

Carbon Co-op Ethical Partnership policy

Drafted: July 2020

Presented: AGM, 17th July 2020

The Carbon Co-op is a community benefit society, driven by our members desire to make radical carbon emissions reductions and avoid run-away climate change. The vision and values of the organisation are best encapsulated in our [organisational 'Ends' policies](#), which seek to define a series of common goals for the organisation and provide a metric against which we measure our organisational success or failures.

The staff team reports on these Ends at each Carbon Co-op Management Committee Meeting and they are subject to periodic review at the Annual General Meeting.

Rationale for an Ethical Partnership Policy

The Carbon Co-op actively seeks opportunities to work together with external organisations in order to achieve shared objectives. However, there may be organisations which, while sharing one or more of our Ends, are perceived to undermine progress in another key area. Our business model is based on a vision of Carbon Co-op as 'independent' and 'trusted', acting in the best interests of the environment, our members and our wider community. Any perceived mismatch between Carbon Co-op activities and the aims we espouse in our Ends could be damaging in the following ways:

- They undermine our relationship with members and/or other existing partners/funders leading to a loss of said members and/or partnership expertise/funding.
- They damage our ability to recruit and retain staff members.
- They cause wider reputational damage and/or poor press, limiting our organisational influence and ability to affect change.

Funders & Project Partners

Carbon Co-op will not accept financial support from; or work in partnerships with, companies involved in activities that run contrary to its overall aims.

We will ensure this by:

- Screening all companies that seek such a relationship against environmental, human rights and product sustainability criteria with the Manchester-based [Ethical Consumer Research Association](#).
- Sharing screening results and highlighting any potential concerns with the Management Committee prior to project sign-off or any formal engagement being entered into.

- Retaining all screening documents and notes of any decisions resulting from them for membership scrutiny.

Suppliers/Contractors

Carbon Co-op seeks to build long-standing relationships of trust with suppliers and contractors across its area of operations. Compliance at the highest level with workers rights, financial propriety and health and safety legislation is dealt with in existing policies (links) and Carbon Co-op has neither the resources or expertise to carry out indepth supply chain or product impact surveys. Rather, where possible, we apply positive selection criteria in our choice of suppliers and contractors.

Positive Selection Criteria

- **Low impact** - we will recommend and specify products which minimise environmental impact across their full life cycle.
- **Local** - shorter supply chains reduce environmental impact and increase traceability. Local contractors keep more money circulating in the local economy.
- **Co-operative** - we seek to support a co-operative, democratic and participatory economy.
- **Small / Worker owned** - working long term with the same individuals allows for better quality assurance and clearer lines of accountability.
- **Honest & Reliable** - durable working relationships are based on openness and trust.
- **Shared ethos** - seeking out those who share our values and aspirations.

Member Engagement

Ultimately ethics are a subjective entity, what is acceptable to some may be totally unacceptable to others. We will revisit this policy periodically and encourage all members to fully engage with staff and management team on areas of concern or for improvement. Contact ethics@carbon.coop

Review

July 2021