

# QUARTERLY RETURN ISSUE 140

SUMMER 2026 | [www.shared-interest.com](http://www.shared-interest.com)

## MOVING MOUNTAINS WITH YOUR INVESTMENT

FULL STORY ON PAGE 10



**SHAREDINTEREST**  
INVESTING IN A FAIRER WORLD

# WELCOME TO YOUR SUMMER MAGAZINE

Welcome to your summer issue of Quarterly Return. I am delighted to share an update on our Strategic Review and would like to extend my sincere thanks to all members who contributed. Whether you completed our member survey or participated in workshops at recent events, your insights, feedback and engagement are invaluable in shaping our future direction.

This issue also features Rwandan coffee co-operatives Huye and Simbi, who I was fortunate to visit during my trip to East Africa earlier this year. It was inspiring to meet farmers in-person and hear how the co-operatives are making a meaningful difference to their lives. You can read more on pages 10 and 11.

High in the hills of Copán, Honduras, we hear from coffee co-operative Cafescor. Central to their approach is a strong commitment to engaging young people. Through a youth cupping school and internship opportunities, they are supporting the next generation of farmers. Together, these initiatives are helping to bridge the generational gap, demonstrating that coffee farming today has the potential to offer diverse, skilled and rewarding careers.

On pages 12 and 13, we hear from Peruvian co-operative CACVI, where a blend of finance and training from both Shared Interest Society and Shared Interest Foundation is helping transform the future of coffee for more than 500 smallholder farmers.

It was a pleasure to meet many of you at our York and Bristol events recently. June was also an opportunity to celebrate our network of volunteers during Volunteers' Week and you can read a summary on page 15.

Warm regards,



**Kerrey Baker**  
Managing Director

## WHAT'S INSIDE

Vacancy for two Non-Executive Directors .....	3
Together we are the Business Revolution! .....	3
Shaping our next chapter together .....	4
Engaging our community ....	5
Supporting the next generation of coffee farmers in Honduras .....	8
Harvesting hope in the hills of Rwanda .....	10
Connecting people, land and culture .....	12
Volunteers Week 2026 .....	14
Council comment .....	15

**SHAREDINTEREST**   
INVESTING IN A FAIRER WORLD

If you would like to manage your Share Account online, you can register to use our Member Portal by calling us on 0191 233 9101 or emailing us at [membership@shared-interest.com](mailto:membership@shared-interest.com)



# VACANCY FOR TWO NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

We are seeking two new Non-Executive Directors to join our Board, as we begin delivering our new five-year strategic plan, shaping how we respond to a changing global context while staying rooted in our values.

The first role is a Non-Executive Director with a broad strategic background. This reflects the changing context in which we work, where environmental pressures, global supply chains and financial risks are increasingly interconnected. We are particularly interested in candidates with proven expertise in one of the following areas:

- **Climate and Environment:** Expertise in the intersection of poverty and climate change, with an understanding of how environmental resilience impacts smallholder livelihoods.
- **Agri-Finance:** Direct experience in rural livelihoods, smallholder farmer financing, or agricultural value chains in the Global South.
- **Risk Management Frameworks:** A proven track record of identifying complex financial risks and an understanding of risk management frameworks within a financial services context, including international credit risk, portfolio diversification and regulatory compliance (such as AML, KYC, together with legal and economic sanctions).

The second role is a finance-focused Non-Executive Director. This position requires a qualified accountant with strong experience in financial oversight, including charity reporting and risk management.

The successful candidate will also Chair the Audit Committee, bringing insight into complex financial systems and leading board level oversight of audit, risk and financial sustainability.

For both roles, we are looking for individuals who share our values. A commitment to co-operation, fairness and global development is essential, alongside the ability to work effectively at board level. You will need sound judgement, strong communication skills and the confidence to support and challenge in equal measure.

Board members serve two three-year terms and attend six in-person meetings each year in Newcastle, alongside the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and attendance at Committee meetings. The time commitment is around 12 days a year. Above all, these roles offer the opportunity to make a tangible difference. By joining the Board, you will help shape a fairer financial system that works for producers and communities often excluded from mainstream finance.

If you are interested and would like to find out more, you are warmly encouraged to request further information or to have an informal, no obligation conversation with **Amanda Simmons, Head of HR**. Please email your interest to [recruitment@shared-interest.com](mailto:recruitment@shared-interest.com)

**Closing date for applications is 14 August 2026.**

## TOGETHER WE ARE THE BUSINESS REVOLUTION!

On 9 May, we celebrated **World Fair Trade Day**, shining a spotlight on the transformative power of the fair trade business model and its positive impact on people's lives and communities. This year, the campaign theme was: **Together we are the Business Revolution!**

The World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) shared: "This edition is about our planet. The foundation beneath everything we do, everything we make, and everything we stand for. At WFTO, we believe that business models rooted in the 10 Fair Trade Principles are one of the most powerful forces we have for real, lasting change; for our communities, our ecosystems, and the world we are leaving behind. Ours is a global network of doers, makers, and changemakers rooted in collaboration and shaping the future of business. Artisans, designers, farmers, shoppers, advocates, we are in this together. And together, we are the Business Revolution!"

To celebrate, we shared messages via social media featuring the farmers and artisans we work with, and the lasting impact our members make by investing in Shared Interest.

During May, our Partnership Manager, Sally Seddon, spoke at the BAFTS Annual Conference which took place in Cardiff. The theme of this year's conference was "Stronger Stories for Fairer Trade," and Sally joined a panel alongside The Co-operative Bank, Unity Trust Bank and Ethical Consumer to debate - Can Finance Have a Conscience?

*The conference was well attended. Sally said: "This was a really energising and thought provoking event and as always, it was wonderful to be part of it. We look forward to building on our partnership with BAFTS Fair Trade Network UK and the community."*



**A SHARED FUTURE:**

# SHAPING OUR NEXT CHAPTER TOGETHER

The development of our 2026 to 2031 strategy has been a thoughtful and inclusive process, shaped by the voices of those who know Shared Interest best. We are deeply grateful to all members who took part in workshops and completed the member survey. Your insights, ideas and honest reflections have directly influenced the direction we have set, ensuring that the strategy remains grounded in our shared values and ambitions. You can read more about the workshops on pages 6 and 7.

Work began in autumn 2025 with a clear intention to bring together perspectives from across the organisation and our wider community. This included engagement with members, alongside Board and Council, colleagues and customers, as well as our wider external stakeholder network. The process combined research, workshops and interviews, drawing on a wide range of experiences to create a strategy that both honours our history and responds to a rapidly changing world.

What has emerged is a strategy centred on renewal, growth and exploration. At its heart are two priorities that reinforce each other. The first is making better use of the capital entrusted to us by increasing lending to customers who need it most.

The second is growing and renewing our membership so that we can sustain and expand that impact over time. Together, these priorities recognise that our strength lies in the connection between members and the communities we serve.

The strategy is built around a simple framework. We will focus on getting better by improving how we work, removing some constraints and making greater use of data and technology. We will go beyond by reaching new audiences, expanding our lending into new geographies and value chains. And we will explore new opportunities, including climate-related finance, blended approaches that combine lending and technical support, and ways to adapt to a changing trade environment.

Five themes will guide our work over the next five years.

- We will place renewed emphasis on engaging and growing membership, recognising both the importance of long-standing members and the need to welcome new and more diverse supporters.
- We will increase our lending and customer base, including expanding into new geographies where there is clear opportunity.
- We will bring the work of the Society and Foundation closer together, creating a more joined up approach that combines finance with practical support.
- We will strengthen how we measure and communicate impact, ensuring that the difference we make is visible and meaningful.
- We will continue to improve as an organisation, becoming more efficient, more responsive and better equipped for the future.

ECOOKIM cocoa farmer  
Kouamé Amino.



Member discussions  
at our event in Bristol.



# ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

The next phase is about delivery. Over the coming months and years, we will begin implementing the changes outlined in the strategy, from improving member engagement and refreshing how we communicate, to refining lending processes and piloting new approaches.

We will also be sharing a more detailed outline of our plans in forthcoming issues of QR and during supporter events. Progress will be carefully monitored, with regular review points to ensure we are learning and adapting as we go.

**This strategy marks an important moment for Shared Interest. It reflects both confidence in what we have built together and a clear recognition that we must evolve. With your continued support, we are well placed to grow our impact and work towards a future in which farming and artisan communities can thrive with dignity, resilience and opportunity.**

**During the summer, we were delighted to welcome over 100 members and supporters to our events in York and Bristol.**

Attendees at both events heard from the Shared Interest senior leadership team, who shared an overview of the impact our members' investments have had during the last year.

Managing Director, Kerrey, opened the events saying: "It has been a year of global challenge for farmers and artisans, we are fully aware that they are navigating a perfect storm. The economic headwinds, including the high global interest rates, the cost-of-living crisis, added to the existing climate change crisis has led to huge instability.

"Logistical supply chains have been affected with shipping disruptions, and the frontline producers are the ones who are bearing the brunt. Thirty per cent of the world's food is grown by smallholder farmers around the world, and yet they do not have the opportunity to access finance - and that is why Shared Interest exists."

*She continued: "Our members are at the heart of everything we do, even a small investment will make a huge difference to producers' lives."*

To ensure our members are at the forefront of our new strategic journey, we hosted interactive workshops during each event. These sessions offered a unique opportunity to dive deeper into the core themes of our 2026-2031 strategy, ask direct questions of our leadership team, and share perspectives on how we communicate our mission.

The workshops focused on three thematic areas, and attendees were invited to participate and share views. The sessions brought about lively discussions, and on the following pages we share a summary.

**CONTINUED >**



## GROWING OUR COMMUNITY

**This session focused on how Shared Interest can re-energise and expand its membership, with particular emphasis on empowering members to act as ambassadors and strengthening how the organisation communicates its purpose and impact.**

Members highlighted the importance of clear, authentic communication in building awareness and encouraging advocacy. Across discussions, storytelling emerged as a central theme, with participants agreeing that personal, real-life stories are the most effective way to spark interest - particularly when they follow individual producers over time and reflect both challenges and successes. This narrative approach was seen as essential in communicating Shared Interest's distinctive identity as an organisation that enables people to trade their way out of poverty, rather than providing charitable aid. The investment model where funds are repaid and reused - was also viewed as a compelling message, although members noted that explaining it simply remains a challenge.

Members identified several barriers to recommending Shared Interest, most notably a discomfort with discussing financial matters and influencing others decisions. This was particularly evident in the current economic climate. To address this, participants emphasised the need for clearer, simpler resources to build confidence in explaining key elements such as risk, interest, and how the model works in practice.

Flexible entry points and tailored messaging were also seen as important for engaging new and younger audiences.

There was strong support for expanding outreach through social media, provided content remains aligned with Shared Interest's values and maintains an authentic, impact-led tone. Members also expressed enthusiasm for acting as ambassadors, promoting Shared Interest through events, community networks, and peer-to-peer recommendations, including both values-led and more mainstream settings to broaden reach.

Participants highlighted the importance of accessible, values-driven messaging, with simple phrases such as "Your money can do good" resonating strongly. They also identified opportunities to engage younger audiences through educational, relatable content and materials suitable for schools and community groups.

Overall, members emphasised the importance of combining clear, story-led communication with practical tools and accessible materials, enabling wider engagement while maintaining credibility and trust.

*"I am always looking for the voice of the producers when I open QR."*

## EVOLVING LENDING AND LOOKING BEYOND CERTIFICATIONS

**This discussion focused on Shared Interests exploration of a more flexible, "values-based" lending approach. Alongside continuing support for Fairtrade-certified producers, this approach would also extend to producer groups that may not hold formal certification, but are strongly aligned with the organisations' mission and values.**

Members that took part in the workshop expressed a cautious but considered approach to exploring greater flexibility in certification and lending criteria. While Fairtrade certification remains widely viewed as a trusted benchmark - providing assurance to both Shared Interest and consumers - there was recognition that it can be costly, resource-intensive, and not always viable or available for all producers. Participants acknowledged that the absence of certification does not necessarily indicate poor standards, and that other credible certifications or internal assessments may also align with Shared Interest's values.



Members emphasised the importance of strong due diligence, transparent criteria, and consistent decision-making. There was clear support for assessing environmental, social, and ethical standards as a core part of lending, including living wages, gender equality, and responsible business practices. Alongside protecting against low producer incomes, participants also highlighted the need to prevent excessive profiteering, particularly when lending to private businesses. Overall, there was support for a developmental model, where Shared Interest works with values-aligned producers and, where appropriate, supports them towards certification. However, members expressed that this flexibility should be underpinned by credible, ongoing evidence that standards are being met.

Members were broadly supportive of reaching producers in more challenging contexts, recognising the potential for greater impact. This was balanced by a strong focus on safeguarding members' investments. Participants stressed the need for robust risk assessment, clear evaluation of costs, local expertise, and trusted partnerships when entering new markets. Trust in due diligence processes and borrower relationships was also seen as fundamental.

There was also strong interest in supporting evolving value chains in response to climate change. Members encouraged agility in helping producers diversify crops and adapt to changing conditions, while recognising the challenges associated with climate finance and certification. Overall, members that took part in the discussions supported a balanced approach that combines impact, resilience, and financial sustainability.

## ONE SHARED INTEREST

**This workshop explored how closer alignment between the Society and the Foundation can create a more joined-up approach - combining trade finance with technical support to deliver deeper, more sustainable impact.**

Members demonstrated strong support for a more integrated approach between Shared Interest Society and Shared Interest Foundation, with lending and business training widely seen as complementary elements of a single mission. Supporting producers from early-stage development through to becoming "loan-ready" was viewed as a practical and impactful model, helping to build long-term resilience. There was recognition that closer alignment can strengthen decision-making, with Foundation insights and due diligence informing lending and reducing risk.

While understanding of the distinction between the Society and Foundation appeared stronger among some members, there was a clear need for more consistent communication about their respective roles. In particular, members highlighted the importance of clearly explaining the difference between investment and donation models, governance arrangements, and how the two entities operate together. This clarity is essential to help members understand when to invest, when to donate, and how each contributes to overall impact.

This uncertainty also influences engagement. Some members view their investment as a form of giving, aligned with a "hand up, not a handout" ethos, while others would be encouraged to support both organisations if clearer pathways were available. Suggestions included promoting options such as donating interest and legacy giving, alongside developing longer-term supporter journeys, tracking a producer's journey from Foundation support through to receiving Society finance.

Across the discussions, there was a strong call for clearer and more transparent communication of impact. Members value personal stories, particularly those told in producers' own voices, and are interested in following full journeys from Foundation support through to receiving Society finance. Alongside this, they want accessible data demonstrating scale and effectiveness, including how funds are used and recycled over time.

Overall, members supported a more integrated "One Shared Interest" approach, emphasising that clearer messaging and compelling evidence of impact will be key to delivering this vision.

***"In many ways it is the Foundation's contribution that enables a business to get started."***

# SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF COFFEE FARMERS IN HONDURAS

High in the hills of Copán, Honduras, coffee farming has long been a way of life. The region's rich soils and high altitudes - ranging from 1,200 to 1,700 metres above sea level - produce some of Central America's finest Arabica beans. But like many rural communities around the world, Copán faces a growing challenge: ensuring that the next generation sees a future for themselves in agriculture.

For many young people, farming can feel uncertain and financially risky. Without access to training, markets or support, the temptation to leave rural areas in search of alternative work is strong. That's why strengthening pathways for young people into sustainable agriculture is vital - not only for their communities, but for the future of coffee itself.

This is where associations like Cafés Especiales Corquin S.A. (Cafescor) are making a difference. Founded in 2014 by a group of 25 ambitious farmers, Cafescor was established with a clear goal: to bring the region's high-quality coffee to international markets. Today, that vision has grown into a thriving producers association of 688 producers, 40% of whom are young people, exporting around 60% of their coffee to Europe.

Since becoming a Shared Interest customer in 2019, Cafescor has been able to strengthen its operations and deepen its impact. Access to finance enables the association to prefinance coffee contracts - ensuring farmers receive timely payment for their harvests, a critical factor in maintaining both quality and livelihoods.



Coffee beans ready for tasting.



*“Shared Interest finance allows Cafescor to purchase coffee from producers during harvest, ensuring timely payments, improving cash flow at farm level, and supporting the long-term sustainability of farming communities. Through this support, farmers can focus on improving coffee quality, investing in their farms, and maintaining sustainable agricultural practices.*

*“In addition, this financial support strengthens Cafescor's ability to access international specialty coffee markets, generating long-term economic opportunities and improving livelihoods for coffee-growing families.”*

**Herminio Perdomo,  
General Manager Cafescor.**



This financial stability has helped Cafescor focus on what matters most: improving coffee quality, building resilience and investing in people.

At the heart of Cafescor's approach is a commitment to engaging young people. In 2024, the association partnered with TRIAS Central America & Caribbean, who supports farmer and entrepreneur organisations to strengthen inclusive, sustainable economic development and livelihoods, to launch a Youth Cupping School.

This initiative equipped 21 young farmers with essential skills in coffee quality control - an increasingly important part of the specialty coffee market. By developing expertise in tasting and grading coffee, young people are gaining new, skilled roles within the sector, beyond traditional farming.

Alongside this, Cafescor introduced an internship programme supporting 20 students nearing graduation in fields such as accounting, administration and agriculture. These placements provide practical experience and a pathway into professional roles within the association and wider agricultural sector.

# CAFESCOR

CAFES ESPECIALES CORQUIN S.A

Thania Paola Roque.



**Customer:** Cafescor  
**Commodity:** Coffee  
**Location:** Honduras  
**Members:** 688



For young people like 22-year-old Thania Paola Roque (pictured above), these opportunities are transformative. Over the past three years, Thania has taken part in a number of Cafescor initiatives, including the Organic Agriculture School, Youth Leadership in Agriculture, the Women's Leadership School, and exchange programmes focused on entrepreneurship and gender equality.

*“Cafescor has opened doors that have helped me grow both personally and professionally,” she says. “Through training programmes, leadership opportunities, and exchanges with other young people, I have gained knowledge, confidence, and new perspectives. These experiences have inspired me to continue learning and developing my own photography and event decoration businesses. They have shown me that young people can build a future in rural communities while creating new opportunities for themselves and others.”*

Alongside her work in coffee, Thania has developed her own businesses, demonstrating how young people can diversify their income and contribute to their communities while building a future in agriculture.

Together, these initiatives are helping to bridge the generational gap - demonstrating that coffee farming today offers diverse, skilled and rewarding careers.



Luz Dariela Estévez, Quality Control Manager showcasing the awards earned by Cafescor in the Full Lot Category at Golden Cup Central America.

Cafescor's work extends beyond youth programmes to create an environment where young people and families can thrive.

The association delivers training to farmers on productivity, climate change adaptation and income diversification - encouraging the cultivation of vegetables and fruits alongside coffee. It also produces organic fertilisers, creating an additional income stream while promoting sustainable farming practices.

Environmental stewardship is another priority. Through a reforestation partnership, Cafescor supports tree planting and environmental education. Meanwhile, 100% of its coffee farms have been geo-referenced using technology to monitor land use and prevent deforestation.

In recognition of its commitment to fairness and inclusion, Cafescor was awarded the 'Organisation with the best approach to Human Rights, Inclusion, and Equity issues' at the 2024 Esperanza (Hope)

Awards, a national awards scheme that celebrates individuals and organisations who demonstrate outstanding leadership, resilience, and impact in driving positive social, economic, or community change. The association also works closely with partners to promote gender equality, raise awareness of child labour, and support families during the busy harvest season. In 2024, children's camps were established within communities, providing educational activities and safe spaces for children while their parents worked.

**Cafescor's story is a powerful example of how finance can drive meaningful, long-term change. Your investment helps ensure farmers are paid fairly and on time. It supports programmes that equip young people with skills and opportunities, and it enables associations like Cafescor to invest in sustainability, equality and community wellbeing.**

# HARVESTING HOPE IN THE HILLS OF RWANDA



Scan this QR code with a smart phone camera to view videos of Huye and Simbi in action.

In Rwanda, almost half a million farmers cultivate coffee at high altitudes on small plots of land, along a cascade of rolling hills. In this pocket of idyllic natural beauty, nutrient-rich volcanic soils, sunshine and ample rainfall provide exceptional conditions for the production of very high quality coffee.



Simbi Coffee farmer  
Nyirabahire Beatha.



**Customer:** Huye and Simbi Coffee  
**Commodity:** Coffee  
**Location:** Rwanda  
**Members:** 2,869 (Huye); 4,500 (Simbi)

For many years, David Rubanzangabo, Managing Director of Huye Mountain Coffee (Huye), has farmed in the Huye district with his family. Here, beans are hand-picked at peak ripeness, carefully washed and sun-dried on raised beds, ensuring each cup delivers the bright acidity and fruity complexity which embodies Rwandan excellence and heritage.

In 2012, David established Huye to support neighbouring communities to access global specialty coffee markets. In 2013, the Rubanzangabo family set up a small coffee washing station and began trading. Later that year, Huye earned the coveted 'Cup of Excellence' award, which has recognised the world's most exquisite coffees since 1999.

Over the next five years, Huye invested in a second coffee washing station, specialist staff, larger processing machines, an accounting system and training to control costs and unlock growth.

Since 2019, Shared Interest has supported Huye with finance, which has enabled the co-operative to grow sustainably, pay farmers in advance of export and invest in a milling machine, a colour sorter machine and a new warehouse in Kigali.

Earlier this year, Shared Interest Managing Director, Kerrey Baker, visited Huye with Lending Manager for East Africa, Immaculate Ochieno and Head of Lending, Paul Sablich.

*Immaculate shared: "The coffee tour conducted for us was very interesting, starting from the office, to the plantation, to the top of the mountain, where we roasted, ground and drank coffee. From there, we went down to the coffee washing stations and up to the factory, the drying tables and to the lab."*

Huye's steady growth has not been without challenges. Whilst the unique conditions of Rwanda's tropical highlands produce some of the most renowned coffee beans on the planet, they also factor into soil erosion at high altitudes, flooding in the lowlands and acute temperature changes as a result of climate change, which exacerbate crop vulnerability and instances of pests and diseases.



Simbi Coffee farmer Tuyizere Marie Goreth, harvests fresh red coffee cherries from the company's farm.



Employees of Huye Mountain Coffee pose for a group photo at the company's facility in Huye Sector.

As a farmer, David understands these challenges, and leads with a proactive, future-focussed approach.

**David told us: "We have a technical team that goes to meet farmers, as well as five trained agronomists. We are introducing intercropping with coffee and bananas... we also organised for farmers to learn how to make manure at home mixed with coffee pulp."**

In addition, Huye conducts coffee tourism, an endeavour which has diversified revenue and marketing opportunities, whilst immersing coffee lovers in the production process.

As a result of Huye's solution-oriented approach, sales are going from strength-to-strength, with a strong portfolio of buyers in Japan, Singapore, Thailand, the Netherlands and the UK.

On the ground, this translates into increased farm investments, employment opportunities and household income security. Vitally, it creates meaningful opportunities for young people. During the harvest, Huye hire an average of 300 casual workers, 90% of whom are women and young people.

Beyond seasonal employment, Huye delivers generational impact, with the co-operative funding school fees for members' children and constructing 10 water collection points, benefiting around 4,000 people within the Huye and Mbazi districts.

Just 20 minutes' drive North of Huye sits Simbi Coffee, an equally inspiring co-operative which also began trading in 2013, following the construction of its first coffee washing station in the breathtaking landscapes of Ngera, Nyaruguru province: a hub for tea agriculture and eco-conservation.

Simbi's membership has risen from 300 to 4,500, whilst its coffee, described as bold, layered and brimming with notes of blueberry, chocolate and orange, has earned multiple 'Cup of Excellence' awards, reflecting the sheer quality of coffee produced in this area.

Shared Interest has supported Simbi since 2021. Our finance has been used to grow the business and its processing capacity, as well as to pay farmers for their coffee in advance, when they need it most.

Coffee farmer, Alphonsine Mukarufonsi, said: "It increased the profit, our life has changed. We have paid for our children to go to school and after school clubs, even life in general goes on well and it is smooth, until now we have no problems."

In that time, the co-operative has invested in a dry mill and a warehouse, which they rent to other co-operatives in the area. This has enabled Simbi to improve product quality, whilst earning additional income milling for other organisations.

With increased revenue from the dry mill, Abdul Rudahunga, Founder of Simbi, says opportunities have been created for many women and young people in the community, who can earn an income sorting coffee during summer.

Abdul told us: "Operating a dry mill has significantly changed our work, both in terms of efficiency and allowing Simbi to control the entire production chain with complete security and transparency."

Simbi's commitment to sustainability, social responsibility and fair pay for farmers has developed an inclusive and empowering work environment.



**"With Simbi Coffee we are able to get money and solve small problems we may have like paying health insurance and school fees, and other ways one can develop themselves financially."**

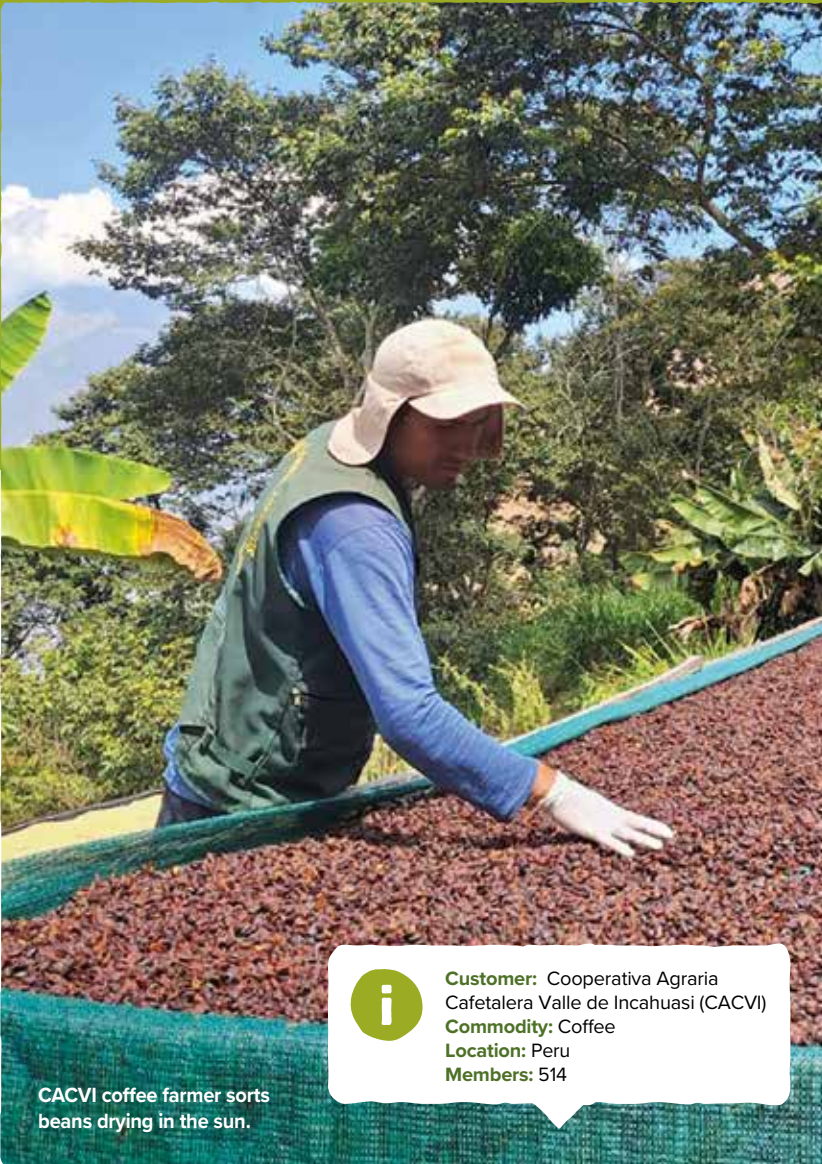
**Nyirabahire Beatha, coffee farmer (pictured left).**



Subsequently, these accolades are a fitting tribute to Abdul's grandmother, one of few rural Rwandans who roasted and enjoyed her own coffee daily, and who inspired the foundation of Simbi.

Whilst Rwanda's present coffee export volumes account for half that of 1993 - before the harrowing events of civil war and genocide unfolded - current exports represent much greater value, underscoring the success of the government's renewed focus on quality, rather than quantity.

Together, Simbi and Huye are exemplary materialisations of Rwanda's culture of innovation and resilience, and are key contributors to the nation's position as a leading producer of specialty coffee. Shared Interest is proud to support these organisations, with our members' investments as a vehicle for change, transforming coffee from a humble brew into a symbol of hope.



CACVI coffee farmer sorts beans drying in the sun.



**Customer:** Cooperativa Agraria Cafetalera Valle de Incahuasi (CACVI)  
**Commodity:** Coffee  
**Location:** Peru  
**Members:** 514



## CUPPING SCORES

Cupping scores are a standardised way of evaluating coffee quality using the Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) scale, where trained tasters assess attributes such as aroma, flavour, acidity, body, balance, and aftertaste, each contributing to a total score out of 100; coffees scoring 80 points or above are classified as 'specialty', indicating high quality, while lower scores reflect progressively more defects or less desirable characteristics.

# CONNECTING PEOPLE, LAND AND CULTURE

High in the southern Highlands of Peru, where steep valleys and remote communities shape both the landscape and livelihoods, the **Cooperativa Agraria Cafetalera Valle de Incahuasi (CACVI)** is transforming the future of coffee for more than 500 smallholder farmers. Spread across 14 local committees in the Ayacucho and Cusco regions, CACVI's 514 members cultivate coffee in one of the country's most isolated growing areas - the Incahuasi Valley, where access to markets and fair prices has historically been limited. Here, just two co-operatives operate, CACVI and fellow Shared Interest customer San Fernando, both playing a vital role in opening fairer, more reliable market opportunities for coffee farmers.

Founded in 1997 in the Andahuaylas district of Apurímac, CACVI began as a small association of farmers determined to secure fairer prices and greater control over their livelihoods. By 2005, the organisation had evolved into a co-operative, strengthening its ability to reach international markets and advocate for its members. Today, its coffee is grown at altitudes between 1,600 and 2,000 metres above sea level and is predominantly produced under Organic standards, contributing to both its quality and sustainability. This commitment was recognised in 2007, when CACVI achieved both Fairtrade and Organic certification, enabling them to export directly and build stronger relationships with global buyers.

CACVI members  
William Muriel (L) and  
Julio Muriel (R).



In recent years, CACVI has gone even further, developing high-quality Arabica coffee that demands premium prices. With cupping scores of between 84 and 90 on the Specialty Coffee Association scale - significantly above Peru's average - the co-operative is firmly positioned in the specialty market. Encouraged by favourable growing conditions and improved access to agricultural inputs, production is set to increase significantly, with finance from Shared Interest helping the co-operative to pay for more coffee from its members and maximise these opportunities.

At the heart of CACVI's success is the deep-rooted knowledge of its farmers, who combine technical expertise with ancestral practices. From traditional offerings to the earth before harvest, to working in Ayni - a system of shared labour built on reciprocity and community - coffee production in Incahuasi reflects a powerful connection between people, land and culture. This balance is also evident in CACVI's forward-looking approach, with plans to invest in composting facilities and reforestation, ensuring that growth goes hand-in-hand with environmental stewardship.

Beyond production, the co-operative plays a vital role in supporting its members' wider wellbeing. Through training, field visits, subsidised inputs such as fertiliser and access to equipment, farmers are equipped to improve both quality and yields. Community initiatives, from medical campaigns to financial assistance in times of need, further strengthen their resilience.



*"The loan from Shared Interest opens up new opportunities in the production and marketing of our product, coffee, which is the main source of income for farmers' families. It also fosters interest among their children, as the new generation, in inheriting agricultural traditions, with greater motivation and confidence in their pursuit of a better life."*

**Fredy Estañis,**  
General Manager.



Alongside financial support, CACVI also participated in a project with our charitable arm, Shared Interest Foundation to increase the income of 58 young coffee farmers in the district of Inkawasi (21% of CACVI's farmers are under the age of 30).

As a result of the project, the young farmers produced dehydrated coffee pulp, which will be used as an ingredient in caffeine-based drinks. Coffee pulp is a by-product obtained from the wet processing of coffee, representing up to 40% of the fruit's weight.

Incorrect disposal of coffee pulp poses environmental threats as it can pollute water sources and farmland. Following the first production cycle, 6,000kg of pulp was produced and sold for the equivalent of £11,297. Beyond immediate financial gains, the project brought a notable change in mindset among the young coffee farmers. Previously relying on a single cash crop, they are now equipped with the technical and business skills to pursue new income opportunities and to add value to what was previously regarded as agricultural waste.

***Susanna Huamán Choque, one of the project participants, said: "Previously, we used pulp to make compost; however, through the project we learned to give it another value as dehydrated pulp. Since this was my first time doing this activity, I delivered three bags of 25 kilos each to the co-operative. This year, I will try to produce more pulp."***

## SHARED INTEREST RECEIVES SPECIAL RECOGNITION

In May, Shared Interest Lending Manager for South America, Bruno Biaggi Vidal, received special recognition from CAC Alta Montaña and Peru's Ministry of the Environment during 'Impacta Verde' (Green Impact). The annual programme promotes investment in 100 sustainable Peruvian enterprises by providing business leaders with training and pitching support to attract finance and strengthen their organisations.

At this year's event, Deputy Minister Carmen Vegas emphasised the importance of collaboration between government, investors and entrepreneurs to protect biodiversity while generating economic opportunities. As part of the programme, CAC Alta Montaña, a coffee co-operative based in Pichanaqui, shared its experience of accessing finance to support a more sustainable supply chain.

Established in 2018, Alta Montaña brings together 538 producers across 2,807 hectares, supported by a team of 14 staff. Led by second and third generation farmers, the co-operative produces Organic cocoa, coffee, oranges and ginger, with certifications including Fairtrade, Global G.A.P. and Rainforest Alliance.

Seeking to strengthen its credit history and attract investment, Alta Montaña worked to demonstrate its scale, management capability and social and environmental impact. Following initial engagement at an investor readiness programme in Lima, Shared Interest conducted due diligence, including a site visit in December 2025.

In January 2026, Shared Interest provided a credit facility to support coffee and cocoa exports. The swift approval enabled Alta Montaña to secure export contracts earlier in the year, benefiting more than 500 member farmers through timely payments.

Alta Montaña highlighted its appreciation for Shared Interest's responsive approach, which combined thorough assessment with efficient decision-making. This partnership demonstrates how collaborative finance can empower co-operatives to grow sustainably, improving livelihoods while supporting environmental stewardship.

Shared Interest members and  
volunteers Ian and Shelagh.

  
**VOLUNTEERS'  
WEEK**



# VOLUNTEERS WEEK 2026

**From 1 - 7 June, we came together to celebrate Volunteers' Week, a chance to recognise and appreciate the incredible contributions of our volunteers across the UK.**

We took the opportunity to extend our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of our 93 volunteers. As a thank you, we planted trees in honour of each of our volunteers to recognise the difference they make. Through the National Trust's tree planting programme, this donation will contribute to their goal of planting 20 million trees by 2030, helping restore nature and create beautiful green spaces for future generations.

Our volunteers take on a variety of roles, from Ambassadors and Community Supporters to Data Entry Assistants and Translators. In 2025, they helped run 22 events and stalls, processed over 500 responses to our member survey, and translated almost 12,000 words into French and Spanish. Whether working behind the scenes or out in the community, every volunteer plays a vital part in our journey.

# COUNCIL COMMENT

THOUGHT PIECE FROM A MEMBER OF COUNCIL

Ian and Shelagh (pictured left) have been dedicated Shared Interest volunteers for over 20 years, bringing both passion and commitment to supporting fairer trade. Their journey began in 1996, after inheriting some money and wanting to use a portion to do good.



*“A copy of Church Times had been delivered to our address by mistake but we had a look at it anyway. A flyer for Shared Interest dropped out and we read it. We had been interested in ways to support people in other countries and the Shared Interest model caught our imagination because of the circular mechanism. So instead of giving to a charity we invested in Shared Interest.”*

**Ian, Shared Interest member and volunteer.**



Their involvement deepened when Ian was selected as one of the first randomly chosen Council members. Inspired by what he learned, the couple became keen advocates, sharing Shared Interest's work more widely. More recently, Shelagh has also served on the Council as an elected member and is now Joint Moderator.

As volunteers, they have spoken at community groups including U3A, Probus and church gatherings, as well as hosting stalls at fair trade and craft markets. Ian has also supported behind the scenes with data entry.

Reflecting on their experience, they say: “Shared Interest is a way for us to help Fairtrade producers thrive without the constraints of commercial banks. It's a practical way to live out our values of equality and fairness.”

**If Ian and Shelagh's story has sparked your interest, we would love to hear from you. Volunteering is a chance to use your time and talents to support people working for a fairer future. To find out more, email us at [volunteers@shared-interest.com](mailto:volunteers@shared-interest.com).**

**Together, we can help build a fairer world.**

**I have been a member of Shared Interest for over 30 years - time flies! What first attracted me was the novel concept of investing in co-operatives, especially small ones that were supplying delicious coffee and cocoa, and 'sharing' the interest.**

It is an amazing opportunity to be the newest member of Council, and I have been briefed by the wonderful Shared Interest team, in terms of risk, compliance, lending and governance, how this is supported by technology, human resources, membership activities and finance, and how it is complemented by the charitable arm Shared Interest Foundation. I am very grateful for their time.

I have learned that Shared Interest is a member of the Council on Smallholder Agricultural Finance (CSAF) - the leading global network of lending practitioners promoting an inclusive finance market for agricultural SMEs. However, Shared Interest has a unique approach in terms of its stable membership-based funding model combined with a focus on higher risk lending to smaller and more varied producers. This approach relies on the organisation's in-depth experience, strong management processes and unwavering commitment to fairness.

What comes across to me from the discussions around the new strategic plan is that the membership's views on investment focus and levels of risk are especially welcome. As active members, we are engaged in the process of balancing risk and impact, which supports the organisation's distinctive community and democratic underpinnings. In addition, building up the membership with younger, financially aware people is a key challenge involving us all.

So, what can we, the members, do to help Shared Interest grow and have a wider impact?

- Invest more money ourselves in the Shared Interest Society
- Recommend Shared Interest to our children, grandchildren, friends and community groups
- Feed our views on investment focus and risk into Shared Interest meetings and surveys
- Become formal ambassadors for Shared Interest in our local areas
- Encourage charitable donations to Shared Interest Foundation
- Follow Shared Interest and re-share their content on social media

At the supporter event in York in May I enjoyed meeting other members and hearing their views during the workshops. As I write this, I am looking forward to my first Council meeting in Newcastle in June. Please do message me if you have any ideas or questions that I can take to the October Council meeting ([council.mail@shared-interest.com](mailto:council.mail@shared-interest.com)).

**Written by Clare Farrukh, Member of Council**

\*The views expressed and content in the piece above are from the current member of Council and do not necessarily reflect the direct mission or strategy of Shared Interest Society or Foundation.

# SHARED INTEREST

INVESTING IN A FAIRER WORLD



Shared Interest was set up in 1990 and brings together a community of 11,700 people in the UK with a shared goal of investing in a fairer world. We work hand in hand with people in communities where income opportunities may be limited and businesses are facing increasing challenges.

[www.shared-interest.com](http://www.shared-interest.com)

## FRONT COVER

Simbi coffee farmer Mukanyandwi Joseline, holds coffee plants on a farm in Rwanda.

## HELP US RAISE OUR ONLINE PROFILE

Connect with us on social media to keep up to date with our activities and help share our news with others.

Scan the QR code with a smart phone camera to connect with us on any of our social media platforms, or search for Shared Interest.



## GET IN TOUCH WITH US

Shared Interest Society Ltd.  
Pearl Assurance House,  
7 New Bridge Street West,  
Newcastle Upon Tyne,  
NE1 8AQ

E: [membership@shared-interest.com](mailto:membership@shared-interest.com)  
T: 0191 233 9101, option 1.

## HELP US TO GROW

Please consider sharing this magazine with a friend or family member before recycling it.

And don't forget, we also have a Resource Pack we can send to you if you'd like to spread the word about Shared Interest.



### DID YOU KNOW!

QR magazine is a carbon balanced publication.

BECAUSE WE CARE

