

RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT

At Co-op, we're committed to building a future where sustainability, social value and inclusion are at the heart of everything we do.

Through our Goods Not for Resale (GNFR) Responsible Sourcing Strategy, we aim to embed these principles across all procurement activities ensuring alignment with our member owner values.

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

We aim to support our Net Zero carbon targets through supplier engagement and responsible sourcing. By embedding sustainability into every stage of our procurement process, we work in partnership with suppliers to reduce emissions and drive innovation.

Alongside achieving Gold in our Co-op EcoVadis assessment, we continued onboarding our Strategic, Critical, and Operational suppliers to EcoVadis, strengthening our understanding of sustainability expectations. The platform also enables us to monitor suppliers' Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) commitments.

Strategic suppliers with SBTi commitments	72%
Strategic suppliers with SBTi Net Zero commitments	47%
Strategic suppliers with Net Zero commitments of 2040 or earlier	29%



Gold medal
EcoVadis Gold Medal for sustainability performance, placing Co-op among the top 5% of companies assessed globally

WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER SOCIAL VALUE

We encourage our suppliers to support us in creating meaningful social value for our member owners. This year, we refreshed our Social Value Action Plan and Social Value Charter, and introduced one-page guides to make it easier for suppliers to get involved in issues that our member owners care about. See what our suppliers did in 2025 in the boxes on the right.

In the video below, hear from our supplier, HH Global, as they showcase how their Social Value SMART action plan is delivering impact in the areas our member owners care about.



1,900 hours
Contributed over 1,900 hours to education and skills development through our Academies, supporting mock interviews, career fairs and volunteering. They've also provided essential resources - from kitchen equipment and hygiene products to books and stationery.



£2.5m
Pledged over £2.54m to [Co-op Levy Share](#) helping transform the lives of young people from diverse backgrounds, by funding over 200 apprenticeships. See our [Co-op Levy Share Impact Report 2025](#) for more.



Raised £9,319
Raised £9,319 for Barnardo's through fundraising activities and supplier collaboration. Several suppliers supported our efforts, including HH Global, who took part in the Total Warrior challenge to raise funds. Buffaloalod also launched two new [partnership-branded trucks](#).

ETHICAL TRADE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

We take a proactive approach to ethical trade and human rights, enrolling suppliers identified as high ethical risk into our Ethical Trade Programme and monitoring their practices through platforms such as EcoVadis and Sedex. To strengthen awareness and accountability, we launched a Modern Slavery e-learning module for these suppliers in 2025, achieving a 97% completion rate. Internally, we keep colleagues informed through a quarterly Ethical Trade Newsletter and continue to deliver Modern Slavery Spotlight Sessions in partnership with Stronger Together and Unseen.

In 2025, responding to a clear call from members, we revised our sourcing policies including our [GNFR Supplier Guide to Ethical Trade](#), and [Sustainable Procurement and Supplier Policy](#).

SUPPLIER ENGAGEMENT

Our GNFR conference brought together key partners to drive responsible procurement. Exhibitors included MSDUK¹, Social Enterprise UK (SEUK), Unseen, Stronger Together and EcoVadis, and a panel on Driving Change Through Supplier Partnerships highlighted collaboration as the catalyst for progress.

The Co-op Difference Awards is a celebration of the outstanding contributions and achievements of our suppliers who have gone above and beyond to make a positive impact for our member owners. Discover more about our winners [here](#), and watch this short highlights video to find out more about the event [here](#).

You can also learn more about Buffaload, one of our logistics partners and proud recipient of Supplier of the Year at the Pioneer Awards 2025 [here](#).

INCLUSIVE BUYING

We remain committed to increasing diversity within our supply chain and are proud members of Social Enterprise UK's *Buy Social Corporate Challenge*, spending £7.4m in 2025 with Social Enterprises.

In addition, we partner with MSDUK to support ethnic minority businesses, continuing to grow our engagement and spend with these suppliers. In 2025, we spent £148,000 with MSDUK's Ethnic Minority Businesses.



¹ Minority Supplier Development UK.

INCLUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Our suppliers play a vital role in helping us meet the needs of the communities we serve by offering a diverse and inclusive product range. Our endless inclusion hub (a collaborative space sharing resources, learning labs and networking opportunities) has seen increased levels of engagement with 95% of our GFR suppliers and over 50% of GNFR suppliers involved. We're proud to be recognised for our progress, including industry awards from [WiHTL](#)¹ and being named a Top 50 Inclusive Employer.

In 2025, we have further strengthened our strategy and defined three key Inclusion Catalysts that shape how we work with suppliers and deliver on our commitment:

- **Close the gender pay gap.** In 2026, we will publish Co-op's first supply chain gender pay gap report, holding ourselves and our suppliers accountable for driving change. To support this, we've partnered with WiHTL to co-create a toolkit featuring case studies from organisations making progress in this space.
- **Cater to diverse customer needs.** We're committed to inclusive product ranges and have deepened our understanding of customer needs through listening panels and demographic insights. We've enhanced tender processes with diversity and inclusion metrics and will roll out training on inclusive design principles for our colleagues.
- **Co-operate to provide equal access to opportunities.** We relaunched our Gift to Give scheme which supports eight purpose-led

suppliers via the Co-op Apiary scheme, giving them access to resources and expertise from well-established brands. To bring our Inclusion Catalysts to life, we co-hosted a National Inclusion Week event with KPMG, bringing together over 200 suppliers to explore practical actions and partnership opportunities. The programme showcased supplier-led examples of inclusive practice, such as Microsoft sharing their approach to inclusive product design and spotlighted the Endless Inclusion Hub, a free resource for suppliers to support progress beyond the event.

COMMUNITY BUYING

Our customers tell us that having access to products that are relevant to them is essential. Through our community buying approach, we strive to create ranges that reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.

Local sourcing

Our insights show that local products are important to communities. Customers associate local goods with exceptional quality, environmental benefits and support for the local economy. Our Local strategy places communities at the heart of our ranging decisions, fostering collaboration with local suppliers to showcase the products our customers expect and value.

World Foods

Our World Foods range is designed to meet the cultural needs of our diverse communities – from everyday staples to products for traditions

like Ramadan and Diwali. In 2025, we trialled a cross-category halal range across selected stores to provide more culturally appropriate options. The range meets halal certification requirements and adheres to our standard animal welfare practices, including pre-stunning.

The Apiary

Co-op's purpose-driven incubator programme champions small businesses that align with our vision and values. Now in its fifth year, The Apiary has supported over 37 businesses as they navigate the world of retail. At its core is a vibrant community of founders, complemented by a network of mentors and ambassadors who provide collaborative skill-sharing, masterclasses, insights and hands-on support. For the second year, we ran the "Gift to Give" Endless Inclusion scheme, where larger suppliers lend their support to purpose-led businesses, giving our founders access to workshops delivered by industry leaders.



¹ Diversity in Hospitality, Travel and Leisure.