



Co-operatives offer workers a direct way of creating or maintaining employment for themselves. They extend democracy into a vital area of life.

Today's economy is international but most co-operatives are local businesses under the control of local people, responsive to local concerns and not subject to the decisions of remote owners/managers.

The experience of co-operatives has much to offer discussion on these important areas of economic and social policy. SCDG also works to bring knowledge of that experience to the widest possible audience.

**GETTING IN TOUCH**

SCDG is based in Aizlewood's Mill, a fine historic flour mill on Nursery Street, which SCDG itself saved from demolition and redeveloped into one of Sheffield's premier centres for small businesses.

Its staff are ready to respond to all enquiries relating to the starting of new businesses or to invitations to meetings or educational events to explain the possibilities co-operatives can offer.

If you think you might be interested in forming a workers' co-operative or would like more information, please contact:

Sheffield Co-operative Development Group Ltd  
Aizlewood's Mill  
Nursery Street  
Sheffield  
S3 8GG

Phone (0742) 823100

**Sheffield Co-operative Development Group Ltd.**

Co-operative Business Development

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Sheffield Co-operative Development Group Ltd with more than ten years experience of providing advice and encouragement to people interested in forming co-operatives or other forms of democratic enterprise is helping them meet and survive the challenges of the recession.

Sheffield's 35 co-operatives have a combined turnover in excess of £4 million a year. They have shown that they are here to stay - an example of what can be achieved when groups of people work together to a common end.

Several long lasting Sheffield co-operative grew out of the other companies. SCDG has considerable experience in helping workers fight to save or re-create co-operatives which have been closed down. Sheffield co-operatives have a long history of providing a much needed service in the current economic climate.

## FREE HELP AND ADVICE

- Have you and some friends got an idea for a new business?
- Are you looking for ideas on how to save your job at the business you work for now if it is threatened with closure?
- Do you like the idea of starting a new venture together with your colleagues rather than going it alone?

If your answer to any of the above is "Yes" then you should contact Sheffield Co-operative Development Group Ltd (SCDG). It has over ten year's experience of talking to people about their dreams, fears and ideas and helping them develop sustainable plans for the future. Its staff are here to give you practical help and guidance through the barrage of questions which confront anyone starting a new business -

- What will be sold, to whom, how?
- When will it get paid?
- How much will it cost to produce the goods or services required?
- When does it have to pay out?
- How much will it cost to get started?
- Where will the money come from?
- Above all can it succeed and offer secure and satisfying employment for the people who work in it?

SCDG's aim is to work with people in a way which develops their confidence in the results of their work in planning the future of their business.

Sheffield Co-operative Development Group specialises in helping people form worker co-operatives. This is one way of setting up a business. If after discussing this and the other options available to you, a co-operative is not the way you are interested in then we can direct you to specialist support more suited to your needs. An important part of the service we offer you is knowing where to go to get the other help you might need - be it business advice, technical support, training or premises.

## THE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

SCDG was formed in 1980 becoming a co-operative itself in 1985. It is owned by the co-operatives it has helped to set up. It is run by a Management Committee the majority of which consists of representatives of Sheffield's co-operatives who are therefore able to control the work done on their behalf by SCDG's workers. Other places are reserved for representatives of Sheffield City Council, which

also helps to fund the group, Sheffield Trades Union Council, the Co-operative Bank plc, and the Co-operative Party - all of which were involved in setting up the group.

## THE CO-OPERATIVES

The members of SCDG are the 35 co-operative businesses trading in Sheffield and Rotherham. Together they employ more than 200 people and have annual sales in excess of £4 million.

They are not all the same. Their activities cover the breadth of economic life in our cities from cutlery to childcare, engineering to computer software, theatre, film, printing etc.

They are run in different ways. Some have managers, others are run by committee yet others by consensus.

They have different origins too - built from the ruins of failed businesses, bought out from former employers or brand new ideas which grew into businesses.

What they have in common is a form of organisation which means that each co-operative is owned by its employee members and ultimately controlled on the basis of one member one vote. They decide what their business will do, how it will be run and what to do with the profits.

## CO-OPERATIVES WORK

In the main local co-operatives were formed as a response to the last recession and most are still here fighting their way through this one. The survival rates of local co-operatives has been far above the national average for new businesses. Nor is it just a question of survival. Local co-operatives are increasingly developing new products, gaining new big name customers, attaining new quality standards.

As well as helping you start SCDG will, if you need it, continue helping you develop your business.

## THE BROADER PICTURE

The Teamwork and Communication which forms the basis of every successful co-operative are increasingly highlighted by current management thinking as being essential to every company.