

SERVICE UPDATE

<u>Name of Function:</u>	City Regeneration & Environment
<u>Date:</u>	05/06/2024
<u>Title of Update:</u>	Fairtrade Update
<u>Author:</u>	Kat Ramsay, Sustainability Officer
<u>Chief Officer:</u>	David Dunne
<u>Contact Details:</u>	Kat Ramsay kramsay@aberdeencity.gov.uk

1. City Wide and Partnership Working for Fairtrade

The purpose of this service update is to provide a summary on the progress of Fairtrade in Aberdeen, which supports a commitment under the Council Fairtrade Resolution¹.

Aberdeen City Council is part of the Aberdeen Fair and Sustainable Trade Group (AFSTG), a partnership of organisations and volunteers, formerly known as the Aberdeen Fairtrade Steering Group. It is this group who oversees the Fairtrade Community renewal status and works to promote and raise awareness of fair and sustainable trade, and wider sustainability issues.

Fairtrade contributes to the alleviation of poverty in developing countries in the global South through a system of trade whereby marginalised producers gain fair access to markets. Fairtrade encompasses fair trade systems and producer empowerment; it has a role in moving towards social and environmental sustainability and climate adaptation. Aberdeen's continuation of awareness raising, and promotion of Fairtrade contributes towards work to strengthen gender equality, market accessibility, improved productivity and quality with a wide range of Fairtrade certified products available across the globe.

1.1. Fairtrade Community Status Renewal

Cities, towns, villages, schools and faith groups can apply to the Fairtrade Foundation for Fairtrade status evidencing the work they have carried out to support Fairtrade, as well as presenting a commitment for future actions.

Aberdeen first achieved Fairtrade status in 2003, since then this accreditation has been renewed on a regular basis. The most recent renewal was submitted by AFSTG, and this successfully achieved Fairtrade Community Status for Aberdeen City on 28 July 2023. This

¹ <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/fairtrade-resolution-2018>

followed the previous renewal in 2018 and it was made using the new application process for Fairtrade renewals in the UK which opened for submissions in July 2023.

Renewal applications are verified by the Fairtrade Foundation (UK) and successful applicants are awarded a Fairtrade Community certificate (Appendix 1).

Aberdeen has been a Fairtrade City for twenty years. The Fairtrade Community status demonstrates the commitment of the City towards a fairer future through community action and support. Aberdeen City Council has worked in partnership with other organisations throughout that time to maintain the status. The next application for Fairtrade Community Status will be due by 28 July 2026.

The Fairtrade Community status is overseen by the Fairtrade Foundation (UK) which, through their campaigns, highlight and drive issues of awareness around unfair trade and support for better product choice in communities, schools and faith groups.

1.2. Aberdeen Fair and Sustainable Trade Group (AFSTG)

AFSTG currently consists of the following organisations:

- Aberdeen City Council
- Aberdeen For a Fairer World
- North Link Ferries
- Granite City Good Food
- Cults Kirk Centre
- Aberdeen University Student Association
- University of Aberdeen
- Co-Op Member Pioneers
- Soroptimist International Aberdeen.

Supporting the renewal process AFSTG organise a range of activities. Table 1 illustrates the number of activities, engagements, as well as connections made with other groups and organisations in support of Fairtrade in the past five years. The dip in the number of activities during 2020-21 was due to pandemic restrictions. However, during this time AFSTG explored new ways of working and they were able to host a number of online activities including lectures, online cafes and webinars. In addition, where restrictions allowed, there were displays and coffee mornings out with lock down periods.

Table 1: Number of activities hosted by AFSTG and partner organisations

Year	Number of Activities
2019	15
2020	12
2021	8
2022	18
2023	21

Activities were presented according to which stakeholder groups had organised them (as shown in table 2). Activities included:

- Schools participated in visits, talks, awareness raising and holding a 90kg rice challenge with primary and secondary pupils.
- Faith groups were focused on coffee mornings, honesty stalls and talks.
- Universities hosted displays, film nights, a lecture and research series and student and staff led activities.
- Communities organised a variety of talks, stalls, drop-in cafes, wine tasting, workshops and community group visits.

Table 2: Activities recorded for the Fairtrade Community Renewal Application

Local Fairtrade Stakeholders	Number of activities hosted	Approximate number of people engaged with
Schools	13	525
Faith Groups	6	480
Universities	5	72
Community	12	1,189
Total	35	2,266

1.3. Celebrating twenty years of Fairtrade in Aberdeen

In 2024, Aberdeen City will celebrate the twenty-year anniversary of its commitment to Fairtrade. A civic reception is set to take place on 19th September to mark the occasion. The event will take place during the Fairtrade Foundation annual Fairtrade Fortnight.

Fairtrade Fortnight 2024² is set to run from Monday 9 September to Sunday 22 September 2024³ to commemorate 30 years of the Fairtrade Mark⁴.

² Fairtrade Fortnight is the annual Fairtrade celebration to celebrate, promote and raise awareness around Fairtrade products and the positive impacts for producers and farmers

³ <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight/>

⁴ [Using the FAIRTRADE Mark - Fairtrade https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/what-is-fairtrade/using-the-fairtrade-mark/](https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/what-is-fairtrade/using-the-fairtrade-mark/)

A range of events, activities and awareness days have already taken place or are planned for the year ahead:

- Aberdeen for a Fairer World held a Barista Challenge (12th March).
- Aberdeen University Student Union hosted a Fairtrade Film Night as part of Climate Week North East 2024 (21st March)
- Aberdeen for a Fairer World will deliver training for teachers and support work for Fairtrade in schools.
- World Fair Trade Day (13th May).
- AFSTG will man a Fairtrade stall at the Hazlehead Highland Games (16th June).
- Cults Kirk Centre are planning a Strawberry Tea (27th July)
- AFSTG will participate in the Mela Festival (August) for the third year.
- AFSTG will host a U.N. Day and Sustainable Development Goals community update (24th October).
- North Link Ferries are planning a tour on one of their ferries.

Up-to-date information on engagement activities is available through the [Aberdeen Fairtrade Facebook page](#)⁵.

2. Aberdeen City Council working for Fairtrade

2.1. Aberdeen City Council Fairtrade Resolution

The Council adopted a Fairtrade Resolution in 2003, which was refreshed in 2018. The resolution includes the acknowledgement of the Council as a consumer and opinion leader of Fairtrade. The Council supports Fairtrade and promotes and raises awareness of it through internal activities. These have included:

- Articles on the staff intranet during Fairtrade Fortnight and World Fair Trade Day.
- Information stalls for staff which were displayed at Marischal College.
- Activities to encourage staff awareness and participation including Fairtrade themed quizzes, photo challenges and learning webinars.
- Hosting activities such as a Fairtrade coffee morning, joint local authority webinars and participation and involvement in Aberdeen for a Fairer World Fairtrade Cafes (online).
- Membership of the [Scottish Fair Trade](#)⁶. The Scottish Fair Trade contributes to building a just, equitable and sustainable world through supporting Scotland to remain a vibrant Fair Trade Nation and working to embed the principles of Fair Trade in all aspects of Scottish society.

⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/aberdeenfairtrade>

⁶ <https://scottishfairtrade.org/>

3. Definitions⁷

Fairtrade

'Fairtrade' refers to the mark or certification label given by the Fairtrade Foundation (in the UK) to products they verify as adhering to their [standards](#)⁸. The standards are overseen globally by Fairtrade International.

Fair Trade

Fair Trade is used two ways:

- A broader term that encompasses the fair trade movement and its principles, values, and goals. It is not a trademark or a certification system, but rather a movement and a practice that seeks to create more equitable and sustainable trade relationships between producers and consumers.
- Fair Trade can be applied to any product or service, and it can be verified by different organisations, networks, or labels, such as the World Fair Trade Organisation.

⁷ Terminology explained by the Scottish Fair Trade <https://scottishfairtrade.org/about-fair-trade/>

⁸ <https://www.fairtrade.net/standard/trader>

Appendix 1

Certificate of success as a Fairtrade Community

