

## PRESS RELEASE

### Bristol Community Ferry Boats awarded Power to Change grant

Bristol Community Ferry Boats Ltd has been awarded a grant from Power to Change, the independent charitable trust endowed with £150 million from the Big Lottery Fund to support and develop community business in England. The £257,000 grant will enable Bristol Community Ferry Boats Ltd to commission a new electric ferry boat, which will contribute to cleaner air in the city centre. It will also be used to develop community outreach programmes for volunteers and schools, and for elderly people so they can enjoy Bristol's waterways and meet each other. The grant will also enable a new apprenticeship scheme to provide training opportunities for young people in Bristol.

"We're delighted that Power to Change has awarded us a grant which will help our community business deliver even more services for local people." said Mark Tucker, Chair of Bristol Community Ferry Boats. "It will demonstrate how an environmentally cleaner ferry can help alleviate Bristol's transport problems while enabling us to provide a new service to reduce social isolation and provide training and work opportunities for young people in the city.

A group of Bristolians decided to save the 40 year old ferry company from closure in 2013. They held a community share offer and now 874 shareholders have a say in how the community ferries are run. This ancient method of transport is part of the cultural life of the harbour, the largest single open space in the city centre, itself part of what makes Bristol special. The ferries provide a modern, year round service for the increasing population around the harbour as new residential, leisure and office developments are completed. The new outreach service will enable more people to enjoy Bristol's maritime heritage and see the vibrant present day life around the water.

"We believe putting business in community hands transforms places." said David Chater, Head of Community Business Funds at Power to Change. "The grant and support we are giving Bristol Community Ferry Boats will help them become a resilient company and develop new community projects to address local issues. It's an inspiring example of how transport can be community owned and bring many benefits to local people, as well as providing sightseeing trips down Bristol harbour and the River Avon."

Initial design work on the new ferry has already started and it is hoped construction will be complete in 18 months. Meanwhile, planning of the new outreach services is underway and the apprenticeship scheme will be open to applicants from early 2017.

**ENDS**

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Follow Power to Change on Twitter at @peoplesbiz and visit [www.thepowertochange.org.uk](http://www.thepowertochange.org.uk) for the latest community business news.

## Notes to editors

### About Power to Change:

- Power to Change is an independent charitable trust endowed with £150 million from the Big Lottery Fund to grow community business in England. Over ten years, we will provide funding and support to help build many more successful and sustainable local community businesses across England.
- In 2015, Power to Change awarded £8million through their Initial Grants programme, supporting 47 community businesses to complete projects to become less grant-dependent.

### About the Big Lottery Fund:

- The Big Lottery Fund is the largest funder of community activity in the UK. It puts people in the lead to improve their lives and communities, often through small, local projects.
- It is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised by National Lottery players for good causes. Every year it invests over £650 million and awards around 12,000 grants across the UK for health, education, environment and charitable purposes.
- Since June 2004 it has awarded over £9 billion to projects that change the lives of millions of people. Since the National Lottery began in 1994, £34 billion has been raised and more than 450,000 grants awarded.

### About community business:

- A community business is a business set up and led by the local community that helps tackle problems in that area. It uses its profits to make the local area a better place to live, work and visit. Examples include communities coming together to save local shops from closure; to set up a community hub to provide a place for people to meet; or developing a community led housing project to help regenerate local areas.
- There are more than 5,000 community businesses in England, and the sector has grown 9% since 2015.

### attachments:

ferry photo