



# Principles of Leeds Bread Co-op

Leeds Bread Co-operative is a workers' co-op bakery, specialising in slowly fermented, hand-crafted bread. We, along with all our fellow co-operatives around the world, are based on the co-operative values of democracy, self-help, self-responsibility, equality, equity and solidarity. We aim for a non-hierarchical workplace where empowerment of staff, care of the community and collective self-reliance are at the core of how we function.

## Quality & Integrity

We aim to consistently produce and supply high quality, handmade products that look and taste great, and that we are proud of. We always use good quality, healthy ingredients which are guided by our ethics and principles, and never use shortcuts such as processing aids or additives. We make all of our products ourselves, avoiding buying in part- or ready-made goods. We recognise baking as a craft and value the skill of bakers whilst appreciating the individuality of handmade products.

We strive for the highest quality from the beginning of production through to delivery/retail, to ensure products reach our customers in the best condition possible. We price our products honestly, based on the cost of ingredients and production, whilst paying ourselves a fair wage for the work we do. We believe that our products offer better nutritional and environmental value compared to industrially produced bread, as well as being much more flavoursome and enjoyable to eat.

As well as product quality, we aim to offer great customer service and communication that is open and responsive, with the intention of building friendly, supportive and trusting working relationships. We openly share our values to demonstrate our integrity; serving as a positive example of the better working practices that co-operatives can offer. Similarly, we will seek to gain insight into the ethics of our customers and suppliers, allowing us to make informed decisions on who we choose to trade with. We aim to be an affable supplier: adhering to our customer's expectations through the maintenance of our own standards.

## Community

We strive to provide good jobs and good products for our locality, as well as creating a positive social impact beyond our own worker community. This includes making the bakery a welcoming and inclusive space, with accessible baking opportunities for both training and well-being. We promote our products as well as the principles that underline our business,

for transparency and educational purposes, including why and how our co-operative differs in comparison to mainstream businesses.

We specifically aim to support and show solidarity with marginalised communities, including refugees and asylum seekers, groups of people that suffer oppression both locally and globally, and groups working to co-operative principles. We also support organisations and causes that are of personal significance to us, or that fit with our principles and values.

We actively support other organisations, particularly other co-operatives, that align with our values and principles – making donations of products or funds, working together on projects, or using our social media presence to support or publicise issues and events.

## **Sustainability**

We aim to provide a secure and meaningful livelihood and fair wage for our staff. By generating a surplus to reinvest in equipment and in our skills, we aim to improve our products and working conditions, and to build up necessary reserves to give us security for the longer term.

We aim to operate in an ecologically aware manner which produces minimum impact on the local and global environment, reducing the amount of resources we use and waste that we create. We do this by:

- Using renewable energy, reducing fossil fuel consumption and minimising energy use where possible.
- Having a transparent supply chain and using organic ingredients where possible, in line with our ethical policy.
- Reducing the distance food is transported.
- Using efficient distribution systems and minimising air pollution.
- Repairing things where possible and reducing, reusing and recycling waste.
- Minimising water use.
- Care for our local environment and neighbours.

## **Good Workplace**

We aim to create an enjoyable and fulfilling workplace that is supportive, fair and treats all staff well, including the other people that we work with such as volunteers, customers, suppliers and the wider community. We recognise the hard work and commitment of our staff and aim to avoid excessive workloads or overtime, by continuously improving our staffing and our understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities. We want to enjoy working together and to create jobs that are dynamic, interesting and positive. Our goal is to

seek the highest standard possible for the workplace, where everyone is paid a fair wage based on the performance of the business.

We seek to have sustainable working practices, with up-to-date policies and procedures which are directly affiliated with our values. We support individual and collective learning and development, through formal training for which support and funding is available; by ensuring staff have time to learn and improve skills whilst at work; and by encouraging creativity and innovation in what we do and how we do it. Through the progression of our workers and policies, we aim to create good working relationships and effective management of the co-op and each other.

## **Co-operation**

We are a non-hierarchical workplace that offers a democratic and participatory form of employment, where empowerment of staff is at the core of how we work. In the tradition of the Rochdale Pioneers, we believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others, and are guided by the 7 co-operative principles laid out by the International Co-operative Alliance. We promote and educate these principles both internally and externally.

We aim for transparency by providing all staff with a clear understanding of how Leeds Bread Co-op is run. We actively seek feedback from all staff, allowing for reflection and improvement, and for us to learn and adapt to different people's learning and working styles. We provide training and support in consensus decision making and facilitation to give staff the required tools to partake wholly in discussions, meetings and the decisions we make as a business. By building strong systems for sharing information and providing appropriate training, we strive to effectively provide new and existing members with the knowledge and skills needed to develop confidence and empowerment, ultimately enabling them to have equal control and inclusion within the business.

We will actively acknowledge the welfare of all of our staff, members and non-members alike. We understand that we are more than just work colleagues and seek to build meaningful and constructive relationships, that account for every individual's well-being. Welfare is an integral part of our staff review process and further pastoral support is also accessible. We want to establish a workplace filled with co-operators, cross-collaborating on all elements of the business, including strategic planning, product and system developments, and financial decision-making to ensure total input from staff, for optimal output.