



Top of the POPs

Good news for Plymouth's voluntary and community sector! After a long and somewhat anxious wait, it has been confirmed that Esmée Fairbairn Foundation is going to invest nearly a million pounds in POP; our work supporting the sector and our grassroots members. Some of the money will be spent seeking out some of the small yet mighty organisations that, we know, fly under the radar. Finding them will be part of the challenge, but by better supporting them, says Matt Bell the CEO of POP, we can better support others:

"We want to show people that the true value of the money invested into these smaller projects is often significant. By seeking them out and raising them up we can show what an extraordinary job they are doing supporting other people, often without any thanks or recognition."

It is not the first time Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, one of the largest independent grant-making foundations in the UK, has invested in Plymouth or POP. Five years ago, it awarded £1.3m to POP to fund the innovative collaborative and cross-sector approach to

decision-making that was evolving across the city. Having kept a close watch on how the grant has been spent and what impacts it has had, the Foundation has decided to commit an additional £990,000. Veda Harrison, the Foundation's Director of Creative, Confident Communities at Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, says it's money well spent:

"We have seen POP reach out and build the capacity of grassroots groups and organisations, supporting them to connect with each other as well as with decision-makers. We know that place-based and place-led change takes time and so we're pleased to support them with a further grant to deepen and broaden the connections already made and move them towards influencing system change more purposefully."

POP is wasting no time to find and support these smaller organisations hiding within the grassroots sector. POP is redoing its strategy and staff efforts focused on finding these groups so that we can bring them out, raise them up and illuminate the work they do and the impact they have.

Help us to help them: tell us about the people and project in your communities info@plymouthocotopus.org



Football Boot Bank Bin number 70

St Budeaux Church Hall given funds to raise the roof



Biffa Truck helps St Budeaux parishioners to raise the roof

It is an astonishing piece of our city history that FIFTEEN CENTURIES after it was first built, and still bearing the name of the grandson of the King of Brest, St Budeaux Parish Church continues to provide and care for its parishioners. Since the creation of the Community Church Hall in the 1960's, the church has extended its reach, and now supports more than a hundred people a week through a variety of groups, clubs and communities. Now with news of a £52,775 donation from Biffa Award for a much-needed new roof, St Budeaux residents can still cry: "Thanks be to Budoc!"

The sixty-year-old building has undergone a series of improvements since the St Budeaux Church Community Hall Development Committee was established in 2010 to regenerate the hall. With the on-going support of the POP ideas team, the fundraisers have helped to secure money to pay for new windows; a catering-kitchen; access and facilities for people with disabilities and new toilets (for the ladies). And now, says Liz Webb, one of the fundraisers, they can finally replace the original roof:

"It's such wonderful news! This is the biggest grant we've received and means we can replace the original copper roof which is leaking and has been repaired many times. We'll also be reclaiming the copper, selling it, and reinvesting the money for the benefit of our community."

With more than twenty-five clubs, groups and organisations taking place each week, the hall is a centre for fun and fellowship for this densely populated part of Plymouth. There is also a weekly drop-in session and food larder run in partnership with the charity Christians Against Poverty who offer debt advice and financial support to individuals and families. And the hall is a much-loved local venue for celebrations, such as, birthday parties and anniversaries.

"Without a new roof," says Liz, "it is extremely unlikely that we would have been able to carry on. We are so grateful to Biffa Award that we are going to raise the roof with a party on Saturday 22nd July for everyone!"

The celebrations will begin at 1.30pm with the unveiling of the Biffa Award plaque by the Reverend Stephen Beach, Vicar of St Stephens, St Budeaux Parish Church who is retiring after 22 years of devotion and service to the parish.

Village People do it for Stoke



Stepping out of the Village Hub in Stoke

The Village Hub opened its doors in the middle of Covid, ironically, as a place for people to come together, to share and to have fun. Run-down, dirty and empty it was transformed by a team of committed volunteers into a much-loved, welcoming and lively community space.

Lots has happened since those early days... numerous coffee mornings and lunches; creative and crafting workshops galore and frequent sociable trips out & about. There has been an abundance of planting with the recent establishment of a communal garden on the site of the former public toilets; new trees and planters throughout the village and

the park and the restoration of the courtyard garden at the back of the Village Hub.

There has also been growth among the staff: there is now a team of eight paid workers at the Hub with everyone sharing the load and working approximately eight hours a week. A grant to help cover core costs until 2027 from the National Lottery Reaching Communities has allowed the team to start to think about the impact of what they do on individuals. Karen Pilkington, one of the Directors of the Village Hub, says they are considering how they embed the notion of 'care' into their work:

"We are exploring community coaching; training in how to hold great conversations; becoming trauma informed for ourselves and for others and learning how to deal with conflict in positive and affirming ways."

And, of course, there's the positivity that comes from a good ol' fashioned knees up: join the volunteers from the Village Hub celebrate the best of Stoke at this year's Stoke Village Fun Day on the 16th of July. It will be blooming wonderful! For more information: www.thevillagehub.org.uk

POP Outreach

Pop goes to Stoke & Ford. We'll be in the Central Park Community Sports Hub on Tuesday the 18th of July from 10.30 - 1.00. Come and meet the team and find out how POP can support your community.

FREE ONLINE EVENTS FROM POP ideas

REGISTER AT BIT.LY/POPIDEASEVENTS

Crowdfunding for VCSE's
Thursday 13 July at 9:30am

How to start a crowdfunding campaign and improve your chances of success.

POP Drop-in - Stoke & Ford
Tuesday 18 July at 10:30am

Meet the team and access free support at Central Park Community Sports Hub.

Understanding Community Needs
Tuesday 12 September at 10am

Learn new ways to effectively consult with your community to improve the services you provide.