

# THE TOWN CRIER

SEVENTH  
EDITION



Edition 7 • Summer 2014

Dear Fairtrade Town contact,

With another successful Fairtrade Fortnight behind us and the petition recently handed in, we are excited about marking the 20th anniversary of the FAIRTRADE Mark this autumn! Planning is underway for a series of regional supporter conferences which will take place in September and October, in place of a national supporter conference. They are your chance to meet fellow campaigners, share ideas and learn from others, as well as to debate and discuss the future of the Fairtrade movement. Invitations will be coming to you shortly, so be sure to sign up and spread the word to other Fairtrade supporters in your area!

We've also been busy with a flurry of new Fairtrade Town applications and some really inspiring renewal action plans which consistently show the ingenuity and enthusiasm out there in Fairtrade Towns around the UK. We will be using some of your fantastic examples as case studies on our new website which launches next month so please do keep us updated on your local campaign successes.

The Town Crier is sent to you as the contact for your Fairtrade Town Steering Group. An electronic version is available at [fairtrade.org.uk/towns](http://fairtrade.org.uk/towns) to share with others, and if you are no longer the appropriate recipient of Town Crier, please get in touch and let us know.

With best wishes

**Adam, Rachael, Silvia and Rachel**  
**(The Fairtrade Towns Team)**

## TOP NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NETWORK



Congratulations to **Hildersham, Aberlour and Bournemouth** who have recently achieved

Fairtrade status – taking the total number of Fairtrade Towns in the UK to 587!



An incredible 70,000 people signed our Make Bananas Fair petition – thank you for your passionate and inspiring campaigning throughout Fairtrade Fortnight and beyond! See more info on page 3.

**Share your top news with us in the next edition – contact details are on page 8.**





© Rob Kenyon

## REGIONAL SUPPORTER CONFERENCES: SAVE THE DATE

Join us and Fairtrade campaigners from across your region to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the FAIRTRADE Mark, share knowledge and inspiration for new Fairtrade campaigning ideas. There will be no national supporter conference this year, but instead we hope to meet as many of you as possible at regional conferences whilst also strengthening regional networks and ensuring the most local relevance to the agenda.

Each day will have a variety of workshops and

speakers and will be joined by a producer of Fairtrade goods to hear more about how Fairtrade has affected their work and community. It's also an opportunity to hear updates from the Fairtrade Foundation, reflect on the past 20 years of the FAIRTRADE Mark and discuss the future direction for Fairtrade campaigning.

Additionally, voting will take place for new representatives on the National Campaigner Committee (NCC). This forum represents campaigners, proving a voice within the Fairtrade Foundation as well

as informing and advising the future of our campaigning. Find out more on page 7 of this edition about the NCC.

If there is no conference in your region you are welcome to attend the closest event to you, but we will also be organising regional conferences in 2015 in each region not visited this year, with the intention of making regional gatherings a biennial event.

The events are free to attend. Lunch and refreshments will also be provided, Fairtrade of course!

### Dates for your diary:

REGION	VENUE	DATE
South West	Truro City Hall	Saturday 13 September
London	Regent Hall, Oxford St, London	Wednesday 17 September
North England	Sunderland	Saturday 20 September
North West England	Location tbc	Saturday 11 October
East England	University of Bedfordshire, Luton	Saturday 18 October
Northern Ireland	Venue tbc	October, exact date tbc

## FAIRTRADE'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY



Emerging from early fair trade pioneers and trade justice campaigners, the FAIRTRADE Mark was first introduced to UK shelves 20 years ago, helping British shoppers understand how every purchase makes a difference to farmers and workers around the world.

Fairtrade Towns and other campaign groups have been an inspiring driving force for change, championing trade justice and successfully persuading businesses and shoppers to do more to support producers with their purchasing power. With every event, parade, press release and banana costume worn, more people are forced to address the responsibility they have when buying the world's commodities and consequently drive the Fairtrade movement forwards.

So please join us in marking the 20th anniversary to celebrate the success that we have built together, and show that more is still needed to make trade fair for

some of the world's poorest farmers and workers.

Attending a regional conference is one way to take part, but celebrating this milestone is a great way to re-invigorate supporters and organisations near you who have been involved, and remind them of the difference that Fairtrade makes. Would a 20th anniversary Fairtrade 'birthday party' event help you do this, or a meal using Fairtrade ingredients? Or perhaps a fun quiz evening showcasing the development of Fairtrade over this time?

Keep an eye out for more specific event ideas and tools in forthcoming Towns e-newsletters.

# FAIRTRADE AT 20

20 YEARS AGO A GROUP OF PEOPLE HAD A BRILLIANT IDEA, TO CHALLENGE INJUSTICE BY HELPING UK SHOPPERS BUY FAIR. BUT THERE IS STILL A LOT TO DO.

YOUR CHOICE MAKES A DIFFERENCE.



THE POWER OF YOU

## CAMPAIGN UPDATE

# MAKE BANANAS FAIR



We launched the 'Make Bananas Fair' campaign in Fairtrade Fortnight this year to call attention to the supermarket price wars which are trapping farmers in a cycle of poverty. This focus is part of our wider 'Make Food Fair' campaign, a three-year drive to call on the general public to act on their power as citizens as well as consumers.

Many banana farmers and workers have seen their earnings cut in real terms as global exports have grown. Shockingly, the UK supermarket sector has almost halved the shelf price of loose bananas in the last 10 years even though the cost of producing bananas has doubled.

**Thank you for your incredible support in gaining support from over**

**70,000 people nationwide for the Make Bananas Fair petition, as well as writing to MPs to highlight the issue in government.**

The final petition, which called on the UK Government to intervene in these price wars, was handed in by local school children, Fairtrade campaigners and Foundation staff in banana suits just before World Fair Trade Day. The box of signatures was



handed in to the office of Vince Cable, Secretary of State for The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) on Tuesday May 13. The sight of over 30 bananas caused quite the spectacle in central London!

Kevin McCullough, Head of Campaigns said at the hand-in: 'Government reaction to the campaign has been lukewarm to date – although supportive of

*Fairtrade there is a reluctance to tackle this damaging structural issue trapping farmers in poverty. The time to act is now in the best interests of producers and consumers alike.'*

A recent article in the Guardian's Sustainable Business blog by Tim Aldred, our Head of Policy and Research, explored consumer attitudes to banana prices. Independent polling we

commissioned found that 84% said they would pay more for their bananas if they knew the extra money would benefit farmers. We know that consumers are open to increased prices if they guarantee a fair price paid to farmers and workers, and will continue to update you on progress and future ways to take action later in the year, so stay tuned and keep those banana suits safe!



## FOCUS ON: FAIRTRADE COTTON



**The inaugural Fashion Revolution Day (FRD) took place on 24 April this year, an international day of action to commemorate the one year anniversary of the Rana Plaza factory disaster which claimed the lives of 1,133 garment workers in Bangladesh.**

FRD sought to raise consumer awareness of the people who make our clothes, from cotton farmers to factory workers throughout the long and complex garment supply chain.

Mr GS Rao from Chetna Organic, and Indian organisation representing 15,000 small-scale cotton farmers visited the UK to take part in FRD, attending events, meeting cotton buyers and Fairtrade campaigners and update us on the situation for the farmers he works with.

Mr Rao, Chetna's coordinator for the state of Odisha, told us the farmers he works with are able to sell their organic and Fairtrade cotton on average 25% above the Indian minimum market price, receiving roughly the same again in Fairtrade premium, which farmers then decide

how to invest. In Odisha this is typically spent on training and technical support, education scholarships for children, clean drinking water for communities and seed banks to provide affordable non-GM seeds for farmers.

He also stressed the importance which Chetna places on organic farming – reducing the dangerous pesticides which damage human health and the environment and helping farmers avoid going down the expensive GM seed route.

He also reminded us however, that the benefits of Fairtrade are limited by the amount of cotton Chetna is able to sell on Fairtrade terms, currently only around 20% of total production (although more is sold as organic). This is a common story for Fairtrade cotton farmers in India and West Africa and the situation can only be improved by greater availability and demand for Fairtrade cotton.

Over the past five years, cotton is one of the few Fairtrade commodities to actually see a drop in sales, seriously limiting the impact

Fairtrade is able to deliver for cotton farming communities.

The Fairtrade system has been working hard in recent years to arrest this damaging decline. This year we are introducing a new way for businesses to buy cotton on Fairtrade terms, which will sit alongside our current product and certification model, known as Fairtrade Sourcing Programs. The Program is also being developed for cocoa and sugar.

We hope this new opportunity will open up badly needed sales for cotton farmers who have seen their market decline over the past few years. You can find out more about Fairtrade Sourcing Programs (FSP) at: [fairtrade.org.uk/FSP](http://fairtrade.org.uk/FSP), but don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Another huge buyer of cotton, and potential market for Fairtrade cotton is the public sector; work wear, uniforms, and other cotton products purchased by local authorities and other public bodies – often in large contracts.

**See the enclosed guide for tips to influence these contracts in favour of Fairtrade in your area – and you can find more information including 'Cotton on to Fairtrade: a guide for public sector procurement professionals' at [fairtrade.org.uk/publicprocurement](http://fairtrade.org.uk/publicprocurement)**

## NATIONAL CAMPAIGNER COMMITTEE

**The National Campaigner Committee (NCC) is a group of twelve elected Fairtrade campaigners who meet quarterly to represent campaigners within the Foundation on a whole range of issues, to inform our campaigning agenda and resources developed by the Fairtrade Foundation.**

The NCC last met on Wednesday 30 April and held lively debates on a variety of topics. A summary of the main

discussion points can be found at [fairtrade.org.uk/ncc](http://fairtrade.org.uk/ncc), along with those from every meeting. The next meetings will be held on Tuesday 17 June, and Tuesday 9 September, so please get in touch with your local representative if you have an issue you'd like to raise.

The NCC are your representatives so if you would like to know more about the discussions in the meetings please contact your representative directly

– you can find out who they are at [fairtrade.org.uk/ncc](http://fairtrade.org.uk/ncc)

NCC members are elected for two year terms at regional conferences, including those in September and October, so if you're interested in running for the NCC please contact us or your local representative to find out how! It's a unique opportunity to use your knowledge and campaigning experience to represent the voice of grassroots campaigners and help shape the work of the Fairtrade Foundation.

## INTERNATIONAL FAIR TRADE TOWNS



Rheinbach in Germany became the 1,500th Fair Trade Town in the world last month, soon after the International Fair Trade Towns conference in Kumamoto, the first Fair Trade Town in Asia in late March.

300 delegates from across the world, including many from Asia and eight from the UK shared experiences and skills with each other and also considered the conference theme of 'building fair and local socio economies.' It's easy to forget when we are focused on getting a better deal for producers in the global south, that a Fairtrade Town brings so much to a local community too, whether bringing together different groups from across the community, supporting local ethical businesses, working with local producers or generally enabling more conscious and empowered consumers and citizens. How do you think your Fairtrade Town campaign contributes to local community or economy? We'd love to hear your thoughts!

**The 2015 international Fair Trade Towns conference is coming to Bristol at the start of July, stay tuned for updates and an invitation, this will be one conference not to be missed!**

## 2014: DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 
- **July 2014:**  
New Fairtrade Foundation website launched!
  - **September/October 2014:**  
Regional Fairtrade Supporter Conferences – see page 2
  - **16 October 2014:**  
World Food Day
  - **19-26 October 2015:**  
One World Week
  - **23 February-8 March 2015:**  
Fairtrade Fortnight 2015
  - **3-5 July 2015:**  
International Fair Trade Towns conference, Bristol

## CONTACT

Rachael Sweet, Communities Campaigns Officer:  
[rachael.sweet@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:rachael.sweet@fairtrade.org.uk) 020 7440 8568

Adam Gardner, Communities Campaigns Manager:  
[adam.gardner@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:adam.gardner@fairtrade.org.uk) 020 7440 8552

Silvia de Gregorio and Rachel Murray,  
Fairtrade Towns Volunteers:  
[Volunteer.towns@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:Volunteer.towns@fairtrade.org.uk) 020 7405 5942

Fairtrade Town Discussion Group:  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FairtradeTown>

Order resources:  
<http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/shop> 020 7440 7676

[fairtrade.org.uk](http://fairtrade.org.uk)  
[mail@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:mail@fairtrade.org.uk)

Fairtrade Foundation, 3rd Floor, Ibex House,  
42-47 Minories, London EC3N 1DY

CS0519

Registered Charity No. 1043886. A company limited by guarantee,  
registered in England and Wales No. 2733136



FAIRTRADE  
FOUNDATION