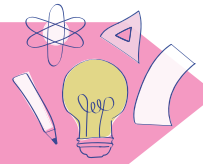


**From  
supporting**

**young people to find work  
and develop skills**



**enterprises to thrive and  
redeveloping land and buildings**

**to helping**



**we work to**

**solve problems and create positive  
and lasting social change.**

**Through Empowering Places, Real Ideas has worked to catalyse the start-up and growth of community businesses, and to create better conditions for them to succeed.**



The programme has also aimed to support strategic change at a city level, with the view to creating an environment that better supports community business to thrive, now and into the future. This included working to improve investment and new approaches for the community ownership of land and buildings, supporting community wealth building the development of a more circular and inclusive economy and growing a wider movement for community business and power.

Commencing in 2017, the programme began slowly as people got to grips with the idea of community business. From here, building on Plymouth's culture of social enterprise, activity grew exponentially from year two, particularly with a number of breakthrough exemplar projects. Undiminished by Covid-19, activity and demand continued to grow and remains popular and in high demand into 2022.

2017

### Initial Targets

Taking an entrepreneurial approach, to maximise legacy, leverage, value for money and impact, the programme begun with the initial output targets of **6 new asset transfers, 6 new incorporation** and the aspiration to **create 20 new jobs** over the five years.

### Key Numbers and outputs

### New Initiatives kick started and supported

### Wider Impact

New local **partnerships**, networks and connections, and an established network of change

Improved **biodiversity**, urban green spaces and parks

Improved **skills**, new and better **jobs** and volunteering

**High Streets**, buildings and neighbourhoods in a better condition

Greater levels of community **engagement**, participation, agency and pride

Better understanding towards place based social purpose **business support**

Strategic **national partners** engaged with the city and community business (e.g. National Trust, Rank Foundation, National Lottery Heritage Fund, etc.)

### Pioneers Parks

A new city approach to enabling greater community business activity in parks

### Fab City Plymouth

A new circular economy partnership to support Plymouth to produce what it consumes

### Ocean City Fund

New investment programme framework for community ownership, carbon capture and biodiversity net-gain

### Community Cultivators

Public/community partnership delivering regenerative urban nature renewal and food production

### The State of Us

Movement for community participation, power and democracy

**Plymouth (Inclusive Growth) Charter** Supporting a fairer greener economy for the city

New **services**, venues and **businesses**

2022

### The programme exceeded all targets

In outputs alone the programme exceeded all targets, helping to catalyse the transfer of **15 community assets, 13 community business incorporation** and some new **25 jobs**. Every pound of funding has almost been matched pound-for-pound with the leverage of over £1m of new funding.



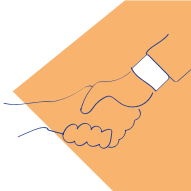
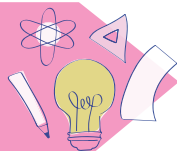
Examples of new core supported community businesses could include **Snapdragons CIC, creative community kindergarten; Nudge Community Builders, community developers, hubs, market and venue; Pollenize CIC, community-led pollinator and habitat renewal; Borrowed Parts Brew Co. cooperative brewery, The Village Hub, high street community hub and park.**



# What's Next? Our future vision has 5 different areas that we are looking for **support** and **investment**


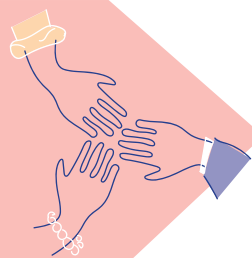
## Skills & Employment Pipeline

coordinated training for young people, linked to grant supported employment within partner community businesses and social enterprises, creating real skills and capacity.



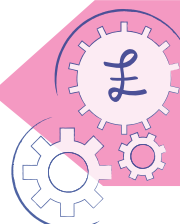
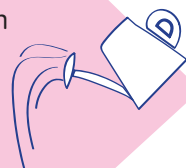
**Business Support** - specialist, flexible and locally informed business support continue to be needed and in demand, across all phases of the community business journey, from pre-development, start-up and growth. It is often the initial and later phases which are harder to resource.

**Community Ownership** - local investment and holding vehicle (grant, debt, equity) to support wider second stage growth and asset ownership. A “community land bank” pilot scheme potentially linked to emerging Ocean City Fund, that can move capital quickly, acquire assets and hold them temporarily, before passing them on to community business with the right soft landing.



**Green investment** – local risk grant funding and follow-up investment to support community building (particularly heritage) retrofit, energy efficiency improvements, and other green improvements, to support carbon reduction, ecology and financial sustainability.

**Transition** – both at the early stage, and into growth, transition capacity for community businesses remains a barrier. This is more about time than it is about skills. Creating a capacity fund that would “buy-out”, community business leaders time, would ensure faster growth, greater impact and sustainability.



**System Change Capacity Funding** – as the units of community business and social infrastructure now better exist, this creates the basis for wider system change innovation, though the opportunities to resources this are limited and patchy.

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