

Crowdfund Plymouth

Crowdfund Plymouth was launched in 2015 as a Plymouth focused page on the [Crowdfunder.co.uk](https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk) platform to enable the Council to pledge money to campaigns (projects) in, and benefiting, the City. We were the first to undertake this innovative and successful approach.

The main source of monies distributed by the Council is the 'City Change Fund'. This is the neighbourhood proportion (previously known as the 'meaningful proportion') of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); a payment made by developers in the City primarily from student accommodation, housing and food retail for the provision of infrastructure.

The type of project that the City Change Fund can contribute towards is very wide, with the legislation stipulating that it must be spent on:

- ‘...
(a) *the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or*
(b) *anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.*’

[Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, as amended]

Members of the public or organisations set up campaigns for infrastructure or events that they would like to deliver and raise money from 'the crowd' before delivering the idea themselves. Once an eligible project has reached 25% of its total costs the Council pledges up to 50% of the project cost. If the campaign reaches 100% or more of their target then they get all of the money, but if they are unable to achieve the full amount then they get nothing and any pledgers' money is returned.

This approach enables a project to demonstrate that it has local support by reaching 25% of its target from other supports (the crowd) before the Council pledges its funds. Crowdfunding also ensures that contributions from the community for eligible projects are 'matched' by the council

and vice versa. The ability to receive up to 50% funding from one pledge gives those running a campaign confidence that they can reach their target amount.

A number of other Councils have seen our innovative lead and are beginning to use crowdfunding platforms to start distributing funds so that communities can deliver their priorities and take an active and fulfilling role in shaping their neighbourhoods.

Some of the benefits for the Council of using a crowdfunding platform for distributing money this way are:

1. Increased public participation.
2. Increased transparency.
3. Increased visibility for the Fund.
4. Increased advertisement of the relationship between development and infrastructure, and the benefit that the growth of the City has for existing residents.
5. Increased buy-in for projects.
6. Guaranteed match funding for the money that we distribute.
7. Lower administration costs than running a 'traditional' grant application process.
8. We see projects that would not normally apply for grants or who don't know that the fund is applicable.
9. Campaigns increase skills, capacity and resilience in the community.

Some of the benefits for Communities using Crowdfunding include:

1. The projects themselves benefit from 'proving' their concept, advertising and increased customer base.
2. Test out their idea with communities.
3. More control of their own success.
4. Supports their entrepreneurial and business skills.
5. Develops a set of supporters and backers.
6. Raise awareness of their project leading to better use of and uptake of projects once up and running.
7. Develops a different skill set that supports groups to be more sustainable.
8. Unlocks resources – financial and community.
9. Showing how they are part of delivering the Plymouth and South West Devon [Joint Local Plan](#).

The Crowdfund Plymouth platform also enables the cities Councillors to distribute their [Community Grant Scheme](#) monies if they see projects that they would like to support.

As of April 2018, the City Change Fund has pledged a total of **£194,685** to 54 projects. These projects raised a total of **£685,316** in the city, far exceeding the anticipated 50% match funding.

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