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A cartoon of a town

Description automatically generated

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**1. Introduction**

Supporting local good causes is a fundamental part of our purpose to make life better in our communities.

Each year we support hundreds of charities, community groups and projects. As we are a local business trading in Lincolnshire and surrounding counties, we only support charities and groups local to our branches or national charities where it can be demonstrated that the money will be spent locally or support local people. Please note that we don’t support individuals, only groups.

Our aim is to be as supportive as possible, however we’re not able to all things to all people, please read the guidelines below of what we can and can’t do.

**2. Community Champions**

Community Champions is the main way we support local charities and community groups. Groups chosen to be a Community Champion will be supported for a six month campaign period. Campaigns can be themed to tie in with our purpose around health, the environment, and local charities & community groups.

Each autumn/winter we support local community groups and nominations for the other six month campaign are taken from colleague and member surveys.

Members and colleagues help us to select the charities through online voting and at members’ meetings.

In addition to a percentage of members’ cashback, funds are also raised from activities such as colleague fundraising; collection boxes; carrier bag proceeds and clothing banks.

Please check on our website for details of when applications are open.

**3. In-store donations**

Groups can request smaller donations of goods or raffle prizes by taking a written request to any of our food stores. Stores can authorise small donations of goods or vouchers.

**4. Charity collections**

We are frequently asked across all our businesses to allow charities to collect on our premises. Because of the level of colleague fundraising for Community Champions, we do not usually allow collections from other charities either inside or outside our branches. This is so we don’t overwhelm customers with frequent fundraising and clutter branches with various collection points. Please note that this applies to collecting items as well as money.

In relation to centres we own and manage on behalf of tenants we do not allow any charity collections either indoors or outdoors. The only exception would be for our own Community Champions.

**5. Fundraising for national campaigns**

In 2025 the only national charity campaign we will be supporting is the Royal British Legion Poppy appeal. This is due to the desire to support our business wide chosen charities and group.

**6. Food surplus**

We hate waste as much as the next person so where we can we’d love to donate surplus food to local good causes and save it going to waste. We’re already working with some local charities who collect the surplus food from our stores and then use it to feed local people through community cafés and lunch clubs. If you are interested in working with us then please contact the Community team.

**7. Food banks**

Our food stores are happy to host collection points for local food banks and community larders, to try and help support people in need. Only one collection point per food store will be agreed, please get in touch with the Community team to arrange. We may also arrange campaigns during the year to increase donations at times when the food banks are needing additional support such as the summer holidays or Christmas.

**8. Sanitary and toiletries collections**

Our pharmacies are happy to host collection points (space permitting) for sanitary items and toiletries. Each branch is supporting a local charity that work with vulnerable people such as Hygiene banks, Domestic Abuse charities, Homelessness charities and Food Banks.

**9. Travel toy appeal**

Throughout the year when customers make bookings in our travel branches, they can donate to the travel toy appeal. In November and December our Travel branches also run a campaign to collect additional toys and gifts. These are donated to their local toy appeal, foodbank or charity to provide gifts for families in need.

**10. Collection boxes**

Authorisation will unfortunately **not be given** for the positioning of any collection boxes or sales merchandise in any of our branches as this is exclusively reserved for Community Champions and other collection appeals agreed centrally such as the Poppy Appeal. This also applies to the collection of items such as stamps, milk bottle tops, ink cartridges etc.

**11. Colleague Volunteering**

We’re keen to make a difference in our local communities, which is why our colleagues get 16 community hours per year, where they can attend pre-arranged activities to support the community. We support a wide range of projects each year linked to our community partners such as Community Cuppas, Wellbeing Walks, Community Champions etc.

We also arrange some green spaces volunteering and together with community groups and members, we get out in the fresh air and look after our local environment.

Please contact the Community team if you are one of our community partners and have a volunteering opportunity.

**12. Sponsorships**

We will consider sponsorship requests from professional bodies and umbrella organisations, where we can actively work in partnership to support our brand and purpose of ‘making life better in our communities’, through either caring for health & wellbeing, looking after the environment, or impacting the local economy. We will also consider requests for advertising boards at community sports facilities where there are multiple grass roots teams playing. All sponsorship activity must be local to Lincolnshire and surrounding counties where we trade - we will not consider sponsorships of individuals. All requests should be sent to the Community team.

**13. Co-operative & Social Enterprise Development**

Lincolnshire Co-op will use allocated funds to support the set up or development of social enterprises and community businesses through delivery partners or specialist support, based around the principles of people working co-operatively. This could include but not limited to:

* + Co-operative Industrial and Provident Society
  + Community Benefits Society
  + Community Interest Company
  + BCorp

We will fund delivery partners to provide specialist business advice and training to support organisations to set up and grow. Funds could also be used for professional services e.g., accountancy, additionally raise the profile of community business models. The maximum available to any individual group is £10,000. All requests for support should be sent to the Community team.

**Contact details**

**Community team**

T: 01522 544 632 E: [community@lincolnshire.coop](mailto:community@lincolnshire.coop)