

LESLEY USES CINDERELLA MAGIC TO LAUNCH PLYMOUTH GRASSROOTS CHALLENGE

Plymouth Theatre Royal panto star, Lesley Joseph has helped to launch the Plymouth Grassroots Challenge Fund to support small voluntary and community groups across the City.

The Grassroots Challenge, which is being run by local charity Devon Community Foundation in partnership with city charity the Drake Foundation, can match £1 for £1 all donations made to the Plymouth Grassroots Challenge Fund.

As the Fairy godmother in the Theatre's current Cinderella panto, Lesley transformed a small gold coin into one twice the size to show how the Grassroots Challenge can double the value of local giving for local causes.

Money raised through the Challenge is being used to build the Plymouth Grassroots Endowment Challenge Fund, which will provide a permanent source of grants for community groups helping local people.

Paul Widnell, Chief Executive of the Drake Foundation comments, "This is a fantastic start to the Plymouth Grassroots Challenge and we can't thank Lesley enough for her help.

"Plymouth's volunteers do a wonderful job running the small voluntary and community groups which are often on the frontline in helping local people

"We're urging local businesses and people to join the Plymouth Grassroots Challenge as a great way to support these volunteers, make a real difference to local lives and make their giving worth so much more for local causes."

"With Gift Aid, a £100 donation to the Grassroots Challenge will be worth £256 to local causes."

Over the last six years, Devon Community Foundation has made £1.7 million in small grants to over 400 voluntary and community groups across the City, supporting everything from lunch clubs for the elderly to youth clubs and from theatre groups for adults with learning difficulties to help for those who are homeless. Joining the Challenge will allow the grant making to local groups to continue each and every year in the future.

But the heat is on, in order to secure the full first tranche of match funding from the government for Plymouth, the Challenge needs to raise £48,000 by the end of March.

Lesley Joseph adds, "This is a fantastic opportunity for people to support local volunteers and groups and I hope my little bit of fairy magic will bring good fortune to the Plymouth Grassroots Challenge."

Anyone who would like to know more about joining the Plymouth Grassroots Challenge should call Paul Widnell on 01752 764455 or Kathy Beechen on 01884 235887.

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