

## LUDLOW FAIRTRADE

As a fair-trade group, our major interest is in making sure that the focus falls not only on improving life for people in Ludlow, but also in the developing world.

There are three strands to 'Fairtrade' (these are the criteria which the product with a FT Logo has to meet) and all are important to us.

- ensuring the farmers in developing countries are given a fair price for their produce along with long term contracts;
- ensuring the product is produced in an environmentally sensitive way
- making sure that there is investment going into local communities to improve, for example, standards of health and education.

Buying a product which is fair-trade certified also guarantees that it has been produced under good labour conditions and no child labour (this is not specific to just fairtrade but is part of the whole picture).

Assuming that we are all going to continue to want to drink coffee, tea, eat bananas and so on, we feel that we should be applying the same ethical standards to our purchase of these goods as we do to goods from this country.

Ludlow has had a fair trade presence since 1986 – long before the FT Mark came into being – through Traidcraft at what is now Ludlow Mascall Centre) and the town has had formal 'fairtrade town' status since 2003. During this time there have been three aspects to the group's work:

- Increasing the availability and sale of fair-trade goods in the town
- Education about fairtrade and the issues involved
- Campaigning more widely on fair-trade and Trade Justice issues

To this end, we have a permanent shop in the Ludlow Mascall Centre; a regular stall on the 'Local to Ludlow' market; stalls at many events in town such as the food festival, the Christmas fair etc; links with local schools, businesses and churches and links with other places in South Shropshire.

As with any voluntary group, we are always looking for more volunteers to assist with all aspects of our work.

The request to consider the group's vision for 2040 has been an interesting one to think about. I suppose really what we would hope is that by that date we as a group don't exist because the need for us has gone. This of course can only happen when all global trade is 'fair'. This 'Utopian' picture will not have been realised within the timescale we are talking about, so how far along the road might we realistically expect to have gone by 2040 and what do our priorities need to be in order to get there?

I think it should be realistic to expect fairly traded goods to be available in all appropriate retailers in Ludlow and it is at this level that we should be able to have an influence.

Therefore I would say that over the next 24 years our specific objectives need to be to get more involved in education at all levels so we are producing a town full of consumers who demand that the goods they buy have been fairly traded and a town full of traders who not only respond to this consumer demand but also are so convinced by the message that they themselves lead on ensuring that our shops are full of these goods.