

Principle FIVE

P5

Yorkshire Co-operative Resource Centre

August Supplement 2025

Middleton Co-operating

Rebecca Harvey writes in [Co-op News August 2025](#)

Middleton is a town in Rochdale, the borough that gave birth to the co-operative movement – and it's now home to [Middleton Co-operating](#), a grassroots project aiming to bring people together to drive positive change. They want to use co-operative ideas to improve the affordability and quality of the things that have the biggest impact on people's lives, from housing and energy to child care, social care, food and transport.

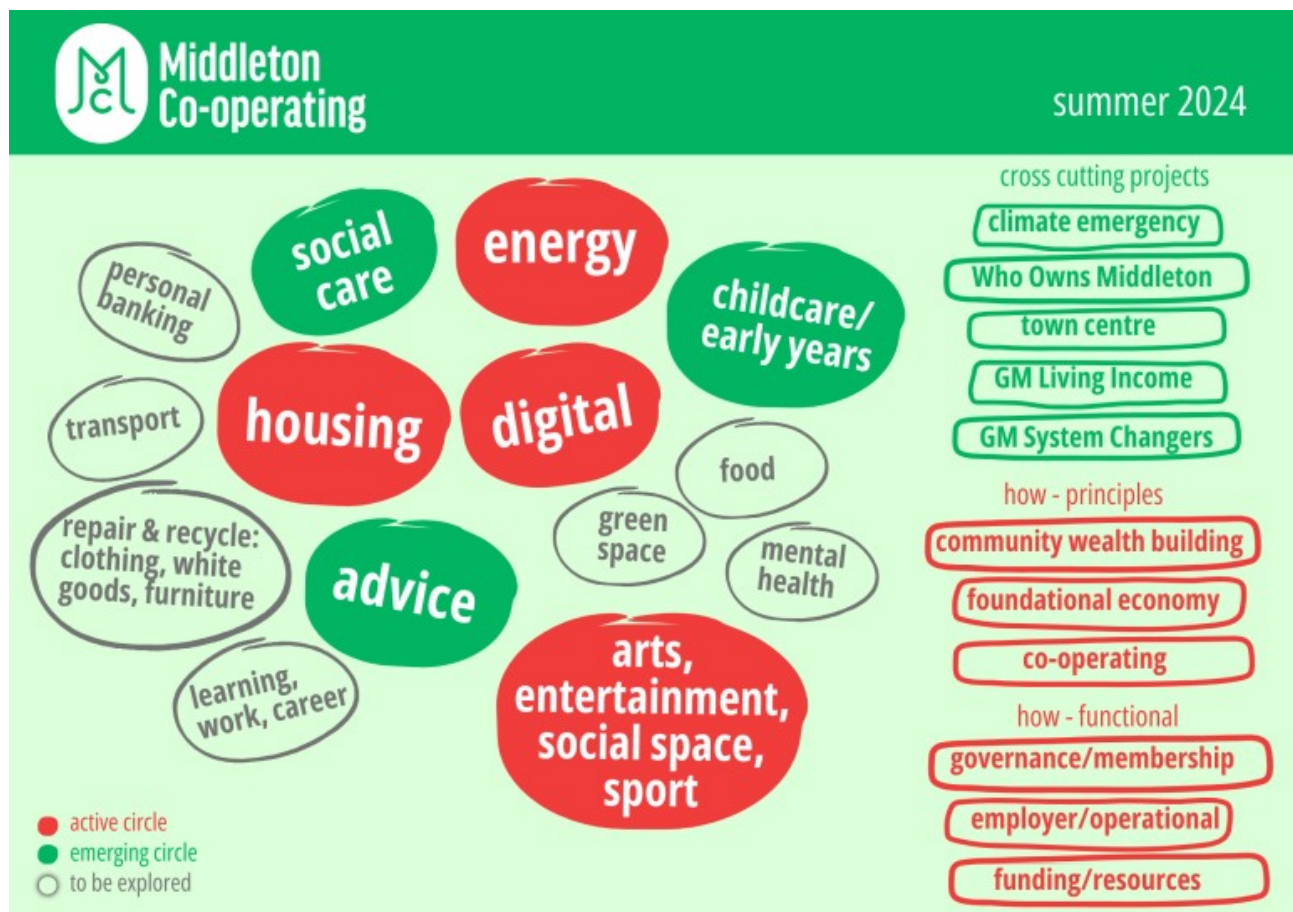
One of the town's most famous sons is actor, comedian and producer Steve Coogan – who is a wholehearted supporter and patron of Middleton Co-operating, and who spoke at [Co-operatives UK](#)'s Co-op Congress in July about the state of the nation and how people need to rise up and effect change.

"I grew up in Alkrington, Middleton, and feel fortunate to have had such a good childhood," he tells Co-op News. "I went to a local state school, which was a pretty good foundation. There was a lot of greenery around. I think I

was part of an aspirant working class where you're encouraged to try to better yourself and be a responsible member of society. My parents fostered children. We had *Encyclopedia Britannica* before we had a colour television. So that was always sort of ingrained into me: that knowledge is power and you try to do your bit."

There was an awareness of co-ops, and a knowledge that "it wasn't just the shop, that it had roots in the community and helped empower people," he adds. "I probably didn't know much of the details, but I knew that co-operatives were people getting together to help each other."

You can read the rest of this article [HERE](#)



SEE:

<https://middleton.coop/>

UK Co-op Congress brings world movement to Rochdale birthplace

Rebecca Harvey and Anca Voinea report from the annual sector gathering, which this year formed part of a week-long global co-op festival

29th July, 2025 Co-op News

Read the report in full [HERE](#)



Rochdale Town Hall



Co-operators on parade from the
Rochdale Pioneers Museum to Rochdale Town Hall

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Principle 6

Co-operation Amongst Co-operatives

Co-operation only became successful as a Movement when co-operatives began to support each other (Principle 6), and education was embedded into the identity of co-operatives (Principle 5). The core principles of Co-operation were established by the Rochdale Pioneers. These, of course, have been revised and re-numbered by the international co-operative movement, the [ICA](#) since the original principles were laid out. They are being revised again this year.

Here at the Yorkshire Co-operative Resource Centre we have good relationships with:

[Lembas](#), suppliers of refreshments for visitors to the Resource Centre

Footprint Workers Co-op. Printing our publications

Webarchitects Hosting our website and email.

Revolver, suppliers of refreshments for visitors to the Resource Centre.

*UK Society for Co-operative Studies. Mutual support

Co-operative Press. Co-op News

Co-operatives UK. Mutual support

We also have good working relationships with compatible organisations which are not co-operatives, such as The Co-operative College and Independent Labour Publications (ILP)

And we subscribe to Stir to Action

*See the Principle 5 page on the UKSCS website:

<https://www.ukscs.coop/pages/principle-5>

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Regather: building a brighter, fairer future



Regather, Club Garden Road, Sheffield

When a curveball from their landlord propelled the team at a Sheffield community co-operative into action, they successfully secured their future – with help from the Business Support for Co-ops programme.

Founded in 2010, [Regather](#) is a Sheffield based community benefit society (CBS) on a mission to transform the local food system.

As well as running a veg box scheme and organic farm, it provides an event space, gardening service, community projects – and more. In short, Regather works to create a better, fairer food system that’s rooted in community ownership and environmental sustainability.

After converting to a CBS in 2018 – with support from co-op expert [Mark Simmonds](#) – the organisation has steadily grown in ambition and continued to be a local force for good. It has also been a finalist in the BBC Food and Farming Awards.

But a turning point came in 2024, when the landlord unexpectedly announced plans to sell the building Regather had occupied and lovingly improved and maintained for more than 15 years.

“This was a building the community had helped transform from a derelict space. It’s full of our blood, sweat and paint. Losing it would’ve been devastating,” said Regather Director Gareth Roberts.

So the team sought help from the [Business Support for Co-ops](#) programme, delivered by Co-operatives UK in partnership with [The Co-operative Bank](#) – and was awarded support from their long-time collaborator Mark Simmonds.

“We’ve known Mark for years,” said Gareth. “He knows Regather. That familiarity was key. We’d already done some groundwork for a share offer, and he helped us pivot toward

the Community Ownership Fund (COF) grant application when the opportunity came up.”

You can read the full article on the Co-ops UK website [HERE](#)

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Members are always welcome to visit Principle 5 co-operative resource centre. We look forward to seeing you.

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