Bristol launches local currency
Emily Gosling

Today sees the launch of the Bristol Pound, a new currency for the city that aims to strengthen local businesses and 'keep our high streets diverse and distinct.'

The Bristol Poundt

The branding for the initiative was designed by graphic designers Adele Graham and Owen Davis, while the designs for the currency itself were chosen form submissions by members of the public as part of a city-wide competition organised by the Bristol Evening Post newspaper. The website was created by Glow Creative.

The Bristol Pound

Notes come in one, five, ten and 20 pound denominations, printed with a cockerel hologram to help prevent forgeries. The four different notes feature Bristol symbols such as 19th century religious writer Hannah More, the Concorde aircraft, partly developed in Bristol, images of the St Paul's Carnival Caribbean street festival, and a tiger writing 'O Liberty!' on a wall.

One Bristol pound is equivalent to one pound sterling, and can be used in more than 300 businesses across the area including the Arnolfini arts centre.

The Bristol Pound

It is the first local currency that can be used to pay local taxes, and the council has offered its 17,000 staff the option of receiving part of their pay in the currency.

The scheme is run as a not-for-profit social enterprise partnership between the Bristol Pound Community Interest Company and Bristol Credit Union.

Bristol Pounds can be spent as hard currency, by SMS text message or online through electronic accounts managed by Bristol Credit Union. Business accounts are available to traders that are independently owned and based in or around Bristol.

The Bristol Pound

While Bristol pounds are in free circulation, they are not legal tender, and accepting the currency is voluntary for organisations. Money can only be taken out of the system by registered account holders.

Fonte: Design Week [Portal]. Disponível em: <http://www.designweek.co.uk/news/bristol-launches-local-currency/3035268.article>. Acesso em: 19 Sept. 2012.

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