



COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING



Co-operatives UK

Empowering Communities Through Co-operation

'The people who live and work in a place are the ones best placed to shape its future.' It is one of the principles underpinning Reclaiming Our Regional Economies (RORE) – a bold five-year programme that's reimagining local economies from the ground up, with Co-operatives UK playing a key role.

Launched in 2023, RORE is a collaboration between Co-operatives UK, the New Economics Foundation, the Centre for Local Economic Strategies, and Centre for Thriving Places. The programme is working with combined authorities in the West Midlands, South Yorkshire and North East to test new, community-rooted economic models that prioritise inclusion, sustainability and democratic ownership.

This hands-on support is enabling councils and combined authorities to embed inclusive business models into their economic strategies. In South Yorkshire, Co-operatives UK also helped deliver the UK's first Ownership Hub, which supports worker co-operatives and employee ownership. The scheme inspired Rotherham Council to create its own version. Meanwhile, West Midlands Combined Authority followed the South Yorkshire pilot, working with Co-operatives UK to offer support around exploring community buyouts through community shares. These initiatives demonstrate how local government and the Co-operative Movement can work hand-in-hand to create a more democratic and resilient economy.

The programme is also contributing to national policy conversations around devolution. Co-operatives UK is using insights from the RORE pilot areas to advocate for more powers and resources

to be devolved to the local level – alongside stronger partnerships between councils, communities and social economy actors.

Amid growing mistrust in national politics, RORE proves that when local communities are empowered, better, fairer outcomes are possible. Co-operatives UK is helping councils unlock the power of co-operation to create thriving, community-led local economies that work for people and planet.

As the UK's authority on co-operatives, Co-operatives UK provides vital expertise in community business, co-operative development and social economy infrastructure. The apex body has also been working with Greater Manchester Combined Authority as the driving force behind Our Business GM. Our Business GM is a co-operatively owned hub designed to empower the city region's social economy. It offers help in the form of training, events, and business support; shares knowledge through a media hub; and builds community through the facilitation of forums, groups and directories. This hub promotes co-operative goods and services to a wide range of buyers, ranging from social economy organisations to anchor institutions and corporates, encouraging trade that supports community wealth-building.

For further information contact:

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