



The Midcounties
Co-operative

Welcome to Your Co-op



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Welcome

Dear Colleague,

I'd like to wish you a warm welcome to The Midcounties Co-operative, one of the largest consumer co-operatives in the UK.

Firstly, thank you for choosing to join our Society. Every one of our remarkable colleagues plays a crucial part in delivering outstanding service to our customers and helping us remain the thriving co-operative we are today.

As a co-operative, we are owned by our members, who have a say in how the business is run and receive rewards for their loyalty to the Society. Today, I'd like to invite you to become a member so you can make the most of everything the Society has to offer.

This handbook has been created to help you understand more about The Midcounties Co-operative and the role you'll play in helping us deliver our Purpose, in line with our co-operative values (both of which you can read more about on the following pages).

It provides useful information about your employment and also forms part of your contract, so please read it carefully and keep it for future reference. It is also available on the Colleagues Connect website, along with all our policies, for you to access whenever you need to.

Lastly, I know that joining a new organisation can be both exciting and overwhelming, but I'm confident that your colleagues will help you feel at home in no time.

Best of luck in your new role and I wish you a long and happy career with the Society.

Best wishes,

Phil Ponsonby
Group Chief Executive

About us

The Midcounties Co-operative is a thriving co-operative society, proudly owned by more than 758,000 members and employing over 6,000 colleagues across more than 400 sites.

We operate the Your Co-op family of businesses which spans Food, Travel, Early Years, Energy, Telecoms, Post Offices and Flexible Benefits. Our trading businesses are supported by our central services, which include HR, Finance, Secretariat, IT, Property, Membership, Community and other support functions.

Our heartlands are in Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Buckinghamshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, the West Midlands, Wiltshire and Worcestershire, but we also trade in the surrounding counties and our Energy, Early Years, Travel, Telecoms and Flexible Benefits businesses operate across the UK.

As a co-operative, we follow the co-operative values and principles based on those established by the first consumer co-operative in 1844. Our values and principles ensure that everything we do is for the benefit of our members and the communities where we trade.

Our Society is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of 16 democratically elected members and we have a Member Engagement Committee charged with promoting the benefits of membership and driving member involvement.



Our Purpose

Through the power of co-operation, we're building a fairer, more sustainable, and ethical future.

Our Brands

your
coopenergy
powered by **octopus**energy

your
coopmobile

your
coopbroadband

your
cooptravel

your
coop Little
Pioneers
nursery and pre-school

your
coopchildcare

your
coopfood

Our Values & Our Trust Pillars

It is essential that you understand the distinctive nature of a co-operative, our values, and how we apply them in the workplace to improve performance and achieve our purpose - through the power of co-operation, we're building a fairer, more sustainable and ethical future.

We live by our Trust Pillars. They've evolved with the times over the last century, but they still act as a solid foundation for a stronger business and a better community.



We're also proud to be accredited with Business in the Community's 'Community Mark', recognising our responsible business approach and support for local communities.

We work with our members, colleagues and communities to support campaigns to address today's major issues including:



Fairtrade - Supporting farmers in some of the poorest parts of the world.



1Change - Driving our business and our communities to combat plastic pollution and defend the environment.



Food Bank Fund - Supporting the most vulnerable in our communities.

Useful Definitions

Members	Anyone over the age of 16 who chooses to invest in this co-operative and own a share of it. All members, however much they invest, own an equal share of the Society, have a say in the way it is run and can share in the profits. Many of our customers will also be members.
Share of profits	Each year the Board of Directors decides how much of the Society's profits are returned to members based upon how successful the Society has been in the year. This is then returned to members in the form of vouchers, or paid into their share accounts, based upon the amount each individual member has spent with the Society.
Board of Directors	The Society's Board of Directors are elected by the Society's members with these elections forming a key part of the Society's democracy, one of our core DOES values. The Board oversees the work of the Executive as they implement the Society's business strategy.
The Executive	A group of senior managers, led by the Group Chief Executive, who operate the Society on a day-to-day basis.



Colleague Council

Providing a communication channel between the colleagues and The Executive, aiming to continuously improve the performance and success of our business.

The Group Councils meet on a quarterly basis and focus on 'action' rather than 'discussion' and give colleagues the opportunity to raise suggestions and ideas of how we can improve our business from a colleague, customer or member viewpoint. The Councils also discuss concerns or issues that colleagues may have and will work together to establish the root cause and offer practical solutions.

The Councils have the full support of the Executive and each meeting is attended by the Chief Operating Officer who will give trading group updates, listen to feedback and give responses to your agenda items.

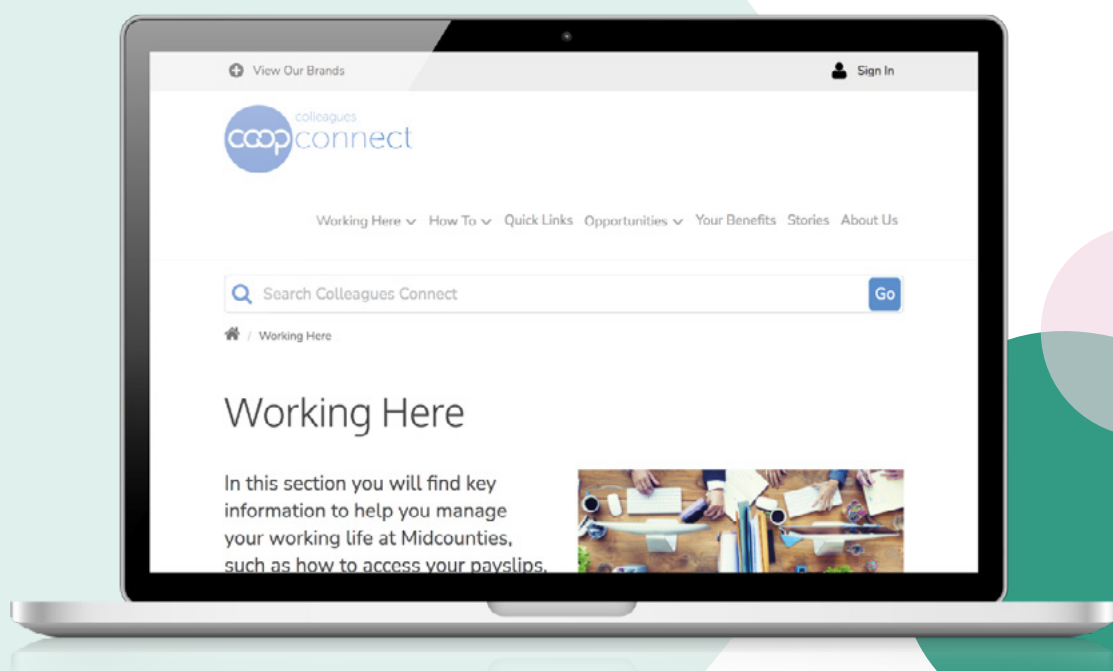
Colleague Union - Usdaw

Udaw is one of Britain's largest trade unions with over 401,000 members nationwide. Usdaw is 'Here to Help You' whatever your job and no matter whether you are employed on a full-time, part-time or casual basis.

Udaw provides advice and representation to workers in many different workplaces. We understand the challenges faced by workers to get a fairer deal in pay and conditions.

Udaw can help you have a voice at work - and the more members there are at your workplace then the stronger the voice of the union will be.

To find out more about how Usdaw can support you and for further details on joining [click here](#). Find your local colleague union rep [here](#).



Communication and Colleagues Connect

Colleagues Connect web page and App helps colleagues stay connected.



Find out about working here, our policies and procedures, and learn about the many opportunities available to you as a colleague from volunteering to advertised jobs.

Learn about the benefits that are available to you and stay connected to the latest news from across the Society.

Download the Colleagues Connect app here:



We love social media, and it's just one way we engage with members and customers.
[You can join in the conversation too.](#)

Pay

You will find details of your basic pay rate in your statement of terms and conditions of employment. For the purposes of calculating wages and other payments, our working week is Sunday to Saturday.

Payment is made at four weekly intervals, which means that there are 13 pay dates in a year. Pay dates are displayed on the Colleagues Connect [My Pay Page](#), along with details of how your pay is calculated and your payslip.

Payment is made by direct credit into your bank/building society account so you must ensure we are provided with accurate details when you start employment or if you change accounts during employment.

Your 4 weekly basic pay is calculated depending on whether you are an hourly paid or a salaried colleague, as follows:

- For hourly paid colleagues - basic pay is calculated as (hourly rate x number of weekly contracted hours) x4
- For salaried colleagues - basic pay is calculated as annual salary ÷ 13

You will find that adjustments such as overtime, sick pay etc may be processed and paid in the following pay period dependent upon the deadlines for payroll submission. The actual dates for your adjustments for that pay date can be found [here](#). Your payslip will be available every payday. If you have queries about your pay, speak to your immediate supervisor or manager in the first instance. If they are unable to help, you should raise a request on service now and payroll will respond.

Payslips can be accessed at any time via the [online portal](#). If your employment ends with Your Co-op, it will be your responsibility to ensure that you save a copy of your historic pay slips as you will no longer have access to the online portal once your employment with Your Co-op has ended. If you are due payment once you have left Your Co-op, Payroll will send out your final payslip in a paper format to your home address along with your P45. Final pay for leavers is dependent on when you leave in a pay period, there may be some adjustments to your final pay.

The tax year ends on 5th April every year. If you are employed at 5th April you will receive a P60 statement from us which shows the total amount received in pay during that year, the tax paid by you and pension contributions where applicable. Your P60 is very important and should be kept in a safe place.

Queries regarding Income Tax which cannot be resolved by the Payroll department should be raised with the relevant tax office as below.

PAYE reference: 948/Y1301 Phone number: 0300 200 3300 Address: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) South Wales Area Ty Glas Llanishen Cardiff CF4 5FX

Pay Review

Your Co-op is committed to paying colleagues fairly for the role they fulfil both in line with government legislation (National Living Wage) and against similar roles in comparable businesses through our benchmarking process. Your Co-op reviews its pay rates in April each year which is negotiated with Your Co-op's recognised union USDAW.

Pensions

The Society has only one pension scheme open to new members, the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST). All new starters aged 22 or over, who are below State Pension Age and who earn at least £10,000 a year will be automatically enrolled in NEST by the Society. Please [click here](#) to see our FAQ guide for new colleagues

Annual Leave Entitlement

The table below sets out your holiday entitlement based on a colleague's career framework level, or the pro-rata equivalent if you work part time. That is inclusive of 8 bank holidays. This will cover the majority of colleagues, but if this does not apply to you as you are covered by a different scheme, this will be communicated to you as part of the statement of terms and conditions or other correspondence provided to you which explains the terms of your employment with Your Co-op.

The table illustrates the entitlement for colleagues who work a 5-day week, your entitlement will be adjusted during your first year of employment pro rata for the whole year.

The annual leave year runs from 1st April to 31st March each year. Any service increases will apply from 1st April the following year.

Career Framework Level	Length of Service (complete years)	Holiday Entitlement (part time employees will be pro rata)
11	N/A	39 days
8-10	0 years	34 days
	1 year	35 days
	2 years	36 days
	3 years	37 days
	4 years	38 days
	5 years	39 days
7	0-5 years	34 days
	5-10 years	36 days
	10 years or more	39 days
2-6	0-2 years	30 days
	2-3 years	31 days
	3-4 years	32 days
	4-5 years	33 days
	5-10 years	34 days
	10-15 years	35 days
	15-20 years	36 days
	20 years or more	37 days

Please note the holiday entitlement outlined in the table forms part of your contract of employment and Your Co-op will not amend this without prior agreement. If this does not apply to you as you are covered by a different scheme, this will be communicated to you as part of the statement of terms and conditions or other correspondence provided to you which explains the terms of your employment with Your Co-op.

Your Co-op expects colleagues to provide 4 weeks' notice of any holiday requests to allow for the planning of rota and work schedule where necessary. To avoid disappointment, colleagues should not make a holiday booking before an annual leave request has been authorised.

At certain times of the year there may be periods when annual leave requests cannot be accommodated due to operational needs of the business at that time; this depends upon the trading group in which you work, for example, Christmas and holiday brochure release dates. Such periods should be communicated to the colleague as soon as reasonably practicable.

Taking leave without authorisation or once a request has been declined will be considered a gross misconduct offence and will be dealt with under the Society's [Disciplinary Policy](#).

Colleagues are asked not to request more than 2 consecutive weeks of holiday off at a time. However, Your Co-op understands occasionally colleagues wish to book longer periods of annual leave, those colleagues wishing to take extended annual leave must speak to their line manager in the first instance who will refer this to their line manager for authorisation.

Colleagues should also ensure that they spread annual leave throughout the year, to avoid a rush at the end of the holiday year which might result in losing some holiday days if too many requests are made for the same annual leave period.

Your Co-op pays a premium payment to those colleagues who are scheduled to work on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years' Day. Details of such payments will be in your contract of employment.

In order to meet the operational needs of Your Co-op, some colleagues will be required to work on a public holiday. Where a colleague is asked to work on a public holiday, they are entitled to the equivalent period of leave to be taken at another time, following the regular annual leave procedure.

For full details of the annual leave procedure please refer to the [Annual Leave Policy](#) on Colleagues Connect.

Society Sickness Pay Entitlement

Colleagues should refer to their contracts of employment for details of the particular sick pay scheme which applies to them.

The entitlement in the table below will cover the majority of colleagues, but if this does not apply to you as you are covered by a different scheme, this will be communicated to you as part of the statement of terms and conditions or other correspondence provided to you which explains the terms of your employment with Your Co-op.

Career Framework Level	Length of Service (complete years)	Sick Pay Entitlement
8-11	0-1 year	6 weeks
	1 -2 years	24 weeks
	2 -3 years	32 weeks
	3-4 years	44 weeks
	4 years or more	52 weeks
2-7	0-1 year	0 weeks
	1-2 years	1 week
	2- 3 years	2 weeks
	3-4 years	4 weeks
	4-5 years	6 weeks
	5-6 years	9 weeks
	6-7 years	13 weeks
	7-8 years	18 weeks
	8-9 years	22 weeks
	9-10 years	26 weeks
	10 years or more	30 weeks

When a colleague's entitlement to Society sick pay has been exhausted during a period of sickness absence, sick pay entitlement can only be restored when the colleague has been back at work for 13 consecutive weeks with no further periods of absence. Co-operative Sick Pay restoration is then also subject to the colleague being entitled to an increase on the anniversary of their start date, and/or as a result of the colleague earning their sick entitlement back within a 12-month rolling period.

Society sick pay will be calculated based upon a colleague's career framework level and length of service and based on rolling 12-month periods.

Please note statutory sick pay will be payable to all qualifying colleagues, irrespective of their length of service.

Please note the sick pay entitlement outlined in the table forms part of your contract of employment and Your Co-op will not amend this without prior agreement. If this does not apply to you as you are covered by a different scheme, this will be communicated to you as part of the statement of terms and conditions or other correspondence provided to you which explains the terms of your employment with Your Co-op.

For full details of the sickness absence procedure please refer to the [Managing Attendance Policy](#) on Colleagues Connect.

For all policies please visit the below link:

[Colleagues Connect policies page](#)

Colleague Rewards



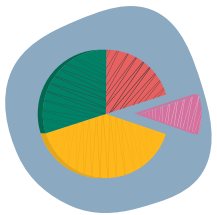
We aim to offer a competitive reward package to attract and retain skilled and experienced colleagues. Reward isn't just about basic pay, there are many elements to a reward package, both financial and non-financial. Read on for more information.

Pay, Bonus, Car



Competitive Annual Salary

We make sure that we keep up to date with the salaries that other, similar sized, employers are paying for each of our roles using a nationally recognised grading and pay information system, reviewed on an annual basis. This ensures that you are paid in line with other employers who are around the same size as us for roles of the same size and complexity.



Share of Profits

As a colleague member, when you trade with us using your membership card, you will earn membership points. These points are converted into Share of Profit vouchers. This benefit can also be extended to an additional family member in your household.



Share Account

When you become a member, we automatically open a share account for you and invest £1. You can invest a little more, earning interest over £10 up to £100,000.





Payroll giving

You can donate an amount of money from your pay on a 4-weekly basis tax free to a charity of your choice.



Workplace Nursery Scheme

Use a Co-operative Childcare nursery and save even more on your childcare fees. By accessing this salary sacrifice scheme it means that you won't pay tax and NI on a portion of your income.



Car/cash allowance entitlement

Eligible colleagues will be entitled to either a car (Electric/Hybrid) or cash allowance.



Electric vehicle scheme

We have an electric vehicle salary sacrifice scheme open to colleagues.

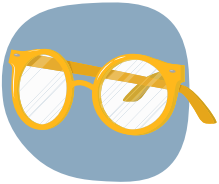


Wellbeing – Health



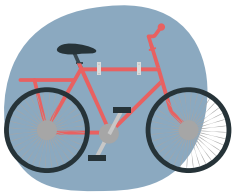
Sick Pay

Your sick pay entitlement is detailed in the colleague handbook but is enhanced above statutory minimum after 1 years' service.



Eye Care

Regular users of display screen equipment can request a free eye test voucher for Specsavers Opticians.



Cycle to Work

You can make savings on a brand-new bike and accessories via a salary sacrifice scheme.



Confidential advice and Counselling Service (Grocery Aid)

Grocery Aid is a national charity providing free emotional, practical, and financial support and advice for all colleagues in the Society 24/7, 365 days a year via phone, live chat or website.





Mental Health



The Society has a number of mental health champions who are an initial point of contact and support for colleagues who are experiencing different forms of emotional distress.



Colleague Support Fund

You can join a voluntary scheme at £1 per week deducted directly from payroll to help with financial assistance related to health costs such as optical, hearing, dental care and hospital stays. You need to contribute for a minimum of 12 months before a claim can be made.





Subsidised on-site refreshments

Free tea and coffee on-site, with kitchen & rest areas, fitted with fridge, microwave, toaster etc.



Financial Wellbeing App (Stream)

Download the Stream app to access our financial well-being offering, which includes the following:

Pay Advance – Access up to 40% of your basic salary instantly before pay day

Savings – Set up a savings account and start saving

Financial Well-being Resources – Articles and other financial educational resources.



Wellbeing – Financial



Colleague Discounts

You can benefit from the following discounts across our businesses:



Childcare – year 1 60% discount up to your child's 2nd birthday, year 2 40% discount up to the term after your child's 3rd birthday and year 3 30% discount alongside the government 30 hours free childcare for 3 to 4 year old children and access to a Salary Sacrifice workplace nursery scheme.



Food – Enjoy 20% off your shopping in all Midcounties Co-operative stores and 10% in other Co-operative Societies such as The Co-operative Group, Central England Co-operative, The Southern Co-operative and East of England Co-operative'



Travel - As a valued colleague you are entitled up to 15% off your holiday bookings' .



Funeral plan – 15% off funeral arrangements, floral arrangements, and masonry. 10% off pre-payment plan Central England Co-op only.



Broadband & Mobile - Switch your broadband and mobile to Climate Positive Broadband and Ethical Mobile and save ££'s with the current colleague offers available. Visit Colleagues Connect for more information



Family Friendly



Annual Leave

The Society recognises that a healthy work life balance is important and encourages you to take planned time away from work. Holidays increase based on length of service.



Maternity/Adoption/ Paternity

Eligible colleagues will receive enhanced Maternity, Paternity or Adoption pay.

Full details of enhanced pay can be found in the Family Leave Policy.

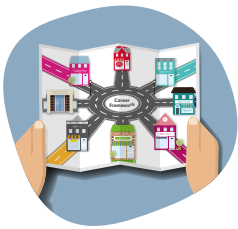


Recognition



Service Recognition Awards

Recognising long service is important to us, so to show our appreciation, colleagues receive various rewards starting at 5 years through to 50 years.



Opportunities for development and progression

We are passionate about growing our own talent and offer opportunities to develop at every level, enabling you to perform at your best and progress your career.



The Co-op Difference



Volunteering hours

Supporting our community is incredibly important to us, so you are given the opportunity to undertake up to 22.5 hours (pro-rata) to volunteer in their local community.



On-site parking and electric charging points

Colleagues can access on-site parking and electric charging points across a number of sites.



Birthday hour

You are entitled to one hour paid as holiday for your birthday, to be booked and agreed in advance, via rotageek.



Uniform

Uniform will be provided to colleagues working in customer facing roles.





The Midcounties
Co-operative

More information about these benefits can be found at
<https://colleaguesconnect.midcounties.coop/benefits/>

If you have any further questions about anything in
this booklet please contact
your.benefits@midcounties.coop

Your Co-op members app

An exclusive app for members of The Midcounties Co-operative.
Our app will bring you all the latest member exclusive deals and offers across
all our businesses and show you how your spend with us makes a difference.
More info can be found at
<https://colleaguesconnect.midcounties.coop/benefits/your-co-op-members-app/>

Or search 'Your Co-op membership' in your app store.



The Midcounties Co-operative

Co-operative House, Warwick Technology Park, Warwick, CV34 6DA