

South West spotlight

A region of contrasts

Unity Trust works alongside organisations that are at the heart of economic and social life in the South West. As a specialist bank for social enterprises, charities, credit unions and trade unions, Unity is uniquely placed to understand their needs.

One of the most beautiful areas of Europe, the South West is also a region of contrasts. Visitors flock to the moorland, beaches and cliffs of Devon and Cornwall. Yet despite this natural

wealth, parts of the region continue to face economic challenges.

While Bristol is the second most affluent large city in England, some parts of Cornwall and Devon have among the lowest average incomes in the UK. Cornwall makes up just 6.5% of the region's economy and receives EU Objective One funding. Following the decline of traditional industries such as mining, agriculture and fishing, the county relies on income from the 5 million tourists who visit each year.

This is why a vibrant voluntary sector is vital. Only London has a greater proportion of its workforce employed in the social purpose sector. The South West has more registered charities per

1,000 people than any other region. In total it is home to around 70,000 third sector organisations. Together, they address many of the issues facing the region.

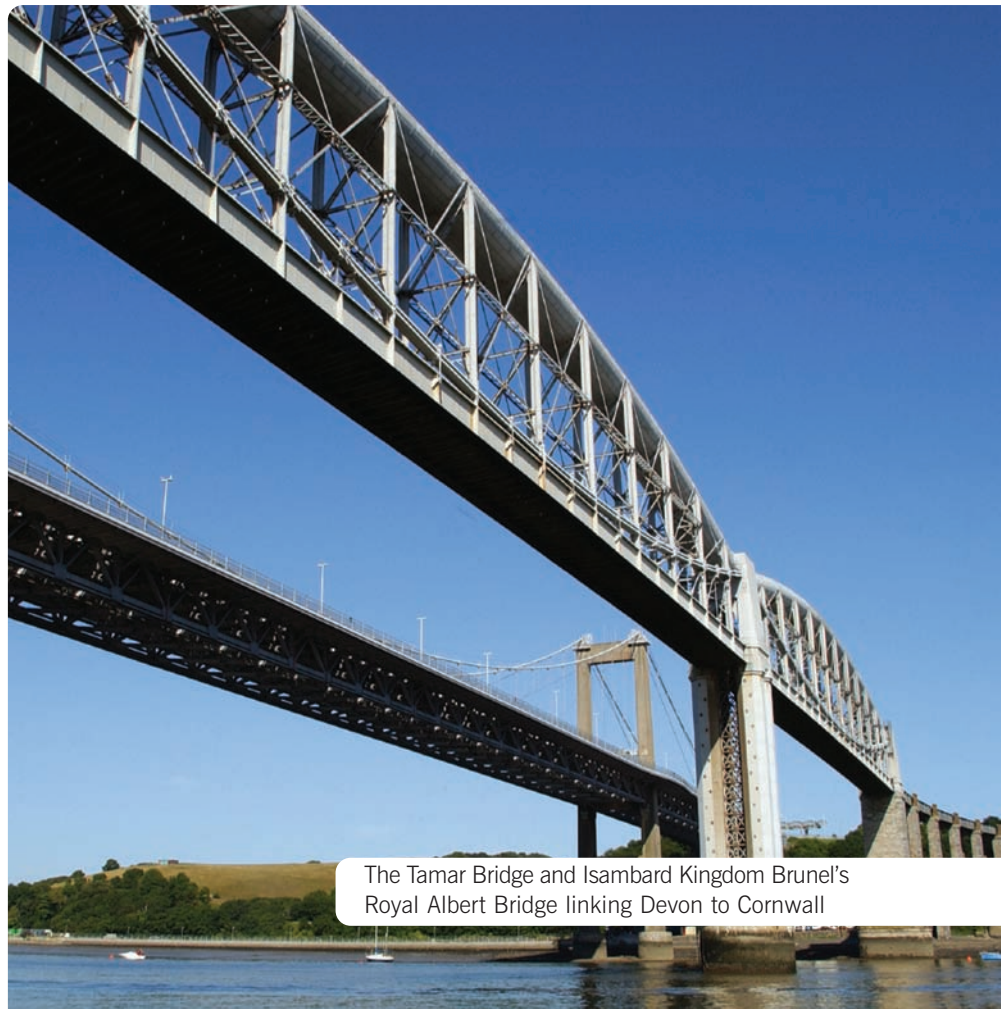
In this edition of South West spotlight, we highlight an example of how Unity works with charity and voluntary sector organisations in the region. From financing development projects to taking care of their day-to-day banking, Unity leaves them free to concentrate on what they do best.

Why do customers move to Unity?

- ✓ Personal service
- ✓ Understanding the needs of social economy organisations
- ✓ Tailored, flexible banking
- ✓ One-stop shop with everything from day-to-day banking to specialist financial services
- ✓ Social values and community spirit
- ✓ Convenient banking when and where you need it
- ✓ Value for money
- ✓ Respected within the sector
- ✓ Safe and secure
- ✓ Socially responsible

Sources

<http://www.southwestrda.org.uk/>
<http://www.southwestforum.org.uk/>



The Tamar Bridge and Isambard Kingdom Brunel's Royal Albert Bridge linking Devon to Cornwall

Bristol Drugs Project

Bristol Drugs Project (BDP) was founded in 1986 to provide free and confidential help to people with drug or alcohol problems. For much of that time, the charity has banked with Unity. "We moved to Unity from a high street bank following a best value review," says BDP director Maggie Telfer. "We felt it was important that our money went somewhere ethical and Unity gave us that peace of mind."

"Unity is secure and reliable," Maggie continues. "That's particularly important at a time when some of the high street banks seem to be involved in all sorts of things. We receive public and charitable funding and we need to keep it safe. We trust Unity to do that."

BDP uses its funding to help over 3,000 individuals and their families each year. Independent of bodies such as social services and the police, the charity is the main provider of free and confidential drug and alcohol help in Bristol. Banking with Unity leaves BDP free to concentrate on what it does best: reducing harm, promoting change, challenging prejudice and maximising people's potential.

"The service we enjoy from Unity keeps improving," Maggie continues. "It's a bank that does the basics well and doesn't try to sell us things we don't want. We meet with our development manager regularly and any problems are always sorted out quickly."

The work that BDP does has never been more important, as drug and alcohol problems become mainstream issues. A 2009 survey by DrugScope revealed that 19% of adult Britons have been dependent on illegal drugs or know someone who has. Over a quarter of respondents aged between 18 and 34 admitted to personal direct or indirect experience of drug dependence.* While BDP helps tackle this problem, it expects public sector funding to come under pressure in the years ahead.

As a specialist bank for charities, trade unions and the social economy Unity is well-placed to support the organisation in the future. "We reviewed our banking arrangements in 2008 and decided once again to stay with Unity," says Maggie. "We feel that banking with Unity is as safe as it's possible to be."



Actress April Pearson, former 'Skins' star, and John Prior, Bristol Drugs Project Chair, unveil the Investing in Volunteers award

*See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2009/jul/26/drugs-survey-dependent-adults-uk>

Open for Business

Many UK banks have suffered as a result of the global financial crisis and many are choosing to retrench and shed jobs. The very opposite is true of Unity and we are "very much open for business". Far from retrenching, we continue to grow our business, our customer base and our workforce.

We have never traded in sub-prime investments because to have done so would have been against both our corporate and social responsibility policies.

So, whilst other banks have been focusing on the harmful consequences of their investment decisions, we have been

focusing on the day-to-day issues affecting our customers and improving the range of services we provide to the sector. Amongst the services we offer are:

Day-to-day banking

As a customer you will be able to operate your bank account via the internet, over the phone, by post, at the Post Office, or by nominating a local high street bank convenient to you. The choice is yours.

Loan finance

In addition to the complete range of 'traditional' banking services, we also provide a range of flexible funding products which have been designed specifically

for the sectors in which we operate. These include: Property Development funding, Fundraising Bridging loans, Social Mortgages, Rent to Buy schemes and Grant Bridging overdrafts.

e-Payment

No forms to complete or postage to pay, the e-Payment service provides a range of time-saving, cost effective BACS options. The service allows you to make and receive regular payments and collect membership subscriptions. This simple to use product delivers services direct to your desktop without the need for complex software installations, and is available 24/7.



Jon Field
Unity Trust Bank plc
PO Box 401, Cardiff, CF11 1LE
T: 02920 644 422
M: 07885 843 682
E: jon.field@unity.co.uk

Registered office: Nine Brindleyplace,
Birmingham B1 2HB.

0845 140 1000
or visit www.unity.co.uk