



Whitleigh Big Local

Request for Expressions of Interest

To undertake a feasibility study to explore opportunities for the development of community led space/centre in Whitleigh Plymouth.

1. Background

1.1 Whitleigh Big Local was established in 2012 with a grant of £1m from Local Trust National Lottery funding. There were 150 areas chosen throughout England, each aiming to make a massive and lasting positive difference in their communities. The partnership, made up of local residents supported by organisations working in the area, is now delivering the fourth of its ten-year programme. It has established Whitleigh Community Trust as a charity to support project development and delivery.

1.2 Whitleigh is a fringe estate surrounded by wooded hills and valleys. It has been described by residents as an urban community with rural isolation. Deprivation levels are high with 80% of people living in the most deprived 20% of areas in England. Income levels are low, benefit claims are high, qualification levels are low, unemployment is high, health indicators are low and levels of isolation are high. Whitleigh has a resident population of 7,465. 96% of residents describe themselves as White British and the population is more stable than in the South West as a whole. But this can mean it lacks the diversity and inspiration that more diverse communities can experience: Despite the statistics, however, Whitleigh has a strong sense of community and community activism. As shown by Big Local; with the right support the community can address its challenges from within.

1.3 In February 2018 Whitleigh Big Local became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Whitleigh Community Trust Registered Charity No 1177144) with a Board of Trustees made up of local residents and with explicit intention of providing a legacy for the community that will continue after the Big Local programme has finished.

1.4 We have entered the fourth year of our 10-year delivery plan and as a board we have started to consider the second half of our programme and the potential lasting legacy of Whitleigh Big local. As part of that legacy, we want to explore the potential and feasibility of creating a sustainable community space that will operate after the end of the 10-year period. We have already done some preparatory work. For example: we have met with supportive local authority officers and elected members, gathered some relevant information, identified some local needs and identified a project steering group. We now need independent professional help to take this initiative to the next stage.

2. Brief

2.1 We are inviting expressions of interest from suitably qualified consultants or agencies to undertake a feasibility study into the potential for different types of community led development of land or property within the WBL area to develop as a community centre.

2.2 The study should include an initial assessment of the following:

a. Demand and Needs – Desktop assessment of identified needs in the area and community support. We have carried out two consultations with community members the most recent finishing in September 2018.

b. Supply – Whitleigh has very limited potential sites or properties available for development, the study will need to include detailed planning options available through Plymouth City Council planning department, their approximate value and the feasibility of them being realised and sustainably developed;

c. Local Context - The strategic and local planning context –

<https://plymswdevonplan.co.uk/policy>

Needs to include an assessment of utilities, access, parking and other factors that will be required before plans are drawn up.

d. National context – briefing for the WBL on potential sources of revenue and capital support for community centre developments.

e. Capacity in the community to undertake a community led property development in the WBL area

2.3 WBL would welcome proposals that are able to:

a. Build an evidence base using information from and in consultation with supportive Local Authority Officer colleagues and potential funders.

b. Develop case studies that make the study relevant.

c. Identify three potential development sites within the WBL area (or immediately adjacent area) and provide an options analysis of each including summary finances and SWOT style assessment of the potential of each for development.

These studies should also include an assessment of a variety of potential community uses including space for social entrepreneur's / start-ups/ potential rentable spaces.

c. Provide an initial exploration of options to combine a community venue and community led housing in one unit / at one site

d. Outline options for delivering long term financial sustainability for a community led space / centre

e. Explore and give recommendations for options related to organisational structure that could support the development of a community led space/centre

f. Explore options for professional support and funding streams both capital and revenue that may be available to support phases in the development of a community led space/centre

g. Identify options to include renewable and sustainable technologies.

3. Reporting

3.1 The successful consultant or agency will work closely with and be supported by members of Whitleigh Big Local commissioning group for this study. A fundamental principle is the need for significant involvement of the local community at each stage. We are seeking proposals that show a structured mechanism for community involvement that will ensure local people can contribute to and have ownership of the final proposals. This will require regular written updates, community engagement, workshops / meetings etc

3.2 During the study period, they will liaise with Whitleigh Big Local Community Development manager

4. Funding and Fees

4.1 We are inviting expressions of interest that include a fully costed quote of no more than £6,000 for this study (inclusive of VAT and all costs).

5. Timescale

5.1 We aim that this initial study will take no more than 3 months. We aim for it to start as soon as possible and ideally will be completed by end of January 2019 with a report to partnership meeting being available for the February meeting on the 11th February 2019.

6. Expressions of Interest

6.1 Expressions of interest should include:

- a. a summary CV of the person/s proposing to undertake the work, indicating their relevant experience and recent track record
- b. a proposal, on not more than 2 sides A4, that responds to the brief and indicates how you might undertake it
- c. a fully costed quotation

6.2 The completed expression of interest should be sent by email to Pippa St John Cooper by no later than 5pm on Monday 19th October 2018.

Email to: pippa@whitleighbiglocal.org.uk

6.3 WBL will aim to shortlist submissions during w/c 22nd October 2018 and meet with shortlisted respondents by appointment during w/c 29th October 2018.

7. Further information

7.1 Whitleigh Big Local web page is:

www.whitleighbiglocal.org.uk

<https://www.facebook.com/WhitleighBigLocal/>

7.2 Local Trust and the Big Local national programme:

<http://localtrust.org.uk/our-work/big-local/about-big-local>

7.3 Whitleigh Big Local Plans and Map:

<http://localtrust.org.uk/our-work/big-local/big-local-areas/whitleigh>