

workers.coop

News #27: Come together... right now

2026 will bring new business and social challenges for our members in the UK. We'll be in their corner as always.

The turn of the year has also brought in to even sharper focus the need for **practical solidarity between worker co-ops and working class communities** within and across borders. Our members have been active in supporting workplace and social initiatives in Syria, Palestine, Italy and elsewhere, and we'll keep you in the loop.

In the US Midwest and across the country, worker co-ops are involved in resisting rising levels of state-sponsored violence and corruption. Their federation, **USFWC**, recently reached out to our own International working group, and over the coming months we'll work on strengthening the relationship and deepening our collaboration.



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Welcome to our newest member, **Canopy Co-operative**.

Not already a member of workers.coop? **Join now**.

Individuals outside of worker co-ops are eligible for worker membership by getting involved one of our **working groups**, or you can become a registered supporter by joining workers.coop's sister organisation, **Solidfund**.

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Announcements

Save the date for Worker Co-op Weekend 2026

This year Worker Co-op Weekend will be **5-7 June 2026**, to be held once again at the rural **Thornbridge Outdoors** venue in Derbyshire's beautiful Peak District. Tickets and programme will be shared at a later date.

The UK's first worker cooperative census is in full swing

More than 80 people from UK worker co-ops have already completed our 10-minute survey, designed to help us better understand composition of our worker co-ops as well as the situation of individual workers, their views and needs. We need another 200 responses over the coming weeks, so please **add yourself to the census now** - and share the QR code below with colleagues. Participants will be entered in a prize draw for **free tickets to Worker Co-op Weekend, plus cash for travel costs**.



News shorts

Exceeding expectations, we were thrilled to get **more than 50 expressions of interest** in our new worker co-op accelerator programme, **Own The Future**. It shows how much demand there is out there for worker co-op business incubation, start-up funding, mentoring and training. We met a vast array of aligned groups at two Q&A sessions, where attendees were keen to learn more about governance, legal structures, membership and other key elements of worker co-op formation. In the next phase, we'll be assessing applications and compiling resources to support those groups with great ideas who don't make it through this time, while looking at potential for future funding to repeat the programme.

To celebrate thirty years in business, **Unicorn grocery in Manchester are opening their doors**. The co-op will reaffirm its commitment to 'solidarity in action' by running a **study day**, to share learning from their impressive history as one of the UK's largest worker controlled, collectively owned grocery stores. The day will include site tours and informal learning sessions on Unicorn's governance and business culture, veg buying and trading policies. It's for anyone interested in setting up an affordable, worker-run wholefood supermarket, existing enterprises looking to scale up, or conversions. Spaces are limited so applications from people already working as part of a group will be prioritised. **Read more [here](#)**.

We think this is a lovely way to put the sixth cooperative principle - Cooperation among Cooperatives - into action, and appreciate how much Unicorn does to support others on their journey.



Photo: Unicorn Grocery's price comparison with top 10 supermarkets

Events

Givers Gain new business referrals - February session

11 February, 12-1pm (online)

For workers.coop members, cooperators & supporters. 'Givers Gain' structured word of mouth marketing is the most effective way to learn about each others' businesses and commercial goals, find partners and generate new trading opportunities. Register [here](#).

Glasgow Co-ops Meet-up special evening event: introduction to social permaculture **11 February, 5.30-7.30pm**

Glasgow's informal co-op meetup, come along to meet other worker co-operators. Our first get together of 2026 will be - NOTE CHANGE OF DATE - Wednesday 11 February at 5.30pm at Greencity in Dennistoun. Meet-up regular Kirsty will introduce "Social

Permaculture". More info [here](#).

Communications working group meeting

16 February, 3.30-5pm

Co-op Support & Development group meeting

19 February, 2-4pm

Future Co-ops 2026: Power to the People

27 February - 28 February (Birmingham)

Co-operative Futures is holding a conference 'Future Co-ops 2026: Power to the People' on Friday 27th-Sat 28th February in Birmingham. For more information about the conference or to buy tickets, see [here](#).

Cycle co-op get together - March

20 March, 11am-1pm

An online meeting to connect with other worker co-ops in the cycling sector and explore how we might support each other. For session topics and how to join, see [here](#).

Conference of the UK Society for Co-operative Studies 2026

8-9 May (Birmingham)

The UKSCS conference offers a timely opportunity to explore the role of co-operatives in addressing major societal challenges while contributing meaningfully to economic and social development. Local practitioners and co-operators welcome to join. More info [here](#).



A shoutout to the 410 members of our sister organisation **Solidfund**, and especially to six new members who signed up last week from **Future Narratives Lab** and **Loaf bakery** in Birmingham. Check out Loaf's current **crowdfunder** aimed at making a dent in the daunting one-off costs of moving their entire operation to a new home in Stirchley. As we write, they've raised nearly £19k towards their £25k target - so there's a way to go.

Solidfund pools regular and one-off contributions from supporters to resource worker co-op assistance, education and organising. The members have given out **more than £200,000** since the fund started, doing something unique and practical to address worker cooperators' lack of access to mainstream money and support. Quite simply, **members pay money in, they pay money out where it's needed most – and things change.**

Big plans are afoot to grow Solidfund over the next 12 months, including a revamp of its member communications. As a reader of workers.coop newsletter look out for a new dedicated newsletter with stories and updates about what Solidfund has been doing, its ambitions for the future and why it's become such a vital part of our effort to spread workers' control and collective ownership. Whether or not you're already a SF subscriber, you'll be able to opt out if you prefer.

If you're a Solidfund member but not yet signed up to participate in its discuss-and-decide forum on [Loomio](#), you can request to join directly on the platform, or email membership@solidfund.coop for an invitation link.

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