

FOR FIGHTING POVERTY

Pledge 61 – Examine how the Council can best support South West Mutual

What we said we would do: We will examine how the Council can best support South West Mutual, a new regional savings and loan bank for small and medium sized businesses, community groups and people of ordinary means.

What we wanted to achieve: To support the development of a new, local, member-owned bank.

What we have done: Plymouth City Council has pledged support for the development of a new, local bank with an investment of £60,000 making it the largest investor in the first phase of development. The council has joined the co-operative as a Founder Member and invested in founder shares along with over 60 individuals, organisations and other local authorities in the area. The bank, known for now as South West Mutual, will be the first ever member-owned, high street bank dedicated to the residents and small businesses of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset.

The mutual bank will be dedicated to the sustainable prosperity of the South West and will make a vital contribution to levelling the economic playing field for the region's people and businesses.

What's next: The investment of £60,000 from the Council's Co-operative and Mutuals Development Fund, purchased shares that can be traded with other members once the bank becomes profitable. The bank has a 3 year development plan that starts with gaining its licences and securing a second round of funding. When opened, it will provide a full range of services to rival high street banks including local branches, digital channels and current accounts.

Find out more!

Here is a news story about our work to deliver the pledge:

<http://plymouthnewsroom.co.uk/council-backs-new-bank/>



FOR A SAFER, WELCOMING CITY

Pledge 78 – Provide shelter and support for those fleeing terror, conflict and famine

What we said we would do: Plymouth has been a welcoming city throughout our history. Our city will continue to provide shelter and support for those fleeing terror, conflict and famine.

What we wanted to achieve: Plymouth has a proud history of providing a safe haven for those escaping war and natural disaster and we want to ensure that this is continued through becoming a City of Sanctuary.

What we have done: Asylum seekers and refugees came together, supported by Plymouth City Council and its partners, to develop the proposals and programme that led to us being a city of Sanctuary. Partners in Plymouth came together in June 2019 to mark the national Refugee Week as the city prepared to launch a pledge to be a 'City of Sanctuary', and to celebrate the contribution of displaced people to British society. The year's events were organised by: Plymouth Hope, Calstock Outreach Group, Open Doors International Language School, Give Back, University of Plymouth, British Red Cross, Plymouth City of Sanctuary Group, Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support (DCRS), and Students and Refugees Together (START), under the umbrella of Plymouth Refugees Communities Forum.

The 'City of Sanctuary' pledge was signed by Councillor Chris Penberthy, Plymouth City Council's Cabinet Member for Housing and Cooperative Development. This reinforces the city's commitment to recognise the contribution of refugees and asylum seekers, build relationships with them and include them in activities. Local organisations will also be invited to sign the pledge.

Becoming a City of Sanctuary does not mean that Plymouth has all of the answers; however we continue to strive to improve all the city has to offer, including the experience for sanctuary seekers. We recognise that these changes will build upon the amazing work already being done across the city by incredible local organisations that deliver services for refugees and asylum seekers. Improving the experience for those most in need will only change when we collaborate closely with each other, involving asylum seekers in shaping the solutions.

What's next: Plymouth has always been, and continues to grow its reputation as, a welcoming city. As part of the City of Sanctuary, we will:

- display the City of Sanctuary logo in public Plymouth City Council buildings to help sanctuary seekers to feel welcome;
- work with agencies in the city and nationally to ensure that sanctuary seekers in Plymouth can access legal advice for asylum claims in the city;
- help agencies and organisations to actively support vulnerable asylum seekers using a person-centred approach focussing on the individual;
- identify ways in which Plymouth can offer individuals a short-term sanctuary and, more importantly, a long-term home where their contributions to the life and wellbeing of the city are openly embraced.

Find out more!

Here are some news stories about our work to deliver the pledge:

<http://plymouthnewsroom.co.uk/landlords-needed-help-rehome-syrian-refugees-plymouth/>

<http://plymouthnewsroom.co.uk/plymouth-supports-refugee-week-2018/>

<http://plymouthnewsroom.co.uk/plymouth-city-sanctuary-comes-together-refugee-week/>



FOR THE CITY CENTRE

Pledge 8I – Encourage more development of homes in the city centre.

What we said we would do: People tell us we should encourage more housing for everyone in the city centre, not just for students. We will encourage more development of homes in the city centre to help improve the vibrancy of the heart of our city.

What we wanted to achieve: To identify opportunities for new homes in the city centre and to work with developers to bring these forward. This should include a mix of small and larger scale opportunities and targeted interventions to help unlock these sites.

What we have done:

- Used the Council's Financial Assistance Scheme to provide loans/grants to enable conversion of empty space above Warren James Jewellers to create three new flats in October 2018.
- Allocated sites within the city centre for new homes (as part of mixed use developments) in the Joint Local Plan (JLP), which was adopted in March 2019.
- Submitted an Expression of Interest to the government's Future High Streets Fund in March 2019.
- Worked with developer Urban Splash to help bring forward a scheme including 144 new residential apartments at the former Civic Centre – planning application submitted March 2019.

What's next:

- Plymouth City Council will establish new governance arrangements and a new city centre team to oversee and drive forward the regeneration agenda for the city centre, including the promotion of sites and opportunities for new homes by July 2019.
- If successful in our Expression of Interest to the Future High Streets Fund, Plymouth City Council will prepare detailed bids for up to £25m funding by December 2019, which could help to support the delivery of new homes.
- Establish delivery strategies for all city centre sites in the JLP by December 2019.

Find out more!

Here are some news stories about our work to deliver the pledge:

<http://plymouthnewsroom.co.uk/gem-empty-space-plymouth-jewellers-converted-homes/>

<http://plymouthnewsroom.co.uk/former-hostel-converted-flats-part-empty-homes-scheme/>

<http://plymouthnewsroom.co.uk/council-bids-much-needed-high-street-fund/>

