

Co-op Member Pioneers



Hi, my name is Boudicca and I'm a Co-op Member from St Thomas, Exeter.

My favourite Co-op product is Co-op's Fairtrade coffee. Not only does the coffee taste great, but it's also important to me because I'm supporting and giving back to my community every time I buy it. I also buy as many Fairtrade products as possible because I'm reassured that I'm also supporting environmental sustainability and fairtrade relationships too.

I drink a lot of coffee and usually carry a cup wherever I go. It's amazing to learn that just by buying Co-op's Fairtrade coffee I'm also raising the funds to provide vital support in my community too - including funding the work of my local Member Pioneer.



It was great to meet my local Member Pioneer, Sarah, and find out about her role.

I learned how she works with local causes to support the amazing work that these volunteers are doing in my local area. She does this by spreading the word about the good work that Co-op does through its membership scheme and by encouraging members to swipe their card and choose a local cause. She also lends a hand and attends events in the community - including a Puja hosted by the Exeter Hindu Cultural Centre at Exwick Parish hall, a lovely Coronation picnic in The Parish of St Thomas, and a Big Help Out event at Topsham Museum.

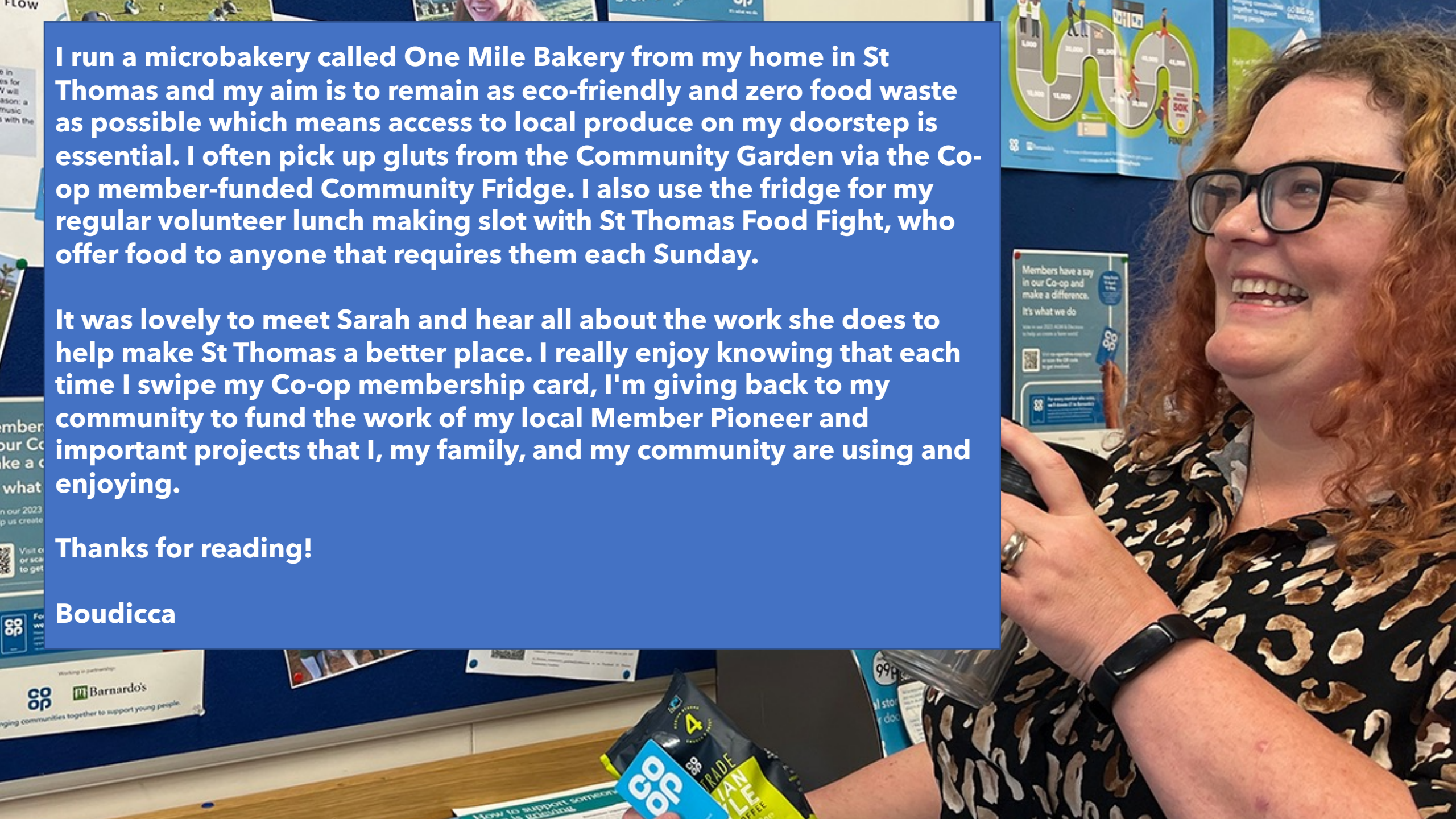
Part of Sarah's role is to get members like me involved in my community too, so I joined her on a recent visit to the local cause I have chosen to support through my Co-op Membership - the St Thomas Community Garden located in St Thomas Pleasure Ground in Exeter.

At St Thomas Community Garden, the volunteers' aim is to grow food in a sustainable way whilst respecting and enhancing local wildlife. They meet each week to tend to the garden, harvest, and distribute produce. My daughter spent a very happy afternoon popping in a whole bed of broad beans and I've recently enjoyed eating fresh strawberries and raspberries as I've walked past the garden.

The garden also connects to local organisations and community groups. They have organised and taken part in several community events locally such as the Good To Grow weekend Open Days, the Festival of St Thomas Stories by the Theatre Alibi, St Thomas Winter Market, Community Lunches by LOVE Food CIC, and the St Thomas Community Fridge.

I chose this local project to support as they encourage access to locally produced food for all in the neighbourhood and also strengthen the sense of community.




I run a microbakery called One Mile Bakery from my home in St Thomas and my aim is to remain as eco-friendly and zero food waste as possible which means access to local produce on my doorstep is essential. I often pick up gluts from the Community Garden via the Co-op member-funded Community Fridge. I also use the fridge for my regular volunteer lunch making slot with St Thomas Food Fight, who offer food to anyone that requires them each Sunday.
It was lovely to meet Sarah and hear all about the work she does to help make St Thomas a better place. I really enjoy knowing that each time I swipe my Co-op membership card, I'm giving back to my community to fund the work of my local Member Pioneer and important projects that I, my family, and my community are using and enjoying.
Thanks for reading!
Boudicca
Members have a say in our Co-op and make a difference.
It's what we do
Barnardo's