

# Plunkett UK Membership Fees

**In 2023, members approved an increase in membership fees for supporter organisation members, to bring them in line with the fees paid by community business members. At the AGM, we also committed to conduct a full review of fees for all categories of membership.**

Following discussions with the Community Business Membership Panel, and conversations with supporter members, this leaflet explains the proposed increase to membership fees to come into effect from 1 October 2024.

## First fee increase for 13 years

From our research of the wider membership sector, it is generally considered to be best practice to increase fees annually/gradually in line with inflation and improvements to membership value. We decided not to take this approach through the difficult trading conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, and ensuing cost of living crisis.

Plunkett membership for individual supporters was simplified and also reduced in 2019. However, the fee for community business membership has not changed since being launched in 2011. Based on these findings, we are recommending an increase in fees across all membership categories in 2024.

We also propose to review membership fees on an annual basis, taking into account the operating environment, and agree no change or bring a resolution to members to increase fees in line with inflation if deemed appropriate.

## Recent improvements to membership

In response to feedback from members, we have:

- Embedded Plunkett membership at the heart of all we do
- Built a bespoke online Member Hub for community business members, including searchable resources and recordings library
- Increased access to training and events for all members through regular webinars
- Created a new grant funding directory for community business members
- Published the online Business Appraisal Tool for community business members
- Improved member administration, including the introduction of Direct Debit
- Increased the number and diversity of recommended suppliers
- Represented the interests of rural community businesses through research, policy and public affairs.
- Relaunch of the National Community Business Conference, as requested by the Community Business Membership Panel

## More to come this year

- Special interest national networking groups
- New regular newsletter exclusively for supporter members

## What are the proposed fees?

	Monthly Direct Debit	Annual fee
Community Business Membership	£18.75*	£225*
Organisation Supporter Membership		£225*
Individual Supporter Membership		£22.50

\*Price exclusive of VAT

As always, the new fees will need to be approved by members at the AGM on 11 September 2024.

## Spread the cost

Community business members can email [membership@plunkett.co.uk](mailto:membership@plunkett.co.uk) to set up a Direct Debit to pay in monthly instalments.

## What else is Plunkett doing to increase income?

Since 2018, Plunkett has invested in diversifying its income streams. We are delivering new consultancy services, have built corporate partnerships and developed additional fundraising initiatives.

## Why should I continue my membership of Plunkett?

Membership of Plunkett UK demonstrates your commitment to the long-term survival of community businesses and makes you part of the only UK-wide movement for rural community ownership.

As a movement, we share knowledge and experience across all members of our network. We provide a range of benefits for members, from regular newsletters and access to reports, resources and information, to events, webinars and training, and opportunities to contribute to research and to influence national policy. Plus, we provide enhanced business support for community business members, including priority support from expert advisers, a free annual health check and the discounted Model Rules service, with free updates for established businesses.



[Watch the video](#) (left) to hear David Burlison from *The Boundary Shop and Café* in St Mary Bourne speak about his experience of community business membership.

We pride ourselves on delivering good value to members. The fee increase has been proposed to ensure that we can continue to meet your needs. We trust that you will continue to support and be involved with Plunkett as we grow the rural community business sector together.

## Contact us

If you have any questions about the proposed fee increase, or any of your membership benefits, please contact us on [membership@plunkett.co.uk](mailto:membership@plunkett.co.uk) or call 01993 630022.



## The work of Plunkett in 2023

To support the impact achieved by community businesses across the country, our dedicated staff team answer enquiries every day from people across the UK who are exploring the idea of setting up a community business, as well as from existing businesses who need additional support.

In 2023, we received **424 enquiries** from a range of businesses seeking support across the UK, including 266 enquiries from communities looking to set up new community businesses.

During the year, we delivered **606 days of one-to-one support to 260 community businesses**, by matching community groups with an expert adviser. This included:

- **119** days of business and financial planning
- **24** days on setting up legal structures and good governance
- **59** days action planning to success
- **40** days on raising community shares
- **111** days of mentoring
- **239** days of in-depth support for the Community Ownership Fund

### Other ways we support community businesses:

Almost **3,000 people** use our online peer networks for community shops, pubs and woodlands.

We held **59** events with **1,289 attendees** in 2023: webinars, courses, workshops, networking and study visits. Our training covers a range of topics, such as diversity and inclusion, recruiting staff, and keeping down energy costs.

We also awarded over **£28,000 in grants to 6 communities**.

**404** community businesses benefit from Plunkett UK Membership, which offers them benefits such as discounted suppliers and an annual healthcheck for their business.

### How did we do?

99% of groups found Plunkett support **easy to access**.

93% were able to **address their challenges** with our help.