

Fairer Access to Food



Hi, my name is June and I'm a Co-op Member who lives in Edinburgh. I am also on the National Members' Council representing Co-op Members' views and championing our Values and Principles.

I have lots of favourite Co-op own brand products, but I've chosen the salmon because it's something I buy every week. It's nutritious and healthy and I do not eat a lot of red meat. It is good to know the salmon is responsibly sourced.

I also love the deals. In Co-op stores the salmon can be bought along with other fish or meat products at a discounted price of 2 for £8. This week I saved £1.95 when I bought it with another item in the offer.



With being a member of Co-op's National Members' Council, I already knew that for every £1 I spend on Co-op branded products 2p goes back to me and 2p funds community projects. Of that 2p, 1p goes to a local cause I choose and the other goes to the Community Partnerships Fund to support larger UK-wide projects, like Co-op's partnership with Your Local Pantry.

When I visited the Leith Pantry in Edinburgh, I met up with Ann who described how the project operated. She was joined by three volunteers who also gave their experiences in the project.



They explained how Your Local Pantry members at Leith Pantry pay £4.50 a week and are allowed to choose 10 products from a wide range of both ambient and fresh food. There are also non-food products such as toiletries and cleaning products. The value of the goods they get is much higher than the £4.50 paid. They also get free fresh fruit and vegetables.

Ann uses the weekly membership revenue to purchase fresh products such as bread and milk. The other products on offer come from Food banks and donation points in local stores.



The volunteers emphasised how well they knew their members and how the members value the help they receive. This includes helping them to complete official forms and providing an ear when they need someone to talk to. They often encourage the members to choose items they might not have tried before, and they share recipes with them.

An important aspect of the service is allowing members to maintain their dignity and allowing them to choose the items they need. Many members commented on the attractiveness of the pantry and how it is a pleasure to use the facility.



Leith Pantry has supported causes such as National Women's Day and Mental Health Awareness Week. One of the volunteers suffers from anxiety issues which made her reluctant to socialise. Volunteering at the pantry has helped her to talk to others and become more sociable.

By choosing Co-op own brand products and swiping my membership card not only am I benefiting myself, I am also helping others, and that's a great feeling to have.

Thanks for reading!

June