



## **#ConnectMe – Resource Pack 3**

### **Celebrate your street – together!**



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## **Unit 12 – Fundraising**

Again, our ethos is always to re-use, recycle, beg, borrow (not steal!) the things you need to make create your street project. There's nothing more bonding that upcycling something that was going to waste and putting it to good community use. However, there may be times when you collectively decide you need to raise some funds, either to buy in some professional help or to purchase materials.

There are three main sources of funding for your street project:-

### **Local authority funding**

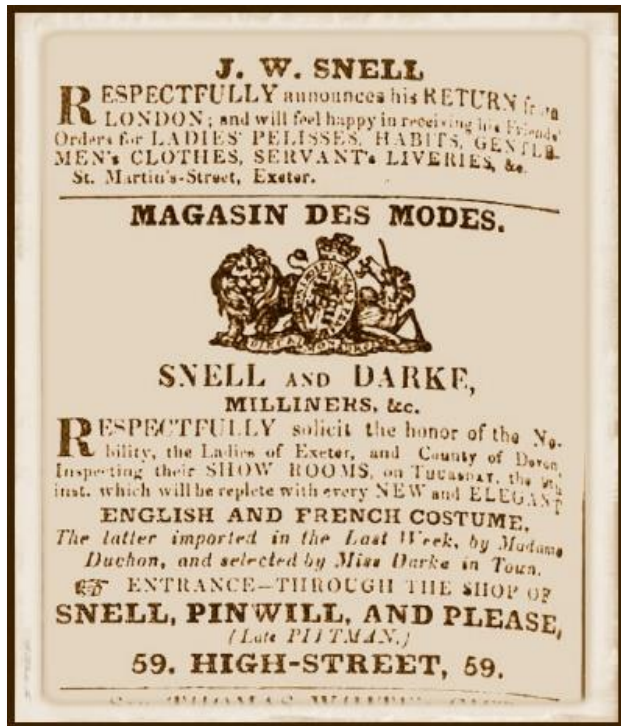
In Exeter this takes the form of Exeter City Council Ward Grants. These can be for up to £300 for a single ward but if your street stretches across wards you may be able to apply for a little more, especially if you can demonstrate match funding. Keeping your Ward Exeter City Councillors in the loop about what you are doing and inviting them to be part of the discussion from the beginning will pave the way for your application.

You may also want to try Locality Budget Funding managed by your Devon County Councillor. These pots are often a little larger, depending on your plans, and can be accessed without too many hoops. Again, every area in the county has a Devon County Councillor so make sure you know who yours is and that you've had some good early conversations.

### **Local business sponsorship**

Local businesses will often help community projects, if they can. If you can find a link, either because their business is on your street, or started on your street, then that gives you a way to open the conversation.

Start with an email. Always try to find the email of an individual. Better still, try and find out if anyone you know also knows someone in the business. An introduction is far better than a cold start.



Finding an old advert from your local history researches can be really useful for this.

In your email, say up front that you're a volunteer for a community project and that you're asking for a donation. The words "volunteer", "community" and "donation" make your proposition and your request for help clear from the outside. You're unlikely to gain more than £100. Use images that reinforce the community value and list the ways in which their donation will reflect positively on their business.

Say that you'll follow up with a phone call in due course.

Leave for a couple of days – it's highly unlikely that you'll hear anything at all if it's a cold contact.

Then repeat including your original email for reference with just a little more info and a few more advantages to them, so that the deal seems better and better.

If you still don't hear anything you can try a call at this stage. Do a little research beforehand and get a name if you can. Explain that you've sent a couple of emails. Wait and give them a chance to connect the dots. If they ask how it will benefit them – be honest.

You can promise to include their logo on any printed materials but the truth is most street projects only have a reach of 100-200 individual engagements which is unlikely to impress a business looking for wide circulation. Much better to be honest and say something like "Look, I can tell you about the numbers of flyers printed but the truth is I can't prove that this will definitely get you more customers. What I can say with absolute confidence is that every penny you donate will go straight towards bringing people together to celebrate this street and we'll take every opportunity – verbally, printed and via social networking to make sure that your community knows that you were a part of this".

We find that people, including businesses, have their own reasons for giving and it's rarely about numbers in the end. People will always respond well to honesty.

If you make that call and still can't get through, then call it a day. There'll be something like a 40% success rate so don't use all your energy on it.

#### A note on Covid19

You may well find that your local, independent businesses, particularly in hospitality and retail, are having a particularly tough time right now. So you might want to flip this on it's head. If you find a street link with a local business why not turn your street event into a fund-raiser to help?

You may find it quicker to go to larger chains who often have personnel assigned to help. In Exeter, Tesco Extra has its own Community Champion. At the time of writing:-

John W Smith  
Community Champion  
Tesco Extra  
Russell Way  
Exeter  
Email: [exevaltesco@gmail.com](mailto:exevaltesco@gmail.com)  
Tel: 07749 309663

John will offer hands on help at your community events but they seem to have reduced their financial contribution down to £10 or £20. This can be useful for catering though.

Smaller outlets, like a Tesco Extra or equivalent, especially if it is on your street, will often provide food and drink to a greater value than that. Some will only offer prizes for raffles. Other businesses might be prepared to offer services, like the installation or transport of planters, rather than a cash donation. You can acknowledge this kind of help in a public way.

Sometimes it can be a matter of who you catch on the day and if you strike out it might be worth sending one of your members in to try again. In fact, the more you can involve your neighbours in the fundraising activity the better. Many of them may well have had success with local community pots in the past. Use all your street knowledge and assets – you're not alone!

## Community fundraising

In this context “community fundraising” means raising funds through collective activity. For instance, in the past we have made printed canvas bags with a project logo to sell at a community fair. This approach has the increased potential for directly involving more of your neighbours. Some members can prefer to take up a specific task, like making bags, than dealing with the bigger ideas. Even though this is unlikely to make a great deal of profit it can be a great way to build a team.



Selling badges, bags and other merchandise at local events is also a great way of letting people know what you and your neighbours are planning.