



BUSINESS SUPPORT

GUIDE FOR **EXISTING BUSINESSES**

FOREWORD

Welcome to the Business Support Guide for businesses currently operating or looking to relocate to Britain's Ocean City.

There is a large and yet frequently changing amount of business support available making it a full time job for businesses to keep up.

To make the process of finding appropriate support easier for businesses in the City, Plymouth City Council Economic Development Service produce and maintain two booklets focussed on helping start ups and existing businesses to find support locally available:

[Click here](#) to see Business Support Guide for Start Ups

This guide will be updated at regular six monthly intervals to ensure the contents stay relevant and up to date.

The information in this guide is subject to change and was accurate when published.

If you notice any business support that has been left out, please contact us:

E_invest@plymouth.gov.uk
www.investinplymouth.co.uk

| SUPPORT PROVIDER | SERVICE | CONTACT | COST |
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| Business Advice | | | |
| ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) | Provides free and impartial information and advice to employers and employees on all aspects of workplace relations and employment law. | 0300 123 1150 www.m.acas.org.uk/ | Free |
| BEIS (Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) | Brings together businesses and regulators to consider and change how local regulation is delivered and received, promoting growth. | 0121 345 1200 rd.enquiries@beis.gov.uk www.gov.uk/regulatorydelivery | There may be cost implications from the service provider. |
| Better Business for All | Brings together businesses and regulators to consider and change how local regulation is delivered and received, promoting growth. | 03456 047 047 rachael.hind@plymouth.gov.uk www.heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk/better-business-for-all/ | There may be cost implications from the service provider. |
| Business Support Hotline Gov.uk | Advice and guidance for new and existing businesses, with information schemes, grants and loans to help businesses start and grow. | 0300 456 3565 www.gov.uk/business-support-helpline | Advice is free. Call charges may apply. |
| Chartered Trading Standards Institute | Free impartial legal guidance for businesses that sell goods and/or services to consumers. | www.businesscompanion.info | Guidance is free |
| Connecting Devon and Somerset | Advice and support for businesses to understand the benefits and adapt to faster broadband availability across Plymouth. | broadband@devon.gov.uk www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk | Advice is free. |

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| Cyber Essentials | Help to guard against the most common cyber threats and demonstrate your commitment to cyber security. | www.cyberessentials.ncsc.gov.uk | Free online resource. |
| Devon and Cornwall Training Providers Network | A not-for-profit organisation and covers both Devon and Cornwall, providing Training, Skills, Apprenticeships info and support, Workforce Development and Apprenticeship Levy. | 01752 294187 enquiries@trainingprovider.com www.trainingprovider.com | Membership Fee Applies. |
| Digital Business Academy | The Digital Business Academy from Tech City UK has more than 50 courses from University College London, University of Cambridge and other industry experts. | info@digitalbusinessacademyuk.com www.digitalbusinessacademyuk.com | All courses are available free to everyone in the UK. |
| General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) | People to have more control over their personal data and be better protected in the digital age under new measures announced by Digital Minister Matt Hancock. | www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-strengthen-uk-data-protection-law | Free online resource. |
| Growth Acceleration and Investment Network (GAIN) | GAIN helps you to navigate your way to the University of Plymouth's internationally renowned research expertise, facilities and business services. | 0800 052 5600 enterprisesolutions@plymouth.ac.uk www.gaininbusiness.com | Services are free via the website. Registration required. Fee based for research and other services. |
| Great Business | Support, advice and inspiration for growing your business. | 0300 456 3565 www.greatbusiness.gov.uk | Great Business is a free online resource. |
| Growth Hub Heart of the South West LEP | Regional service designed to help both new and established local businesses identify and access the best business support available. | 03456 047 047 info@heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk www.heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk | Free service. |

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| Growth Support Programme Devon County Council | A fully funded 1:1 advisor service which helps businesses identify and plan their development needs. Additional follow up specialist workshops available in Finance, HR, Marketing and Innovation. | 03456 047 047 info@heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk www.heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk | ERDF eligibility applies |
| Health and Safety Executive (HSE) | Online health and safety toolbox, providing relevant information to SMEs that applies to their industry. | 01752 226024 www.hse.gov.uk | A vast amount of information is available for free through the HSE website. |
| HMRC | Support and advice to help businesses understand their tax affairs. | www.hmrc.gov.uk | Information, documents and forms on the website is provided free. |
| ico – Information Commissioner’s Office | Find out about your obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information and providing access to official information. | 0303 123 1113 www.ico.org.uk | Membership Fee Applies. |
| Institute of Chartered Accountants England and Wales Business Advice Service | Business advice session with a chartered accountant including subjects such as business growth, securing loans, capital and finance, export planning, meeting tax and regulatory requirements. | 020 7920 3561 bas@icaew.com | ICAEW offers one hour free business support. |
| Intellectual Property Office | The Intellectual Property Office is able to provide advice and guidance to businesses about their IP including innovative designs and trademarks. | 0300 300 2000 www.gov.uk/ipo | Information supplied by the Intellectual Property Office is free but to protect IP will have a cost associated with it. |
| MentorSME | MentorSME is a gateway for businesses that are looking to contact a mentor in their area. | www.mentorsme.co.uk | Free service. Some mentors on the website charge for their services, each is different and some offer free information to SMEs. |

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| Plymouth City Council Business Relationship Programme | Free impartial support to help businesses identify available property, relocation advice, recruitment, links to regional funding and skills schemes, network introductions, economic research and gateway to relevant council services. | 01752 307996 info@investplymouth.gov.uk | |
| Plymouth City Council PATLIB | Provides free patent searches by appointment and advice and guidance around copyright, trademarks and designs. | 01752 306795 patlibplymouth@plymouth.gov.uk | Free of charge |
| Plymouth City Council Public Protection Service (PPS) | Advice and guidance to all trade an industry concerning regulation and best practice. Operates the assured trader scheme Buy With Confidence. | 01752 304147 public.protection@plymouth.gov.uk | Free of charge. |
| Plymouth Octopus Project (POP) | Provides infrastructure support for the Voluntary and Community Sector in Plymouth. | 01752 395131 info@plymouthoctopus.org www.plymouthoctopus.org | Free website resource. |
| Plymouth Social Enterprise Network | Promotes social enterprises in and around Plymouth. It provides a range of networking and membership services. | 07786 863206 gareth@plymsocent.org.uk www.plymsocent.org.uk | Membership fees start at £20. |
| Small Business Saturday | Small Business Saturday UK is a grassroots, non-commercial campaign, which highlights small business success and encourages consumers to 'shop local' and support small businesses in their communities. | comms@smallbusinesssaturdayuk.com www.smallbusinesssaturdayuk.com | Free website content. |
| SWMAS - South West Manufacturing | We help and inspire ambitious manufacturers to develop their capabilities and enter new markets. | 0845 608 3838 info@swmas.co.uk www.swmas.co.uk | Free website information. |

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| YTKO | Working across the UK and abroad, we bring over 30 years' private and public sector expertise in supporting new entrepreneurs and established businesses from a wide range of sectors. | info@ytko.com www.ytko.com | Free website information. |

Exporting

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| ASEAN: The Association of Southeast Asian Nations | The Association of Southeast Asian Nations brings together disparate neighbours to address economic, security, political, and social issues, but the group's impact remains limited. | 00 1 212 434 9400 www.asean.org/ | Free online resource |
| China Britain Business Council | The China-Britain Business Council helps businesses and organisations work together in China, the UK and third markets around the world. | www.cbbc.org/old/contact-us/ | Some services are free. Membership Fee Applies. |
| Devon Chamber of Commerce | Provides export services for planning, finance, logistics, sales and marketing. | 01752 220471 chamber@devonchamber.co.uk www.devonchamber.co.uk | Membership Fee Applies. |
| Department for International Trade | Helping businesses to export. | 020 7215 5000 enquiries@trade.gsi.gov.uk www.great.gov.uk/ | Most services provided by DIT are free, but cost may vary for some services. |
| Department for International Trade South West | Regional support service helping local business to export. | 01275 370829 www.businesswest.co.uk/export | Most services provided by DITSW are free, but cost may vary for some services. |

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| Enterprise Europe Network South West | Helping ambitious businesses innovate and grow internationally. We provide expert advice and support for businesses looking to commercialise ideas and succeed in new markets. | 01275 370997 EENSW@businesswest.co.uk www.enterprise-europe.co.uk | Advice and services offered by Enterprise Europe Network SW are free to businesses in Devon and Cornwall. |
| Open to Export | Free online information service, which is dedicated to helping small UK businesses, get ready to export and expand internationally. | www.opentoexport.com | Free online resource. |

Finance

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| Access Point for the Reach Fund Plymouth City Council | Aimed at growing the social enterprise sector in Plymouth, applicants can apply for a grant of up to £22,000 to develop their enterprise to become 'loan ready'. | jane.hunt@plymouth.gov.uk www.reachfund.org.uk/what-reach-fund | This fund is only open to social enterprises who are willing to take on loan capital as part of their business growth. |
| British Business Bank Finance Guide | The business finance guide is an invaluable tool for directors managing established or growing companies of all sizes. | 0114 206 2131 info@british-business-bank.co.uk www.thebusinessfinanceguide.co.uk | Advice is free. |
| Business, Energy and Investment Strategy (BEIS) Angel CoFund | Funding available alongside syndicates of business angels in order to support high potential businesses and give them the capital they need to develop and propel growth. | info@angelcofund.co.uk www.angelcofund.co.uk | The critical criterion is the presence of a strong group or syndicate of private angel investors who are looking to make a good commercial investment. |
| Crowdfunder | Advice, tips and crowdfunding methods for anyone looking to raise funds from the crowd. | www.crowdfunder.co.uk/95-crowdfunding-tips/95-tips-for-crowdfunders-your-guide-to-running-a-successful-project | Free advice on how to run a crowd funding project, but there are cost implications to using the service to raise finance. |

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| Devon and Cornwall Training Providers Network | A not-for-profit organisation and covers both Devon and Cornwall, providing funding, workforce Development and Apprenticeship Levy. | 01752 294187 enquiries@trainingprovider.com www.trainingprovider.com | Membership Fee Applies. |
| Fredericks Foundation | Microloans for start-up and established businesses unable to borrow conventional sources, with funds secured from Plymouth City Council. | 01276 472722 www.fredericksfoundation.org | The loan will need to be paid back to Fredericks Foundation through an agreed format. |
| Funding Central | Database of grants and funding available to the voluntary and community sector including social enterprise. | fundingcentralhelp@ncvo.org.uk www.fundingcentral.org.uk | Subscription based service free if income is below £100,000 if above £100 exc VAT. |
| Funding Circle | An online marketplace which can help businesses access finance exclusively focused on small businesses. | 0800 048 8747 www.fundingcircle.com | Costs associated with Funding Circle services. |
| Innovate UK | Fund, support and connect innovative businesses to accelerate sustainable economic growth. | 0300 321 4357 support@innovateuk.gov.uk www.gov.uk/innovate-uk | Service is free. |
| Patent Box | The Patent Box enables companies to apply a lower rate of Corporation Tax to profits from exploiting patented inventions. | www.gov.uk/guidance/corporation-tax-the-patent-box | You can only benefit from the Patent Box if your company is liable to Corporation Tax and makes a profit from exploiting patented inventions. |
| Research and Development tax relief (RnD) | R&D is a Corporation Tax (CT) tax relief that may reduce your company's tax bill. | www.gov.uk/guidance/corporation-tax-research-and-development-rd-relief | Companies can only claim for R&D tax relief if an R&D project. |
| Royal Bank of Scotland and Natwest Small Business Loan Fund | A loan programme designed to support small businesses operating in the South West looking to grow or diversify their business. | 0345 600 2230 (RBS) 0345 711 4477 (NatWest) | Free to contact for support. |

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| South West Angel Investor Network (SWAIN) | Helping SMEs to find equity finance and business angels. It assists private investors to search for company investment opportunities in businesses with growth potential. | 0870 060 6560 enquiries@swain.org.uk www.swain.org.uk | Costs associated with SWAIN services. |
| South West Investment Group (SWIG) | Non-profit organisation that provides risk capital to businesses in the South West | 01872 277 331 finance@swigcapital.co.uk www.swigfinance.co.uk | The majority of money is available through a loan scheme. |

Networks

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| Devon Chamber | Plymouth's local chamber providing opportunities to make new connections meet other businesses and stay informed about activities taking place in the local business community. | 01752 220471 chamber@devonchamber.co.uk www.devonchamber.co.uk | Membership costs vary. |
| Devon Chamber Export Forum | Supporting businesses in Devon to connect grow and succeed through the provision of networking opportunities, international trade advice and signposting to relevant business support services. | +44(0)1548 857009 info@ditf.org.uk www.ditf.org.uk | Free website content. |
| Devon and Cornwall Business Council (DCBC) | DCBC is the regional body that supports private sector businesses by operating at a strategic level across the counties of Devon and Cornwall. | 01752 395665 www.dcbc.co.uk | Membership costs. |
| Devon and Cornwall Training Providers Network | A not-for-profit organisation and covers both Devon and Cornwall, providing a voice for the training provider sector, as well as giving practical support and partnership opportunities for Members. | 01752 294187 enquiries@trainingprovider.com www.trainingprovider.com | Membership Fee Applied. |

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| Digital Plymouth | Connecting Plymouth's digital community. An opportunity to network and learn about the amazing things that are being created right here in Plymouth. | www.digitalplymouth.com | There will be cost implications with this service. |
| Federation of Small Business (FSB) | Wide range of vital business services including advice, financial expertise, support and a powerful voice in government. | 0808 2020888 customerservices@fsb.org.uk www.fsb.org.uk | Membership costs. |
| Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN) Part of Innovate UK | KTN can lead businesses to potential partners, horizon-expanding events, bespoke support and innovation insights relevant to their needs. | 03333 403250 enquiries@ktn-uk.org | |
| Plymouth Law Society | Share best practice, discover new career opportunities or simply engage with like-minded individuals that face the same challenges. | www.plymouthlawsociety.co.uk | Membership costs. |
| Plymouth Woman in Business | An opportunity for women business owners and decision makers to meet with local, like-minded business focused women, once a month, at a well-structured and facilitated network meeting. | Facebook page | Free to attend. |
| Plymouth Manufacturing Group (PMG) | An informal network of manufacturing companies from across the Plymouth travel-to-work-area. | www.mypmg.co.uk | Membership cost |
| Plymouth University - Starting Post | The Starting Post is a business network for people with a new business or those thinking about starting up. It is there to support the start-up community across all sectors. | formationzone@plymouth.ac.uk www.plymouth.ac.uk/whats-on/starting-post | Free to attend. |
| Six O'Clock Club | The Home Of Brighter Business Networking Great business networking events in Plymouth & London. | www.sixoclockclub.com | Free to attend. |

| SUPPORT PROVIDER | SERVICE | CONTACT | COST |
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| Skills | | | |
| Apprenticeships | UK National apprenticeship programmes. | 0800 015 0600 nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk www.hireanapprentice.campaign.gov.uk/ | Free website information. There will be cost implication to employing apprentices. |
| City College Plymouth | We work closely with local businesses, to ensure that the training and education we provide benefits both students and employers. | 01752 305300 employers@cityplym.ac.uk www.cityplym.ac.uk/help-advice/employers/ | Free website information. |
| Devon and Cornwall Training Providers Network | A not-for-profit organisation and covers both Devon and Cornwall, providing Training, Skills, Funding, Skills Analysis, Workforce Development. | 01752 294187 enquiries@trainingprovider.com www.trainingprovider.com | Membership fee applied. |
| Grad South West | The graduate job board for south west England. They advertise graduate jobs, graduate schemes, paid graduate internships and degree apprenticeships. | 01392 241302 admin@gradsouthwest.com www.gradsouthwest.com | From £80 exc VAT |
| Skills Support for the Workforce Learndirect | Free bespoke training for businesses, to raise attainment levels and to reduce skills shortages that restrict business growth. | 0345 5210066 www.learnirect.com | Free to Small Medium Enterprises |
| The Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards | Represents, promotes and supports the 21 Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) across the UK, working with over 550,000 employers to define skills needs and skills standards in their industry. | 0300 303 4444 info@fisss.org www.fisss.org | Free |

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| Tech Support | | | |
| Bristol University CFMS | Independent, non-for-profit organisation, committed to accelerating the delivery of more intuitive and powerful simulation-based design processes. | 0117 906 1100 info@cfms.org.uk | There will be a cost implication of using CFMS. |
| Dataplay | Open data is data that anyone can access, use and share. | +44 (0)1752 305477 DATAPlay@plymouth.gov.uk www.dataplymouth.co.uk | Free website content. |
| Engineering Innovation Network South West | Business support to help grow SME engineering sector in the South West. | 01249 466800 einsw@wiltshire.ac.uk | The two days of business support is free. |
| FAB Labs | Centre for experimental production, investigation and education, housing sophisticated computer-aided design software and machinery for the creation of prototypes and scale models in the creative and commercial industries. | T 01752 203434 fablab@pca.ac.uk www.fablab.plymouthart.ac.uk | Free induction programme, but there could be costs associated with using the service. |
| i-DAT | i-DAT is an Open Research Lab for playful experimentation with creative technology. | 01752 586201 contact@i-dat.org www.i-dat.org | There may be costs associated for the required facilities. |
| Innovate2Succeed | A 5 – 9 day programme provides access to innovation specialists to help harness innovation and overcome barriers to growth. | 0300 123 3066 contact@enterprise-europe.co.uk www.enterprise-europe.co.uk | Service is free for ERDF eligible businesses. |

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| Laboratory for Integrated Metrology Applications (LIMA) | Manufacturing solutions from metrology research for businesses large and small, allowing them to benefit from emerging technology and state-of-the-art solutions. | 01225 385138 contact@limauk.com www.limauk.com | Many of its free services are free to SMEs in the South West. |
| National Composites Centre | Independent, open-access national centre that delivers world-class innovation in the design and rapid manufacture of composites and facilitates their widespread industrial exploitation. | 0117 370 7600 info@nccuk.com www.nccuk.com | Tiered memberships option available or pay-per-use for private venture work. |
| Plymouth University Enterprise Solutions | Enterprise Solutions can provide access to Plymouth University's facilities, expertise and services. | 0800 052 5600 enterprisesolutions@plymouth.ac.uk www.plymouth.ac.uk/business-partners/business-services/enterprise-solutions | There may be a cost implication depending on what services are used. |
| Plymouth University Plymouth Electron Microscopy Centre | Can offer expert and specialist support to companies, acting as an 'outsourced lab' for many Plymouth businesses. | 01752 584535 emc@plymouth.ac.uk www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/about-us/university-structure/faculties/science-engineering/electron-microscopy-centre/working-with-industry | There may be costs associated for the required facilities. |
| Regen SW Zero Energy Building | Intensive business support to businesses in construction, energy efficiency and micro-generation sectors. | 01392 494399 tcrook@regensw.co.uk www.regensw.co.uk | Free to eligible businesses. |
| Somerset College The Genesis Project | A facility in Taunton which provides information on sustainable construction. | 01823 366 366 trevor.payne@somerset.ac.uk www.genesisproject.com | Each course on offer has its own cost implication. |

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| University of Exeter The Centre for Additive Layer Manufacturing | Innovative manufacturing for the benefit of businesses in the South West. | 01392 725 831 calm@exeter.ac.uk www.exeter.ac.uk/engineering/research/calm/ | Initial advice is free to all businesses; however further support available at a cost. |
| University of Exeter Centre for Alternative Materials and Remanufacturing Technologies | Supporting businesses in the South West involved in composites and plastics. Provides access to expertise, advice and technology. | 01392 725821 calmare@exeter.ac.uk | 12 hours fully funded support to SMEs. |

Business Support – A guide for businesses in the city
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