



Foundation



Community spaces are
everybody's business

A photograph of two young children walking away from the camera on a dirt path through a lush garden. The child in front is wearing a green t-shirt, blue shorts, and a green bucket hat. The child behind is wearing a floral patterned shirt and purple pants. The garden is filled with various plants, including yellow flowers on the left and purple flowers on the right. A wooden fence is visible in the background.

We're offering interest-free loans for enterprising ideas to improve community spaces.

Places and spaces for people to come together and enjoy shared interests are vitally important for building stronger communities.

Venues such as parks and community centres need regular income so they can continue to meet the needs of people who use them, love them, and rely on them for local services and social contact.

If your community group is thinking about growing its trading activities to generate more sustainable income, we might be able to help your plans take off. We can offer interest-free loans of up to £50,000 towards viable business ideas that will benefit the whole community - particularly those facing greater challenges.

These are some of the enterprising community projects we've invested in so far.



Heeley People's Park

Heeley People's Park in Sheffield is managed for the benefit of the community, by local charity Heeley Trust. Co-op Foundation funding is being used to help develop a social enterprise which repairs and sells used bikes, using its profits to support the maintenance of the park.



Hulme Community Garden Centre

Hulme Community Garden Centre sells organic plants and delivers gardening sessions for the local community. We're helping them refurbish and expand their growing and retail spaces, allowing them to trade on a larger scale. The extra income from sales will fund wellbeing gardening sessions for more vulnerable groups.



Stretford Public Hall

Stretford Public Hall hosts regular events and activities that are affordable to local people. With our funding, Friends of Stretford Public Hall will be able to develop more community activities and larger-scale events. They will also expand their volunteering programme to get more people involved in the centre and develop their skills.

Is this funding right for you?

- Is your organisation run for the benefit of the community, rather than for private profit?
- Do you own or manage a building or outdoor space that's used for a wide range of community activities?
- Do you involve a wide range of local people in your work, including more disadvantaged members of the community?
- Do you have realistic plans to develop trading activities that will grow your long-term income?
- Are you prepared to take on a loan that will need to be repaid?

What we can offer

- Loans of up to £50,000 - interest-free for up to five years
- No repayments for the first year, while your trading activities are getting started

If you are based in a more deprived area, or your work mainly benefits more disadvantaged members of the community, we might also be able to offer some grant funding alongside a loan.

Find out more

For details of how to apply, visit coopfoundation.org.uk or contact us at foundation@coop.co.uk

Co-op Foundation is a working name of Co-operative Community Investment Foundation, a charity registered in England and Wales (1093028) and Scotland (SC048102)

Photo credits: Heeley Trust, Hulme Community Garden Centre and Stretford Public Hall

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