

Principle FIVE

P5

September 2023

Principle 5 Co-operative Library and Resource Centre Celebrating 10 years

After building up co-operative resources for Sheffield Co-operative Party for many years, the Collection became available to the wider co-operative movement in August 2013. This unfortunately was the year in which The Co-operative Group incurred a financial crisis and was subsequently re-structured.

It coincided with the publication of: [‘Building Co-operation: A Business History of the Co-operative Group, 1863 – 2013’](#) by John F. Wilson, Anthony Webster & Rachael Vorberg-Rugh. At our launch in early 2014 we were fortunate to welcome Rachael to speak about the book and sign copies which were eagerly snapped up by attendees.

What started as a modest collection of books and materials for co-operative education became a substantial and valuable collection, thanks to East of England Co-operative Society. They donated the books and archives which were the legacy of the libraries of the co-operative societies in the East of England. E of E Co-op continue to be Principle 5 supporters.

Since the early days, the library has grown as a result of carefully added books and archival resources.

The Collection continues to be housed securely because of the subscriptions from Principle 5 members. The Membership is owner and custodian of this wonderful resource.

Principle 5 is a member of the following co-operative organisations:

[Co-operatives UK](#)
[Co-operative Press](#)
[UK Society for Co-operative Studies](#)
[The Co-operative College](#)
[Webarchitects Co-op](#)
[Sheffield Co-operative Development Group](#)
[Wortley Hall](#)

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Community Wealth Building in Sheffield

It seems that when Sheffield Co-operative Development Group (SCDG) was first set up in 1980, the Council had similar ideas to what the Principle 5 team were were discussing at a recent meeting to explore the possibilities of Community Wealth Building in Sheffield. That was a time when local businesses including co-operatives were providing services to the City. One example is the Traffic Systems Co-operative which was contracted to maintain the traffic lights in Sheffield.

The story of SCDG forms part of the conversation about Community Wealth Building.

The Principle 5 Resources include useful material about SCDG in it's early days in 1980 and 1990.

These include

- SCDG (this is a collection of newspaper reports from its early days followed by some background information)
- An edition of the SCDG news from 1990
- The early SCDG leaflet (we have a paper copy of in the resource centre).
- A short piece in The Journal of Co-operative Studies:

[Sheffield Co-operative Development Group](#)

This and other material is available on request.

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Principle 5 Publications

All of our publications are now available to members as PDFs and can be downloaded from the website [About P5](#) page.

A useful addition to the [Study Page](#) is:

[Towards Common Ownership](#)

This is a 41 page pamphlet published in 1983 by the Labour Finance and Industry Group. It considers the case for co-operative common ownership in some detail. Although here has been a few changes to law and taxation since then, it remains a valuable document for co-operative study.

Equipment of the Workers

In 1918 Arnold Freeman, Warden of the Sheffield Educational Settlement conducted a survey to ascertain how well equipped people in the working class areas of central Sheffield were to take an active part in local democracy. Freeman was a socialist and was aware that without a certain degree of educational attainment people were at a major disadvantage.

The findings of this survey are available. Let us know if you would like to study this further.

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South Yorkshire Festival

Principle 5 held a stall at this annual event at [Wortley Hall](#)

It was good to meet lots of people who were interested in co-operative education. And we sold some of our pamphlets.





Members are always welcome to visit the resource centre.

For appointment contact steve@sheffield.coop

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