

ROCHDALE

Renewing Our Co-operative Heritage,
Developing the Archive and Learning Experiences



Co-operative Heritage Trust

The Co-operative Heritage Trust was established in 2007 by Co-operatives^{UK}, the Co-operative Group and the Co-operative College and the six trustees are appointed by these organisations. It is a registered charity (number 1121610). The charitable objectives of the Trust are for the preservation, protection and improvement for the public benefit of the Museum building and collections and the Archive collections and the encouragement of the provision of access to and the study of the Museum and the Museum and Archive collections.



Co-operatives^{UK}, the Co-operative College and the Co-operative Group are the founders of the Trust the Rochdale Pioneers Museum building and collections and the Archive collections have been assigned to the Trust. The Archive and Museum are managed by the Co-operative College under a management agreement.



Transforming our heritage into
accessible learning resources

We need your support



The Rochdale Pioneers Museum



The Rochdale Pioneers Museum at 31 Toad Lane, Rochdale is the building where the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society started trading on 21 December 1844. The Rochdale Pioneers were a group of working people who realised that they could improve their living conditions by working together and through self help.

The Museum, which opened in 1931, receives visitors from the local community, including educational trips from most of the schools in the Rochdale area, alongside co operators and those interested in co-operation from all over the UK and the world, the visitors' book includes people from over 30 countries each year.



Their efforts marked the development of a sustainable model of co-operation that inspired groups of people in the North West and throughout the UK to get together to form their own co-operative societies. They effectively founded a movement that now involves, as member owners, over eight hundred and sixty million people across the globe and employing over 120 million workers. It that has helped, and continues to help lift and keep people out of poverty and has been stated by the United Nations as improving the lives of over half of humanity.

The Project

The ROCHDALE project will enable the Co-operative Heritage Trust to move from safeguarding and preserving co-operative heritage to using it to inspire a wider public about the extraordinary history and development of the worldwide co-operative movement, its heritage and contemporary relevance. This will transform the collections of the Rochdale Pioneers Museum and National Co-operative Archive through:

- Preservation and ensuring their long term care.
- Increasing access by widening the audience and overcoming barriers.
- The development of new interpretive displays, developing educational materials and building relationships with the education sector.
- Developing the staffing capacity of Museum and Archive.

By addressing each of these areas through the project we will transform the Museum and Archive into resources that will – in the words of the Co-operative Heritage Trust's Mission Statement:

Inspire people within and beyond the co-operative movement about the origins, development and contemporary relevance of co-operation by collecting, safeguarding and making accessible artefacts and documentation through lifelong learning and research.

The overall cost of the project is £2.3 million and a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant of £1.8 million has recently been submitted. £1.4 million of this will be for developments at the

Museum, restoring part of the third floor that was removed during the 1970s refurbishments in order to provide a dedicated education space and building an extension to hold a new staircase and lift to give full access to all parts of the Museum.



The project's Outline Business Plan gives further information, including full details of the project costs and timescales. The Business Plan and architectural drawings by the architects Loop Systems can be downloaded from the website at www.co-op.ac.uk/museum_And_Archive.htm or a copy can be provided by Gillian Lonergan, the Learning Resources Manager and Archivist, by telephoning a request to 0161 246 2925.

The National Co-operative Archive

The Archive collections cover a period from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the present day and have built up over the last century. They attract researchers from the North West, the UK and across the world. The Archive has been granted Designated Collections status, recognising its importance to the heritage of England.

The Archive welcomes anyone who wishes to study any aspect of the co-operative movement. Visitors include those undertaking academic research from school project to PhD, those studying particular subjects or people and those carrying out local history or family history research.

Collections include the personal papers of Robert Owen and George Jacob Holyoake, the business records of national co-operative

organisations and some local and regional societies along with published books and journals of the co operative movement. The Archive also holds films, oral history recordings and major photographic collections.

