

## SESI STATEMENT OF BUSINESS ETHOS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1) **No advertising or use of marketing manipulation** - We will not copy the neoliberal model of cynical sales pitches, eco-misinformation and intrusive advertising that ultimately leads to over consumption. SESI never uses paid advertising and has grown essentially by word of mouth, networking, campaigning and volunteering. By concentrating on product quality and providing products of good value, our customers have helped us to find us new markets and develop products through honest feedback and sharing of research.
- 2) **Work within the economic means of the many to have the biggest impact** - At SESI we have prioritised the accessible supply of local, fair trade and organic (certified) food to people of low to average income. We are now en route to achieve similar goals with supplying refillable, vegan and organic certified cleaning and personal care products. We will make affordability a priority as we continue changing consumer behaviour that doesn't tax the pocket or the earth. As we expand we hope to be able to work with more accreditations, but will ensure we do this without raising the production costs of our products in a way that stops people being part of change.
- 3) **Democracy belongs in the workplace** – there is a consensus that democracy is beneficial in our political structures but put less importance on industrial democracy. We believe individual mental welfare and human justice is also dependent on bringing democracy into our economic lives. At SESI all workers that meet the criteria for membership gain voting rights in the management of the partnership.
- 4) **All those that participate in producing wealth have a right to share that wealth** - many of society's ills and environmental crises are the result of a poverty of capital and savings with excessive wealth accumulated by a protected and distant few. SESI workers acquire a share of the partnership's net worth each year over and above pension contributions.
- 5) **Cooperation is a stronger force in business than competition** - SESI is building a network of refill traders who cooperate through hubs to mutually support each other in times of need, sharing resources and skills, which helps build community resilience.
- 6) **Act against income inequity** - one of the least defensible aspects of modern global economy is the excessive rewards to elite members of society. SESI limits the maximum ratio between highest wage and lowest wage. Currently the bar is at 1:3. Also our minimum wage is the Real Living Wage, which is higher than the National Minimum Wage.
- 7) **Support Good Causes** - not everything good is provided by the free market or the state. SESI is constitutionally bound to donate 10% of its profit after reinvestment, to community and environmental causes.
- 8) **Be a Corporate Good Citizen** - We believe there is space for all honest and well-run companies to shine and thrive without undermining the efforts of others. We keep an open door policy to collaboration with other companies, a strategy we are having great success with, where we see opportunities to lower costs to consumers or function with less waste and pollution overall. We support doughnut economics which seeks the 'Goldilocks zone' between ecological / social / economic insufficiency and over-reach.
- 9) **Support Other Co-ops** - a corollary to the above point, social enterprises, co-ops and family firms are our favoured trading partners. They are usually the best workplaces to work, and an economy comprised of a majority of such firms would obviate most of the environmental bad practice from ever happening in the first place.

