

Crowdfund East Devon – Coleridge Memorial Statue Bid

Decision to be made: Do you wish to support the Coleridge Memorial crowdfunding campaign? If so, how much of a grant do you wish to offer?

The Coleridge Memorial project on Crowdfunder has now raised more than 25% of their Crowdfunder total. They have also now sent back answers to a few supplementary questions we asked. They are therefore now eligible to be considered for a Crowdfund East Devon pledge.

As at 25 August 2020 they had raised £13,320 of a £20,000 campaign (66%) with 10 days left to raise the full amount. They have raised this amount from 60 supporters which is a large number of supporters, although there was one large donation of £10,000 from one source. I did put them in touch with Crowdfunder and they have had one to one guidance on how to achieve their target amount.

1. Their campaign

Their Crowdfunder campaign page: <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/coleridge-memorial-statue#start> which has a video explaining the project. Watching the video is a good way to find out more about their proposal.

Please also check their campaign page for an update on how much they have currently raised and so still have left to raise.

This is the wording from their project page which explains their project in brief:

“Our Project

“We are fundraising for a life-size statue of Coleridge to be sculptured and placed at St Mary's church. Our project launched in October 2017 and we have to date raised £30,000 of a £80,000 target. This Crowdfunder push is to raise £20,000 with a stretch target to £30,000: this will allow us to get our statue sculpture started, and then to prepare the site archeology, arrange public engagement notices, and plan for the unveiling event. So, we would be up and running in 2020 for completion by a 2022 deadline! Our sculptor Nicholas Dimbleby is keen and ready to begin his work, and we have all the permissions required to place this at Ottery St Mary parish church.

“Memorial Sculpture Fundraising Campaign - Dame Hilary Mantel

“There has long been a wish in Ottery St Mary that the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, born in the town in 1772, should be appropriately memorialised in sculptural form close to his birthplace. Our project is passionately endorsed by one of our major supporters: internationally acclaimed and local writer Hilary Mantel -

“He was a visionary who helped shape our national imagination, and it is right that he should have a memorial in the place that shaped him: and in the very churchyard where he told the secrets of his heart to the grass and the nettles.’

“This Project's Importance - Sir Andrew Motion

“There is no memorial statue of Coleridge anywhere in the world to recognise and honour his shaping of our modern view of the world through his literary and philosophical contributions. The need to remedy this is argued by another of our distinguished supporters: writer and former Poet Laureate Andrew Motion -

“It seems completely astonishing that such a thing doesn't exist already. Coleridge is one of the greatest poets and thinkers who ever lived, as well as being one of the most fascinating human beings; Ottery St Mary should honour and celebrate him.”

3. Things to think about in making the decision:

3.1 Eligibility

- In order to receive a grant from us the project has to fit in with at least one of the aims of the Council Plan or Transformation Strategy. They feel their project will support elements of all of EDDC's aims and objectives, giving examples of the positive well-being impact of supporting cultural, artistic and heritage aspects of the local community, as well as the potential economic benefits of increased tourism to Ottery and the local community.

3.2 Costs

- They say the total costs will be £80,000, they already have £30,000. Their Crowdfunder campaign is for £20,000 which would mean they'd have £50,000 in hand. This means they will currently be £30,000 short even if their campaign is successful. The decision to set the Crowdfunding target at £20,000 was essentially to be realistic, and for it to be achievable, and is justifiable. They feel that if they have the £50,000 in hand they will be in a better position to reassess and potentially reduce their costs from £80,000. They've also been promised some of the £30,000 shortfall already. However, at this stage we would not be funding part of a finished project. We have always previously funded and would prefer to fund projects that we know have enough to come to fruition if successful in their Crowdfunder campaign. Please note we can put extra terms and conditions on the grant if we feel they are necessary.

3.3 Community support

- They have so far raised £43,320 from the local community, bequests, Coleridge's family members and other interested individuals. Although we don't know how many people have contributed to this total, this shows a significant amount of buy in for this project.

3.4 Our Crowdfund East Devon grants

- If they don't raise the full £20,000 their crowdfunding campaign is for, under our terms and conditions we remove any pledge we make and they don't receive any funding from us. They will still receive all the funding they have raised from other sources.
- Our maximum grant is £10,000. We can decide to give less than this. In the case of this project as at 25 August they only need £6,680.

- They have currently raised £13,320 of a £20,000 campaign (66%) with 10 days left to raise the full amount (correct as at 25 August). If the panel are supportive of the project I would suggest granting enough to ensure they meet their target. £6,680 of a project is a significant amount to raise with only 10 days left.
- We have around £90,000 still available in the Crowdfund East Devon pot. This can't currently be used for any other purpose, technically it is mostly Devon County Council's money that they're allowing us to use to give grants to East Devon community projects. This £90,000 doesn't include:
 - £20,000 still left from the £25,000 that was taken from the Crowdfund East Devon pot and used to create a small grants stream joint with Devon County Council for coronavirus related projects. This is still with Devon County Council waiting to see if this grants stream needs to be revived.
 - £50,000 from the Transformation Fund that was placed into the Crowdfund East Devon pot and has been held to one side whilst we used monies available to us from alternative sources.