Co-operative.

The Society has funded the creation of a beehive in the Northfield area in conjunction with the Northfield Eco Centre and Allens Cross Community Garden.

The project will be used by local schools for special educational visits that will allow youngsters to find out about the important role that bees play in relation to the eco system of the world.

James said: "We are really proud of being able to give back something and this project is a great example of this.

"We were able to work closely with the Northfield Eco Centre and Allens Cross Community Garden to come up with a plan designed to ensure we created something that would be of major benefit for children across the area.

"Bees are vital to our eco system and this community beehive will allow us to teach children this, all while operating in a fun but safe environment."



James Knight explains about the beehive project

TANYA NOON

MCRO FOR THE CENTRAL REGION

Some activities Tanya has recently delivered for members include:

- Hosting a special 'Get to know your Co-operative' event in Wooldale to welcome new members to the Society
- Putting on a special Co-op Masterclass for students in Leicester. The event was aimed at teaching youngsters all about co-operative values and principles and how they can use them to start their own co-operative.

Colleagues have been getting their hands dirty as part of a unique project to build an eco-greenhouse in Nottingham.

The Society joined forces with the Rotary Club and youngsters from Annesley School, in Kirkby in Ashfield, to help construct the greenhouse using recycled plastic bottles instead of glass.

Colleagues from food stores and funeral homes worked with MCC representatives as part of the project.

The MCC is made up of Co-op members who are passionate about their community and want to make a difference within it.

Each council is given funding and support by the Society to organise activities and events ranging from keep fit and gardening to educational visits, school workshops and dance classes.

The MCC donated the cost of the wooden framework and 1,300 bottles were collected at Skegby Road food store and the school to make the greenhouse.



Tanya Noon helps to educate people about Co-ops

KAREN BEVAN

MCRO FOR THE EASTERN REGION

Some activities Karen has recently delivered for members include:

- A Healthy Choices Workshop to dozens of youngsters at Dogthorpe Infant School, in Peterborough
- Providing prizes and pump bags for the junior section of St Neots Camera Club

Part of the work undertaken by MCROs sees them working closely with MCCs to hand out funding to support community good causes and events.

This effort to make a difference recently saw Cromer Town Football Club given a funding boost to get more people interested in sport.

The £200 will be used towards helping the club to pay for registration and promotional materials.

Phil Harris, vice chairman of the Cromer Town Community Football Club Limited,

said: "I would like to thank Central England Co-operative for the help they have given in the formation of the first community owned sports club in the area.

Karen Bevan, Member and Community Relations Officer, said: "The Co-operative has a long tradition of giving back and we welcome the opportunity to make a real difference to the lives and education of local people.

"It is really important to have strong links with the local community and I am proud we have been able to help."



Karen Bevan helps make a big difference with local projects

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

The 5p carrier bag levy has helped pay for vital lifesaving devices to be installed across our trading area

Corporate responsibility is something we take very seriously in our role as an ethical retailer.

The Society takes part in projects that make a real difference and this is why we have used funds raised by the 5p carrier bag levy to place over 300 lifesaving pieces of equipment in the heart of the community.

The Society has installed defibrillators at its food stores and funeral homes across 16 different counties during the past 12 months as part of an ambitious scheme.

It is estimated that around 100,000 people die from Sudden Cardiac Arrest in the UK each year and, while CPR saves the lives of around nine per cent, if CPR is used alongside a defibrillator the chance of survival increases to 50%.

Central England Co-op worked closely with ambulance services to find the best locations for the devices and, where possible, fitted them to buildings externally so anyone could use them 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Martyn Cheadle, Central England Co-operative Chief Executive, said: "Sudden Cardiac Arrest is one of the UK's biggest killers and, after listening to the concerns of customers, members and partners, we wanted to help tackle the issue by getting more life-

saving equipment into communities where it can save lives.

"As a responsible business we place a huge focus on making a positive contribution to our local communities; we are delighted to have been able to build on our existing work with this project which we funded from the 5p carrier bag levy.

"The response to the project by our colleagues, customers and members has been amazing and we have been taken aback by the overwhelmingly positive feedback to this initiative."

After every device was installed by long-term partner Oak Electrical, special familiarisation sessions took place for staff at Society outlets, nearby business, local residents and community groups to help people find out more about the device and its ease of use.

If one of the defibrillators is ever needed, anyone can call 999 and the emergency operator will pass on a code that will open the locked case that the equipment is stored in.

The devices will then talk the person through how to use it – they are easy to use and any member of the community would be able use the equipment.

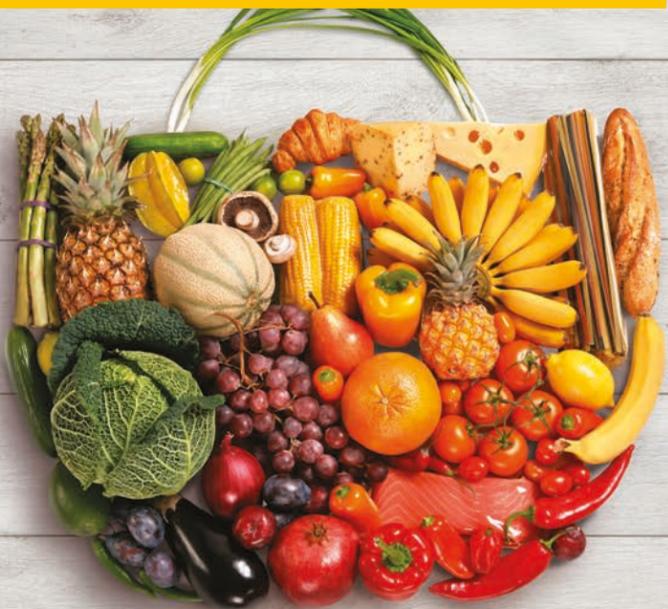


Colleagues showcase one of our community defibrillators

Join in

Support your community and earn points as you spend

The **co-operative** membership
Part of Central England Co-operative



MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

We hope you've enjoyed finding out more about our membership and community news, if you're inspired to join in and become a member of Central England Co-operative too then you can enjoy an array of benefits including:



Share of the Profits

You can earn a dividend payment by shopping in our family of businesses, including earning a point for every £1 spend in our food stores.



Community Dividend Fund

As a member you can apply for funding for a local project through our Community Dividend Fund.



Have Your Say

Get involved with the democratic process and attend member meetings to make your voice heard.

Find out more about becoming a member by heading in to one of our stores, picking up a Join In leaflet and registering online at **www.members.coop** or by calling **0800 050 1601**