

The Co-op Foundation



Hi, my name is Mike and I'm a Co-op Member from Surrey.

My favourite Co-op own brand product is the Irresistible Fairtrade dark chocolate with orange. It's not quite as fattening as normal chocolate and it contributes to making a fairer world for cocoa farmers too!

It's also great to know I'm supporting the Co-op Foundation, the Co-op's charity, every time I buy it.



Funded through the Co-op Foundation's #iwill Fund, I visited Mencap's Dickeridge Community Centre in Surrey, to find out more about the group and how I'm helping to raise the money to support them just by shopping at Co-op.

I learned about how the project supports young people with learning disabilities, difficulties, or autism to undertake various projects - including refurbishing an allotment, building a shed, and growing food for distribution at the centre's Foodbank. The learners plan everything themselves from the start, develop new skills and learn to work as a team, supported by incredibly dedicated volunteers at this vibrant local centre.



The biggest impact for me was hearing directly from the learners as they explained how the project has boosted their confidence and life skills, which will not only help them seek employment opportunities but will also help them go about their daily life more confidently. It was great to see how much fun they were having. The pride in their collective achievements was very clearly visible on all their faces, which I loved to see.



I had some awareness of the Co-op's commitment to charities and communities, but to spend a few hours seeing one of these projects in real life really brought it home to me that every small contribution I make as a member just by swiping my membership card adds up to significant amounts of help that will deliver truly amazing things locally. I could see that the Co-op's support makes a huge difference to the lives of those taking part, the volunteers who support them and also to the wider community and the local environment.



And, as a Co-op Member, it's so easy for me to support projects like this simply by choosing own brand products and swiping my membership card. Co-ops are local and convenient in most communities, so I just go there and do some shopping – no extra effort needed.

Every time I shop at Co-op, I walk out with good quality products and the knowledge that some of what I've spent will be going directly to amazing Co-op Foundation funded charities and community groups like this that are doing great things in my neighbourhood.

Thanks for reading! Mike



To learn more about this Mencap project in Surrey, follow this link to read the blog post:
https://www.coopfoundation.org.uk/blog/guest-blog-mencap/

To find out more about more about the Co-op Foundation's #iwill Fund, follow this link:
https://www.coopfoundation.org.uk/how-we-fund/iwill-fund/

To find out more about The Co-op Foundation, follow this link to visit their website:
https://www.coopfoundation.org.uk/