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Dear Colleagues,

As you may be aware, last summer West Sussex County Council launched West Sussex Crowd - an online crowdfunding initiative enabling communities to make projects happen. So far, 'The Crowd' has provided local groups with a platform to present more than 120 shared ideas unite communities and raise funds to deliver sustainable projects. Here, individuals can run a crowdfunding campaign on behalf of their group, promote it among supporters and residents of direct benefit, plus demonstrate community demand by attracting monetary pledges towards their fundraising target. In addition to this, eligible projects can also pitch for a share of the county council's £280,000 Community Initiative Fund, with grants of up to £5,000 available.

In Year 1, the council gave its backing to a variety of enterprising projects floated on The Crowd, all of which pledge to produce in line with the authority's priorities as set out in [The West Sussex Plan](#).

To date, more than 1,900 backers, made up of local people, businesses and organisations, have accessed the platform and donated across all projects countywide. I'm proud to report that £456,700 to 75 projects have gone on to be successfully funded having achieved their crowdfunding target. Meanwhile, we are encouraged by a further [19 exciting projects currently crowdfunding](#) and would warmly welcome your organisation's involvement and support.

Many Parish and Town Councils have already pledged to projects in their local area. If your organisation is interested in supporting future projects, there are three ways in which you can get involved:

1. **Pledge** – it only takes a few clicks to register a Spacehive account, log-in and start pledging to projects. [Click here to find out more about current crowdfunding campaigns](#). Let us know if you need supporting pledging to a project. Once you've submitted your pledge, your organisation's name, logo and the amount you have pledged will be visible on the project's page. [Click here](#) if you are interested in staying up to date and potentially pledging to projects on a semi-regular basis. Spacehive will then email you with a list of current campaigns approximately three times per year and you can choose which projects to back.
2. **Partner:** If you would like to support projects on a more regular basis, you can become an official supporter with a profile outlining your offer of funding or in-kind support/resources. This [two-page](#) overview provides more information on the reasons why some organisations chose this option. If you are interested in going a step further such as establishing your own community fund on the platform, please let us know and we can discuss this further.

3. **Promote:** Spread the word about live campaigns and the opportunity to crowdfund by reaching out to audiences through your channels or events. If you are interested in promoting the initiative, please let us know and we'll arrange for Spacehive to share some resources with you.

County Local Committees will be allocating funds to projects for the next round during June & July. See [here](#) for more information on how people can get involved. We are also running two free workshops in [Crawley](#) and [Haywards Heath](#) on the 7th of May if you would like to come along and learn more; other workshops are available on request.

We have already seen a range of inspiring projects come to life across the county. With your help, even more projects can come forward and get funded.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,



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