

Fairtrade matters: A time to rally. Your support is sought.

The weeks leading up to Christmas have always been one of the busiest period for sales be they Fairtrade or not. Many enterprises rely on Christmas to see them through the year. This applies even more so to Traidcraft this year.

You may have heard or read that the trading arm of Traidcraft is having to consider its future. Since 1979, Traidcraft has been pioneering fair trade in the UK. Today, the business is in a period of consultation. For some years the trading climate has been increasingly challenging. In recent weeks the Traidcraft board concluded that the current business model is not sustainable. A wide ranging consultation process has begun with all stakeholders and supporters, including the 70 UK based staff whose jobs are now at risk.

That said, Traidcraft continues to trade and seeks support to maintain its impact in helping folk trade their way out of poverty. There is an element of 'Watch this space' when it comes to what decision will be made by Traidcraft, however every one of us has the ability to influence the decision by buying Fairtrade. While many other sources of Fairtrade goods could be affected by possible changes at Traidcraft, other suppliers and producers of Fairtrade goods continue their individual businesses. The provision of Fairtrade goods on offer to local Methodist Churches, individuals, churches and organisations continues through Rod Thorpe.

So what can you do to help Traidcraft?

- Seek out opportunities to buy Traidcraft at your own or nearby church.
- Visit www.traidcraftshop.co.uk, and encourage friends and family to do the same or
- Browse, promote and share the Traidcraft catalogues. (see info below)
- Go to the Traidcraft website and sign up to receive their email newsletters, which will let you know how you can continue to help Traidcraft in the future

Catalogues and Orders: Orders made through Rod Thorpe incur no delivery charge and a 10% donation from the sale price goes to Christian Aid. Ring Rod on 01844 351565 for catalogues or more information.

Remember it is not just foods that are produced to Fairtrade regulations. Watch out for flowers, furniture, products from recycled glass, tyres and metal, gold, jewellery, ceramics, clothing, children's toys, Advent calendars as well as Gifts for Life presents.

The options are wide and the impact of your purchases is significant for all sorts of reasons.