



The Proper Good Pop-Up Shop

The Proper Good Pop-Up Shop premiered during the week of Social Enterprise Day 2025 (18th – 23rd November) as a dedicated space for Social Enterprises and Enterprising charities in Stockport to generate unrestricted income through trade and to raise awareness of the benefits of buying social.

The shop provided Stockport residents and visitors with the opportunity to 'Stock Local, Shop Social' and buy purpose-fuelled gifts that give back to their communities.

11 partners were involved in the shop:

- Arts for Recovery in the Community (ARC)
- Cera Cycloan
- Dementia Disco
- Feel Good Communities CIC
- LUSU Inspired CIC
- Make Build Grow
- Marbury Road Edible Garden
- Mind TOG
- Re:Dish
- Smart Works GM
- Together Trust



A further 9 Social Enterprises were highlighted via the A-Z of Proper Good Shopping guide:

- A Breathing Space CIC
- Fresh Skillz CIC
- Grit Studios CIC
- Merseyway Workshop
- Pink
- Plastic Shed
- Pure Kitchen Bakery
- Stockport Race Equality Partnership
- Upward Frog

An independent survey commissioned by Sector 3 earlier on in the year found that grant funding is still the main source of income for our VCFSE sector. In an increasingly volatile funding landscape, Sector 3 aim to encourage more organisations to actively explore trading as a route to generating unrestricted income, with a view to increasing financial resilience and sustainability. Ultimately so that these organisations can continue to provide the crucial support services they are known and respected for in their communities.

This, coupled with a request from our Proper Good Cohort of Social Enterprises for more opportunities and platforms to trade, led to us (Sector 3) to apply to be in the Pop-Up Shop space in Merseyway Shopping Centre during the week of National Social Enterprise Day (20th November).

The shopping centre attracts an average of over 19,000 footfall daily, providing Pop-Up Shop exhibitors with a direct opportunity to attract passing trade that they wouldn't normally have access to.

To benefit even more Social Enterprises locally, we created a map of Socially Enterprising organisations situated in the town centre. A copy of the map was also made available online.

E26 Thematic Areas:

Access to and management of physical assets within the social economy community:

The union of Social Enterprises significantly reduced the cost of hiring the Pop-Up Shop from £350 to up to £30 per trader, making it accessible for our smaller organisations and increasing profit margins.



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Contract bidding and marketing + Financial & legal support unique to the requirements of social economy organisations:

Social Enterprises and enterprising organisations were invited to apply to be part of the Proper Good Pop-Up Shop, detailing the kind of products they would be selling as well as their social mission. With the wealth of diverse Social Enterprises in Stockport, we were able to curate a shop that offered an eclectic mix of gifts ready for the Christmas season including party wear, craft items, puzzles and games and other unique gift ideas.

Information boards were designed and printed to give each stall its own presence and allow customers to discover the social mission behind each trader.

The shop was promoted through social media in the run up to, and during, with a paid for advert running on instagram to raise awareness and encourage footfall. Each trader was spotlighted on Social Media to offer context on their social mission so that would-be purchasers could understand where (some of) their money was going.

Mentoring, effective coaching and/or peer support in small groups:

Traders were recruited with plenty of notice to prepare and generate stock for the shop. In the lead up, Sector 3 delivered two briefing sessions to provide logistical information to traders as well as an opportunity for the group to harmonise on stock to reduce competition and provide a diverse shopping experience for customers. One to one support was offered through Proper Good Lead, Simone, for advice on trading ideas, marketing and more.

Outcomes:

The shop took £2,592.20 in sales from 226 items with an average of 2.1 items purchased per transaction.

1,814 footfall in the shop across the week

X2 new volunteers recruited

X2 different collaborations identified and in progress between traders

Social Media:

31,250 ad views

6.98% engagement rate on posts

19 new followers across platforms

18,415 post reach

8,255 engagements



The trader who took the highest takings from the shop was also one of the traders that would not have been able to afford to single-handedly hire the shop for a week. The Proper Good Pop-Up, therefore, enabled the trader to participate and see firsthand consumer interest in their products.

Insights and Lessons:

The shop gave traders the opportunity to trial products and as a result, many of the traders have expressed ideas for changes to their stock to better suit customers wants and needs:

"I would definitely be interested in doing this again. I would think about having more non branded products next time, to suit a wide variety of customers e.g. disco themed earrings and accessories."

Kate Darby, Dementia Disco

Together Trust is going to explore a direct link between the work created by their young people and the products they offer. Potentially going down more of a craft route.



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Comms were mainly distributed through the more public facing Stockport Volunteer Hub platforms to reach everyday consumers for maximum awareness. Although comms received positive engagement, there is a disconnect between volunteering and shopping (albeit for good causes), therefore, conversation has now turned to potentially creating a 'Proper Good' online shop, with social media accounts to support, to generate passive income.

Reflections:

"...it was great being involved and thank you so much to all your help. You have been so helpful throughout the whole process and we'd love to be part of another Proper Good Pop Up in the future."

Zoe Hunter, Together Trust

"I thought it was amazing to be part of and was super grateful to have the opportunity!! I think this year we all learnt together and next year if you do it again it will be even better!"

Jen Pilkington, Make Build Grow

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