TORBAY COUNCIL

Monday, 12 October 2026

CABINET

A meeting of **Cabinet** will be held on

Tuesday, 20 October 2026

commencing at **5.30 pm**

The meeting will be held in the Banking Hall, Castle Circus entrance on the left corner of the Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

Members of the Committee

Councillor David Thomas (Chair)

Councillor Billings
Councillor Bye
Councillor Chris Lewis
Councillor Jacqueline Thomas
Councillor Tranter
Councillor Tyerman

A Healthy, Happy and Prosperous Torbay

Download this agenda via the free modern.gov app on your iPad or Android Device. For information relating to this meeting or to request a copy in another format or language please contact:
Governance Support, Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

Email: governance.support@torbay.gov.uk - www.torbay.gov.uk

CABINET
AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes (Pages 5 - 18)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15 September 2026.

3. Disclosure of Interests

(a) To receive declarations of non pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda.

For reference: Having declared their non pecuniary interest members may remain in the meeting and speak and, vote on the matter in question. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.

(b) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda.

For reference: Where a Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest he/she must leave the meeting during consideration of the item. However, the Member may remain in the meeting to make representations, answer questions or give evidence if the public have a right to do so, but having done so the Member must then immediately leave the meeting, may not vote and must not improperly seek to influence the outcome of the matter. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.

(**Please Note:** If Members and Officers wish to seek advice on any potential interests they may have, they should contact Governance Support or Legal Services prior to the meeting.)

4. Urgent Items

To consider any other items the Chair decides are urgent.

5. Matters for Consideration

6. Torbay Placement Sufficiency Strategy for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People 2026-2029 (Pages 19 - 110)

To consider a report that seeks approval of the Torbay Placement Sufficiency Strategy for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People 2026-2029.

7. Torbay Young Futures Hub and Local Youth Transformation Programme (Pages 111 - 134)

To consider a report that sets out a programme overview of a proposed strategic framework, governance, workstreams, indicative timetable and funding profile.

8. **Hackney Carriage Tariff Increase** (Pages 135 - 158)
To consider a report on the Hackney Carriage Tariff Increase**.**

9. **Destination Management Plan Review** (Pages 159 - 256)
To consider a report that seeks approval of the refreshed Destination Management Plan.

10. **Updated Torbay Heritage Strategy for Adoption** (Pages 257 - 346)
To consider a report that seeks approval of the updated Heritage Strategy.

11. **Amendment to Boundary of Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve** (Pages 347 - 412)
To consider a report on the above.

12. **Disposal of Surplus Assets Phase 2** (Pages 413 - 432)
To consider a report that seeks approval to dispose of surplus assets.

Live Streaming and Hybrid Arrangements
To encourage more people to engage in our public meetings the Council is live streaming our Cabinet meetings on our YouTube channel in addition to recording the meetings and publishing the recording on our website. To watch the meeting live please visit https://www.youtube.com/user/torbaycouncil.

We are also using hybrid meeting arrangements to enable officers and Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet to either attend the meeting in person or to attend the meeting remotely via Zoom. Anyone attending the meeting remotely must use their raise hand function when they wish to speak and to declare any interests at the appropriate time. If anyone attending the meeting remotely loses connection the meeting will continue and they will have the option to follow the meeting via the YouTube live stream.

This page is intentionally left blank

Minutes of the Cabinet

15 September 2026

-: Present :-

Councillor David Thomas (Chair)

Councillors Billings, Bye, Chris Lewis, Tranter and Tyerman

(Also in attendance: Councillors Cowell (virtual), Mandy Darling (virtual), Douglas-Dunbar (virtual), Johns (virtual), Law, Barbara Lewis (virtual) and Long)

---

28. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Jackie Thomas.

29. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 18 August 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

30. Disclosure of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

31. Matters for Consideration

The Cabinet considered the following matters, full details of which (including the Cabinet's decisions) are set out in the Record of Decisions appended to these Minutes.

32. Developing Residential Children's Homes for Torbay

33. Adult Social Care Local Account Summary 2025/26

34. Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment for Complaint Handling

35. Leasing of Commercial Business units at Unit D, Westfield Business Park, Long Road, Paignton

36. Appointment of Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel

37. SWISCo Dashboard - Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

Chair

This page is intentionally left blank

Record of Decisions

Developing Residential Children's Homes for Torbay

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 15 September 2026

Decision

1. That a procurement to select Ofsted registered and suitably experienced children's home providers be approved and that the Cabinet agreed to proceed on the basis of:

   a) Lot 1 – a provider to work with Torbay Council to deliver two 2-bedded children's homes. The buildings would be purchased by the Council and leased to the provider, who would register and operate the home. The provider would partner with Torbay Council to select the most suitable properties and design the service to meet Torbay Council's needs; and

   b) Lot 2 – A provider or provider(s) to deliver two 2-bedded children's homes, with the buildings sourced and the home operated by the provider.

   For both Lots the Council will seek to involve children and young people in the procurement process and design of the homes following the procurement, to make sure the Council considers their views.

2. Both Lots would be block contracted for a period of 3+2 years to enable homes to be secured for Torbay children and to give the commissioned providers the opportunity to create high quality, stable local services, working in partnership with Torbay Council's social workers and support services.

Reason for the Decision

Torbay Council has a statutory responsibility to ensure there is a sufficient range of safe, stable and high-quality accommodation for children and young people in its care.

The development of local residential children's homes would provide opportunities for children and young people to remain closer to their families, friends, schools, health services and local support networks where this was in their best interests. The proposal would also support the Council's ambition to reduce reliance on unregistered placements, strengthen local sufficiency, improve outcomes for children and young people and assist in managing increasing residential placement costs.

Implementation

This decision may be implemented on 28 September 2026 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

Torbay Council is committed to ensuring that children and young people in its care receive the same opportunities as their peers and are able to achieve positive outcomes throughout their

lives. High-quality residential care forms an important part of the local placement offer for children whose needs cannot be met through fostering or other family-based arrangements.

The Council has been selected by the Department for Education to receive capital funding to support the development of local residential children's homes. The procurement seeks to secure four new children's homes providing a total of eight residential placements through two complementary models: Council-owned homes operated by specialist providers and provider-owned homes independently operated by registered providers.

The introduction of locally based homes is expected to improve placement stability, reduce the disruption associated with out-of-area placements, support stronger relationships with families and local services, and provide better opportunities for planning transitions into adulthood. The use of block contracts is expected to provide greater certainty of provision for Torbay children while enabling providers to invest in staff, services and long-term partnership working within Torbay.

At the meeting Councillor Bye proposed and Councillor Tyerman seconded a motion that was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

The option of taking no action was considered and discounted as it would have continued the Council's reliance on an increasingly pressured external market, perpetuated the shortage of local residential placements and limited the Council's ability to meet its sufficiency duty and shape the local market to meet the needs of Torbay children and young people.

The option of developing Council-run children's homes was also considered. Whilst this would have provided direct control over service delivery, it was rejected because the Council no longer had experience of operating residential children's homes and recognised that specialist external providers possessed the expertise necessary to register, establish and manage such provision successfully.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

18 September 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Record of Decisions

Adult Social Care Local Account Summary 2025/26

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 15 September 2026

Decision

1. that the contents of the Adult Social Care Local Account Summary 2025/26 be noted; and

2. that the publication of the Adult Social Care Local Account Summary 2025/26 as the Council's annual account of Adult Social Care performance and improvement activity be approved.

Reason for the Decision

Publication of the Local Account supported the principles of transparency, accountability and continuous improvement and enabled residents, carers, partners and stakeholders to understand how Adult Social Care services were performing, the impact they were having on local people and the priorities for future improvement.

Implementation

This decision may be implemented on 28 September 2026 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The Adult Social Care Local Account Summary 2025/26 had been developed using performance information, quality assurance activity, feedback from people with lived experience, carers, staff and partners, and learning from service delivery throughout 2025/26. The report described how Adult Social Care had responded to increasing demand, rising complexity of need and financial pressures whilst supporting people to remain independent and connected to their communities.

The report also reflected the outcome of Torbay's first Care Quality Commission assessment and preparations for the return of Adult Social Care functions to Torbay Council in April 2027 following the termination of the Section 75 arrangements.

At the meeting Councillor Tranter proposed and Councillor David Thomas seconded a motion that was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

The alternative option considered was not to publish the Adult Social Care Local Account Summary 2025/26. This option was discounted as publication supported transparency, accountability and engagement with residents, people who draw on support, carers, partners and stakeholders and provided an opportunity to communicate performance, achievements, challenges and priorities for improvement.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

18 September 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Record of Decisions

Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment for Complaint Handling

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 15 September 2026

Decision

1. that the Housing Complaints Policy as set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved; and

2. that the Self-Assessment Report 2026 as set out at Appendix 2 to the submitted report be noted.

Reason for the Decision

From 1 April 2024, the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code became statutory and social landlords were required by law to comply with its requirements. Approval of the Housing Complaints Policy would ensure that Torbay Council achieved best practice in complaint handling, provided a better service to tenants and demonstrated to the Housing Ombudsman that complaint handling arrangements were operating in accordance with the Code.

Implementation

This decision may be implemented on 28 September 2026 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code sets out the requirements that social landlords must follow when receiving, investigating and responding to complaints from tenants. Since becoming statutory on 1 April 2024, landlords have been required to demonstrate compliance with the Code and are subject to monitoring by the Housing Ombudsman.

The submitted report presented the Council's Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment for 2026 and sought approval of a Housing Complaints Policy to strengthen governance arrangements and ensure that complaint handling processes remained consistent, transparent and accessible to tenants.

At the meeting Councillor Tyerman proposed and Councillor Cowell seconded a motion that was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

No alternative options were identified, as compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code was a statutory requirement and the approval of an appropriate complaints policy supported the Council in meeting its legal obligations and providing an effective service to tenants.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

18 September 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Record of Decisions

Leasing of Commercial Business Units at Unit D, Westfield Business Park, Long Road, Paignton

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 15 September 2026

Decision

That delegated authority be given to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth, to negotiate and agree the detailed terms, including the market rent, of the first lease granted for each of the four units at Unit D, Westfield Business Park, Long Road, Paignton.

Reason for the Decision

The market rent for each individual unit was assessed by a RICS surveyor as being in excess of £50,000 per annum and, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, the granting of the leases required Cabinet approval. Delegating authority to the Director of Finance would enable lease terms to be agreed efficiently, avoiding delays in the letting process and the receipt of rental income by the Council.

Implementation

This decision may be implemented on 28 September 2026 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

Cabinet considered a report seeking authority to enable the letting of four newly created commercial units at Unit D, Westfield Business Park, Long Road, Paignton. The Council purchased the property in April 2026 and invested in significant refurbishment works to create two laboratory units and two office units targeted specifically at high-tech businesses.

The development formed part of the Council's longer-term strategy to support growth within Torbay's high-tech sector, building on links with South Devon College and businesses associated with EPIC. The units were intended to provide accommodation for expanding businesses, increase employment opportunities and attract investment into Torbay.

Cabinet noted that delegating authority to the Director of Finance would enable commercially advantageous lease agreements to be progressed promptly, helping to minimise void periods and reduce the costs associated with vacant property holdings.

At the meeting Councillor Chris Lewis proposed and Councillor Bye seconded a motion that was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

The option of disposing of the units on a freehold basis was discounted as the Council wished to retain ownership and control of the premises, ensuring that they continued to support the development of the high-tech sector and local employment opportunities.

The option of not letting the units on a commercial basis was also discouted as this would increase void costs, delay revenue generation and reduce the overall financial benefits arising from the Council's investment in the property.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

18 September 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Record of Decisions

Appointment of Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 15 September 2026

Decision

1. that a Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel be established with Membership and Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report; and

2. that the Chief Executive (Anne-Marie Bond) be appointed as the Council's Shareholder Designated Representative.

Reason for the Decision

The Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel was required to set the objectives of the Board and ensure the performance of the company and safeguard the Council's investment.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 28 September 2026 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

Following the transfer of Torbay Economic Development Company (known as TDA) to Torbay Council, the Council had established Torbay Council Holding Company Limited to manage all the Council's companies and their subsidiaries. A Board had been established in accordance with the Local Operating Policy for Governance of Council Wholly Owned Companies. There was a requirement for the Cabinet to appoint a Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel and Designated Representative as part of the governance arrangements. This also aligned with the Local Government Association guidance and the Local Partnerships Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCo) Guidance (2023) ensuring appropriate governance of Wholly Owned Companies and clear separation of roles between the Board and the Shareholder Panel.

At the meeting Councillor David Thomas proposed and Councillor Tyerman seconded the motion that was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

To retain the existing SWISCo Shareholder Panel, due to the scale of the work covered by the Panel. This option was not recommended as it would add another meeting/Panel and may lose consistency of having a single Panel providing oversight of all the Wholly Owned Companies and their subsidiaries.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

18 September 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Record of Decisions

SWISCo Dashboard – Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 15 September 2026

Decision

That the Cabinet's response to the SWISCo Dashboard - Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board be approved as published.

Reason for the Decision

The Cabinet was required to respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 28 September 2026 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The Cabinet received the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board on the SWISCo Dashboard. In accordance with section D7 of Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny as set out in the Constitution, the Cabinet was required to respond to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Board within two months. Subsequently the Cabinet prepared a response to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Board which was proposed by Councillor Billings and seconded by Councillor Chris Lewis and agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

None

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

18 September 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

TORBAY COUNCIL

Meeting: Cabinet **Date:** 20th October 2026

Wards affected: All wards

Report Title: Torbay Placement Sufficiency Strategy for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People 2026–2029

When does the decision need to be implemented? Following expiry of the statutory call-in period.

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Councillor Nick Bye, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Director Contact Details: Nancy Meehan, Director of Children's Services

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval of the Torbay Placement Sufficiency Strategy for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People 2026–2029.

1.2 The Strategy provides a whole-system framework to support more children safely within their families and networks, increase the range and quality of local homes and accommodation, secure permanence without avoidable delay, and improve accommodation pathways for care experienced young people.

1.3 Delivery will be taken forward through the accompanying Placement Sufficiency Delivery Action Plan and the Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements, with progress reported to Directors and Cabinet.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

2.1 The Strategy responds to Torbay's statutory sufficiency responsibilities and to evidence of continuing pressure in the placement market. At 31 March 2026, Torbay was caring for 292 children. Around 74% were in family-based care, while 94 children were placed more than 20 miles from home and a small number required high-cost or unregistered arrangements. Demand remains particularly challenging for adolescents, sibling groups, children with disabilities and complex needs, parent and baby placements, emergency care and residential step-down.

2.2 Approval will provide a clear strategic framework linking prevention, kinship and connected care, local fostering, residential and specialist provision, permanence, supported accommodation and commissioning oversight. The intended benefits are improved placement stability and locality, better education and health continuity, stronger accommodation pathways into adulthood, reduced reliance on crisis-led external provision, and improved value for money.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

1. That Cabinet approves the Torbay Placement Sufficiency Strategy for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People 2026–2029.
2. That the Director of Children's Services be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, to make minor amendments to the Strategy that do not materially change its direction or commitments.
3. That delivery is taken forward through the Placement Sufficiency Delivery Action Plan and the Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements, with progress and exceptions reported to Directors and Cabinet through existing governance arrangements.

Appendix 1: Torbay Placement Sufficiency Strategy for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People 2026–2029
Appendix 2: Placement Sufficiency Delivery Action Plan 2026–2029

2 Background Documents

- Children Act 1989 and statutory guidance on securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children
- Torbay Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Torbay Children and Young People's Plan
- Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements

Supporting Information

3 Introduction

3.1 The Council has a duty, so far as reasonably practicable, to secure sufficient accommodation within its area for children it looks after. The proposed Strategy is based on local demand, placement, fostering, SEND, care experienced young people and market evidence. It establishes seven linked priorities: supporting families and networks; increasing local foster care; reducing out-of-area, high-cost and unregistered provision; improving provision for children with complex needs; securing permanence; improving accommodation for care experienced young people; and strengthening commissioning, data and governance.

4 Options under consideration

4.1 Approve the Strategy. This is the recommended option because it provides a coherent statutory and strategic framework, supported by a delivery plan and governance route.

4.2 Defer approval. This would allow further development but would delay implementation, weaken the Council's response to current sufficiency pressures and postpone the benefits of coordinated action.

4.3 Do not approve the Strategy. This is not recommended because the Council would lack an up-to-date strategic framework for meeting its sufficiency duty and managing quality, demand and financial pressures.

5 Financial Opportunities and Implications

5.1 The Strategy is aligned to the Placements Financial Sustainability Plan, which identifies a requirement to reduce placement expenditure by £4 million over two and a half financial years. Approval of the Strategy does not, in itself, commit the Council to new expenditure. Individual workstreams requiring investment, procurement or capital approval will be subject to detailed business cases and the Council's normal financial decision-making arrangements. Financial benefits will be tracked as cashable savings, non-cashable cost avoidance, one-off savings and investment or transition costs.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 The Strategy supports the Council's duties under the Children Act 1989, including sections 17, 20, 21, 22 and 22C, and the requirement to secure sufficient local accommodation so far as reasonably practicable. It also supports the corporate parenting principles in the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Legal advice will be sought on individual delivery proposals where required, including procurement, property, planning, registration and contractual matters.

7 Engagement and Consultation

7.1 The Strategy has been informed by local service, performance, commissioning, finance, housing, SEND and placement evidence.

8 Procurement Implications

8.1 Approval of the Strategy does not itself award any contract. Delivery may require future procurement of residential, specialist, supported accommodation or related services. Each procurement will follow the Procurement Act 2023, the Council's Contract Procedures and relevant social value requirements, with proportionate consideration of market engagement, local supplier opportunities, lotting, quality, safeguarding and value for money.

9 Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

9.1 The strategic aim of increasing suitable local provision may reduce travel associated with distant placements and support greater continuity with local schools, health services, families and communities. Any new property, capital or commissioned provision will be assessed separately against the Council's Environment and Carbon Neutral Policy, including energy, transport, waste, biodiversity and climate resilience considerations.

10 Associated Risks

10.1 Key risks include delay in developing local residential and specialist provision; insufficient foster carer recruitment and retention; provider market, workforce and affordability pressures; blocked accommodation pathways for care experienced young people; fragmented planning for SEND and complex needs; and financial pressures increasing faster than planned improvements.

10.2 These risks will be managed through the delivery action plan, monthly high-cost placement review, commissioning and contract oversight, sufficiency performance reporting and escalation through Directors and Cabinet. Failure to approve the Strategy would reduce strategic grip and delay coordinated action.

11 Equality Impact Assessment

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age	• 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. • 55% of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. • 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	The Strategy is expected to have a positive impact on children in care and care experienced young people by improving the availability, stability and suitability of homes and support across childhood and transition to adulthood.	Use age-appropriate planning, placement matching, participation and transition arrangements; monitor outcomes by age and placement type.	Children's Services and partners; throughout 2026–2029.
Carers	• At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. • 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care.	No Differential Impact	N/A	N/A
Care experienced	• As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young	Positive impact is anticipated through stronger Staying Put, supported accommodation, move-	Monitor suitability, homelessness risk, move-on and tenancy	Children's Services, Housing and

	people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	on, tenancy sustainment and participation arrangements. Risks include insufficient affordable or specialist accommodation and delayed transitions.	sustainment; escalate gaps through the sufficiency programme.	Commissioning; throughout 2026–2029.
Disability	• In the 2021 Census, 23.9% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.	Children with SEND, disabilities and complex needs may be disproportionately affected by gaps in local specialist provision, disrupted education and delayed transition planning. The Strategy gives this group a specific priority and is intended to improve joint planning and local sufficiency.	Joint planning across social care, SEND, education, health, housing and adult services; accessible participation; reasonable adjustments; monitoring of placement and education stability.	Children's Services, SEND, Education, Health, Housing and Adult Services; throughout 2026–2029.
Gender reassignment	• In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth.	No Differential Impact	N/A	N/A
Marriage and civil partnership	• Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census,	No Differential Impact	N/A	N/A

	44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.			
Pregnancy and maternity	• Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3). • For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0).	No Differential Impact	N/A	N/A
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: • 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh • 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black	No Differential Impact	N/A	N/A

	Welsh, Caribbean or African • 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups • 96.1% as White • 0.4% described their ethnicity another way. • Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.			
Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following; • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddhist • 0.2% are Hindu • 0.6% are Muslim • Less than 0.1% are Sikh • 0.1% are Jewish • 0.7% have another religion	No Differential Impact	N/A	N/A

	• 43.2% have no religion • 6.3% did not answer			
Sex	• 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.	No Differential Impact	N/A	N/A
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows; • 89% as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian • 1.1% as Bisexual • 0.1% as Pansexual • 0.1% described their sexuality another way • 7.4% of people didn't answer the question	No Differential Impact	N/A	N/A
Armed Forces Community	• In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces.	No Differential Impact	N/A	N/A

	• In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.			
Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	• Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	The Strategy is expected to support children and families affected by deprivation through earlier help, prevention of homelessness, stronger family networks and improved access to stable local homes. Housing affordability and family poverty remain material risks.	Align delivery with Family Help, Housing and financial inclusion work; monitor Section 17 accommodation, homelessness and placement distance.	Children's Services and Housing; throughout 2026–2029.
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	• For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between males who live in Torbay's least and most deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females.	Stable placements, continuity of education and health services, therapeutic support and safer transitions are expected to improve physical and emotional wellbeing. Delayed access to local specialist support could reduce these benefits.		
Human Rights impacts		The Strategy supports children's rights to family life, safety, participation, identity and access to education and health. Individual	Maintain lawful care planning, advocacy, review and complaints routes; involve children and young	Children's Services and Legal;

		placement decisions must remain lawful, proportionate and based on assessed need and best interests.	people in decisions and explain reasons clearly.	throughout implementation.
Child Friendly	Children and young people have emphasised having a say in decisions, being heard, having somewhere decent to live, remaining connected to important people and places, and receiving support that recognises the impact of care experience.	The Strategy has a positive Child Friendly impact by embedding participation in placement planning, commissioning, quality assurance and governance and by prioritising safe, stable and local support where possible.	Use established participation forums and direct work; include feedback loops in procurement, service design and performance reporting.	Children's Services and Participation Service; throughout 2026–2029.

12 Cumulative Council Impact

12.1 Delivery has cross-council implications for Children's Services, Housing, Finance, Commissioning, Assets, SEND, Education, Adult Services and Legal. Coordinated planning should improve outcomes and reduce duplication, but competing capital, workforce and revenue pressures may affect pace. These dependencies will be managed through the Sufficiency Programme Board and existing budget governance.

13 Cumulative Community Impacts

13.1 The Strategy depends on continued partnership with health, education, housing providers, commissioned services, foster carers and the voluntary and community sector. Wider housing-market pressures, provider capacity, workforce shortages and national reform may affect delivery. Ongoing market engagement, joint planning and annual review will be used to respond to these changes.

TORBAY COUNCIL



Torbay Council - Placement Sufficiency Strategy

2026 – 2029

Contents

Foreword **4**

1. Introduction **5**

2. Our legal duties **5**

3. Our Commitment to Children and Young People **6**

4. Our children and young people **6**

4.1 Demography, deprivation and future demand 6

4.2 Age, gender, ethnicity and additional needs 6

5. The intent of the placement sufficiency strategy **12**

6. The strategic context **13**

7. Our care family – a snapshot **17**

8. Forward demand and sufficiency assumptions **20**

9. What we have achieved since the last strategy **22**

10. Our strategic priorities **22**

Strategic Priority 1: Support more children to remain safely with their parents, families and wider networks 22

Strategic Priority 2: Increase the number, range and capability of local foster carers 31

Strategic Priority 3: Reduce reliance on out-of-area, high-cost and unregistered provision ... 33

Strategic Priority 4: Improve sufficiency for children and young people with SEND, disabilities, complex needs and emotional wellbeing needs 37

Strategic Priority 5: Secure permanence without avoidable delay 40

Strategic Priority 6: Increase the quantity, quality and range of accommodation and support for care experienced young people 43

Strategic Priority 7: Manage placement resources effectively through commissioning, market shaping, data and governance 50

11. Young person's voice: listening, acting and feeding back **52**

What young people's voice means for this strategy 53

12. Finance and value for money **54**

13. Strategic risks and dependencies **57**

14. Conclusion **60**

15. Summary of high-level success measures **60**

16. Recommendations and next steps **61**

Appendix 1: Placement Sufficiency Delivery Action Plan 2026–2029 ..... **64**

1. Purpose 64
2. Delivery principles 64
3. Strategic outcomes by March 2029 65
4. High-level delivery milestones 65
5. Financial framework 78
6. Governance and reporting 78
7. Core measures 79

Foreword

I am pleased to introduce Torbay's Placement Sufficiency Strategy for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People 2026–2029. This strategy sets out how Torbay Council, with partners, will strengthen the range, quality and availability of local homes, accommodation and support for children and young people who need us. Our ambition is that every child is supported to remain safely within their family, network and community wherever possible, and that every child who does need care is safe, loved, listened to and supported to thrive.

As corporate parents, we want the same for Torbay's children and young people as any good parent would want for their own child: stable relationships, a secure sense of belonging, good education, good health, ambition for the future and a safe place to call home. This means supporting families earlier, strengthening kinship and connected care, increasing local foster care, developing local residential and supported accommodation options, and securing permanence without avoidable delay.

This strategy is informed by Torbay's local data, current priorities and wider reform context. It should be read alongside, and delivered through, the existing work already underway across Torbay, including the Children's Services Housing Needs Analysis, the Children's Homes Programme, the Department for Education capital bid for residential provision, the Fostering Offer and recruitment work, the Specialist Post-16 Provision proposal, the Joint Working Protocol to Prevent Homelessness for Young People aged 16–25, the Torbay Corporate Parenting Strategy, the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and the accommodation pathways for care experienced young people.



Cllr Nick Bye

Lead Member Children's Services

1. Introduction

This Placement Sufficiency Strategy sets out how Torbay Council will meet its responsibilities to secure sufficient, safe and suitable accommodation and support for children in care and care experienced young people. It focuses on ensuring that children and young people have the right home, in the right place, at the right time, and that support is planned around their needs, relationships, identity, education, health and long-term outcomes.

Sufficiency is not only about finding placements once children enter care. For Torbay, sufficiency is a whole-system responsibility. It includes the interrelationships between early help, Family Help, Family Hubs, family group decision-making, kinship and connected care, safe reunification, permanence planning, fostering, residential care, supported accommodation, care leaver housing and specialist support for children with SEND, disabilities and complex needs.

2. Our legal duties

Torbay Council's sufficiency responsibilities are rooted in the Children Act 1989 and associated statutory guidance. The overall sufficiency duty requires local authorities to take steps that secure, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within the local authority area for children who are looked after by the authority.

- Section 17 places a general duty on the local authority to provide a range and level of services to children in need and their families that are appropriate to those children's needs.
- Section 20 requires local authorities to provide accommodation for children in need who appear to require accommodation.
- Section 21 requires local authorities to accommodate some children who are remanded or subject to certain criminal justice orders.
- Section 22 and Section 22C require the authority to consider the most appropriate placement, including preference for family and connected person arrangements where suitable, keeping children near home, avoiding disruption to education, enabling siblings to live together where appropriate, meeting the needs of disabled children and providing accommodation within the local authority area unless this is not reasonably practicable.
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires local authorities to have regard to the corporate parenting principles when exercising functions in relation to children in care and care leavers up to the age of 25.

3. Our Commitment to Children and Young People

Torbay's commitment to children in care and care experienced young people is that they benefit from stable relationships, a secure sense of belonging, good education, good health, ambition for the future and a safe place to call home. This strategy helps put that commitment into practice by ensuring children and young people have access to stable homes, trusted relationships, the right support, and opportunities to maintain family, community and cultural connections wherever this is safe and in their best interests.

4. Our children and young people

4.1 Demography, deprivation and future demand

Torbay's sufficiency planning needs to be understood in the context of local demography, deprivation and family stress. Torbay's population was estimated at 140,126 residents in 2024 (latest available data), with around 28,866 residents aged 0–19. Although overall population growth has been relatively modest, Torbay continues to experience significant deprivation across the South West, which is closely linked to family stress, housing insecurity, health inequalities and demand for children's social care. Sufficiency planning must therefore be based not only on population size, but also on the level and complexity of need within families and communities.

4.2 Age, gender, ethnicity and additional needs

Age profile of children cared for by Torbay					
Age group	31/03/2022	31/03/2023	31/03/2024	31/03/2025	31/03/2026
Under 1	30	28	33	13	14
1–4	65	72	73	32	37
5–9	129	119	118	64	64

10–15	67	72	67	108	118
16+	8	21	9	63	64
Grand total	299	312	300	280	292

Age profile of children in care: prediction. *The tables below provide projected age profiles for Torbay's Cared For cohort over the next three years. These projections are based on the average age distribution observed over the last four years and applying these proportions to the "High-Demand Scenario" evidenced on page 16. This method aligns these figures with our projected overall population figures and assumes that the age profile of our cohort will remain broadly consistent over the projection period.*

Age profile of children cared for by Torbay: averages		
Age Group	Average over last 4 years	% of total population
Under 1	22	7.4%
1-4	53.5	18.0%
5-9	91.25	30.7%
10-15	91.25	30.7%
16+	39.25	13.2%
Total	297.25	100%

Age profile of children cared for by Torbay: projected figures			
	2027	2028	2029
Under 1	22	22	21
1-4	53	53	52
5-9	91	90	89
10-15	91	90	89
16+	39	39	38
Total	297	292	290

Children looked after by age and gender				
Age group	Gender	31/03/2024	31/03/2025	31/03/2026
Under 1	Male	16	7	10
Under 1	Female	17	6	4
1–4	Male	42	18	24
1–4	Female	31	14	13
5–9	Male	61	31	32
5–9	Female	57	33	27
10–15	Male	37	58	66
10–15	Female	30	50	52

16+	Male	7	33	34
16+	Female	2	30	30
Grand total		300	280	292

Children looked after by ethnic origin			
Ethnicity	31/03/2024	31/03/2025	31/03/2026
A1 - White British	244	233	240
A3 - Any Other White Background	13	11	9
B1 - White and Black Caribbean	3	9	7
B2 - White and Black African	8	5	5
B3 - White and Asian	1	2	1
B4 - Any Other Mixed Background	17	14	14
C1 - Indian	0	3	3
C3 - Bangladeshi	1	1	1
D2 - African	3	3	2
E2 - Any Other Ethnic Group	7	8	8

E4 - Not Yet Obtained	0	0	2

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children		
Year	Torbay	Statistical neighbours
2020	-	13
2021	0	9
2022	6	13
2023	23	21
2024	10	26
2025	9	23
2026	7	N/A

UASC: cared for and care experienced cohorts		
Year	CLA UASC	Care experienced UASC
2021/22	8	1
2022/23	38	3
2023/24	24	18

2024/25	18	28
2025/26	10	29

UASC: Cared For and Care Experienced Projection. The table below displays the year-to-date figures for 2026/26 and projected figures for the next two years. Projections are based on a four-year rolling average. This approach reflects longer-term demand patterns, but may differ from very recent trends, where we have seen numbers of UASC Cared For children fall rapidly.

The NTS 0.1 rate for our population indicates that we should expect to have approximately 24 UASC in our care at any one time.

UASC: Cared For and Care Experienced		
Year	CLA UASC	Care Experienced UASC
2026/27 (YTD)	9	26
2027/28 (Projection)	15	25
2028/29 (Projection)	13	27

This strategy includes more detailed needs analysis on the age, gender, ethnicity and additional needs profile of children in care. This analysis helps explain the type of provision Torbay needs. The age profile has shifted over time, with a significantly reduced numbers of children in the 1–9 age range but continued pressure for older children and adolescents whose needs can be more complex and who may be more likely to require specialist fostering, residential or supported accommodation. Gender and ethnicity data will continue to be monitored so that sufficiency planning can respond to any emerging patterns and ensure that provision is inclusive, culturally responsive and matched to individual identity and need.

Torbay's children and young people are affected by a combination of demographic, social and placement market pressures. The child population is relatively stable, but deprivation, child poverty, housing insecurity, SEND, domestic abuse, parental mental health, substance misuse

and family stress all contribute to complexity of need. Sufficiency planning therefore is based on the level and type of need, rather than population numbers alone.

Children looked after in Torbay need stable relationships, good matching, education continuity, timely health and emotional wellbeing support and purposeful permanence planning. Children with SEND and disabilities require placements and support that are planned jointly across social care, education, health, SEND, housing and adult services. Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children require culturally responsive care planning, access to education, health and legal advice, suitable accommodation and careful transition planning into adulthood.

5. The intent of the placement sufficiency strategy

This strategy is held together by one clear thread: Torbay will support more children to remain safely within their families and networks, increase the range and quality of local homes and accommodation for those who do need care, and use evidence, commissioning and young people's voice to make sure the right support is available at the right time. Each priority is important in its own right, but the greatest impact will come from how the priorities work together as a single improvement programme.

The improvement logic is simple. Earlier help, Family Help, kinship and connected care should reduce avoidable entry into care. Stronger local fostering, permanence and reunification should improve stability and reduce reliance on external provision. Local residential and specialist provision will reduce the need for children to live far from Torbay or in high-cost and unregistered arrangements. Better support for children with complex needs and clearer accommodation pathways for care experienced young people will reduce crisis responses and help young people move on safely and confidently. Data, commissioning and governance will knit these elements together so that Torbay can track impact, respond quickly to pressure and redirect resources toward provision that improves outcomes and reduces avoidable cost.

Young people must be taken with us on this journey. Their voices, experiences and aspirations will shape what good looks like, from family-based care and children's homes through to supported accommodation, move-on homes and preparation for adulthood. The strategy will therefore not judge success only by whether placements are available, but by whether children and young people experience support as safe, stable, respectful, local where possible, connected to the people who matter to them and able to help them thrive.

6. The strategic context

National children's social care reform continues to shape Torbay's approach to sufficiency. 'Stable Homes, Built on Love', the Families First Partnership Programme, kinship care reform, supported accommodation regulation, regional fostering reforms and the development of Regional Care Cooperatives all reinforce the need for earlier help, family-led planning, stronger kinship and fostering support, better local provision and more effective regional commissioning.

Locally, this strategy is aligned with Torbay's Children and Young People's Plan, Corporate Parenting Strategy, Family Help developments, Kinship Local Offer, Fostering Recruitment and Retention Strategy, SEND and education priorities, housing and care leaver accommodation pathways, safeguarding partnership arrangements and commissioning plans. These documented intentions together provide the framework for supporting children earlier, securing permanence and improving the quality, stability and locality of placements and accommodation.

Torbay developed this strategy during a proposed period of Local Government Reorganisation. This proposal has now been "paused" by HM Government. However, if and when further developments are published, this strategy will be updated accordingly as a priority

Solution-focused proposals already in development			
Proposal / workstream	What this will help solve	Proposed response and intended impact	Relevant strategic priority
Use the Children's Services Housing Needs Analysis as the evidence base for commissioning and investment.	Reduction in the housing and accommodation pressures that are affecting care experienced young people, families supported under Section 17, residential sufficiency and young parents.	Use the analysis to drive joint planning between Children's Services, Housing, SEND, commissioning and providers. This will support clearer demand forecasting, earlier identification of accommodation gaps, stronger business cases and more targeted development of supported accommodation,	Priorities 3, 6 and 7

		move-on options, Section 17 responses and residential provision.	
Progress the Children's Homes Programme as a local sufficiency solution.	Increase Torbay's limited local residential capacity to reduce exposure to out-of-area, high-cost and unregistered provision for children with complex needs.	Develop local children's homes through council-owned, provider-run homes and provider-owned homes, with strong procurement, mobilisation and contract management. The aim is to increase local regulated capacity, reduce distance from home, improve oversight, support step-down planning and reduce reliance on crisis-led placement searches.	Priorities 3, 4 and 7
Use the Department for Education capital bid to develop provision for children with complex needs.	Meet children's needs by offering a more integrated and therapeutic local response to address trauma, deprivation of liberty risks, complex mental health needs, challenging behaviour, SEND or disrupted education.	Develop specialist local provision that brings together social care, health, education and therapeutic support. This will help children remain closer to Torbay where safe, improve access to local professionals, reduce placement instability and support more planned transitions or step-down arrangements.	Priorities 3 and 4

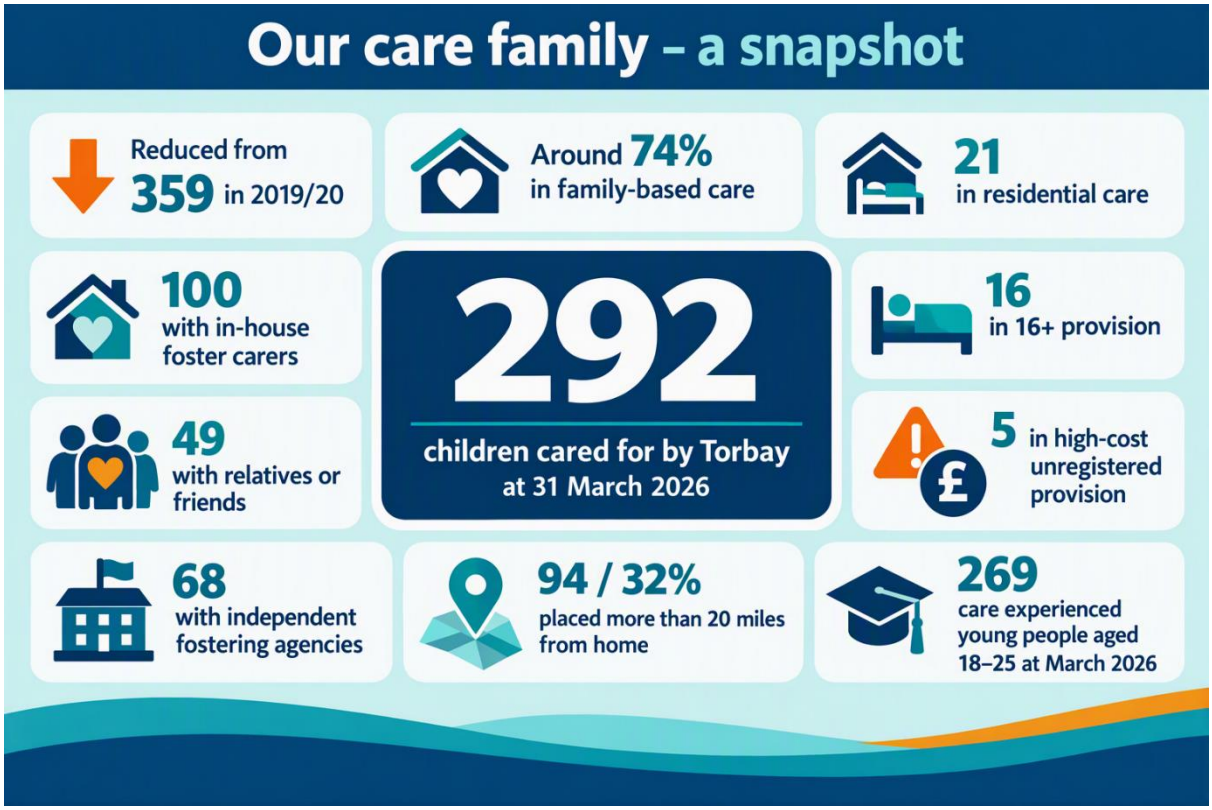
Strengthen the fostering offer to support recruitment and retention.	Increase local foster carer capacity by improving provision particularly for adolescents, sibling groups, children with disabilities, parent and baby placements, emergency care and children stepping down from residential provision.	Develop a clearer and more competitive local fostering offer, including improved support routes, evening and weekend training, practical placement support, peer networks, Mockingbird, targeted incentives and clearer promotional material. The aim is to recruit more local carers, retain experienced carers and reduce reliance on independent fostering agencies where local family-based care can safely meet need.	Priorities 1, 2 and 5
Commission a more planned Specialist Post-16 Provision pathway.	Reduce significant reliance on spot purchasing and ad-hoc packages for young people whose needs cannot be met through existing commissioned provision.	Develop a planned commissioning approach for young people aged 16–25 with complex SEMH needs, EBSA, EOTAC packages or risk-related needs. This will support clearer pathways, better alignment between education and accommodation planning, reduced ad-hoc purchasing and more sustainable use of specialist provision.	Priorities 4, 6 and 7
Re-establish provider engagement for 16+	Increase supported accommodation which is currently under pressure	Use the provider forum as a practical market-shaping mechanism, bringing together	Priorities 6 and 7

supported accommodation and young people's housing.	from Ofsted regulation, provider capacity, market change and limited move-on options. These create blockages and delay young people's progress toward independence.	supported accommodation and move-on providers with Children's Services and Housing. This will support better intelligence, earlier identification of risks, more flexible provision, improved quality assurance and stronger planning for future accommodation needs.	
Expand move-on and affordable accommodation options through SHAP, Hotels to Homes and housing partnerships.	Care experienced young people and young people at risk of homelessness benefit from increased affordable move-on options from supported accommodation.	Continue to develop affordable and supported housing pathways that provide realistic move-on options, tenancy sustainment and gradual independence. This will improve throughput, reduce unsuitable accommodation, support tenancy stability and help young people move on when they are ready.	Priority 6
Develop a proportionate accommodation response for young parents.	Although demand is low, develop sufficient safe accommodation and support for 16–17-year-old using Ofsted-registered provision.	Use a mixed approach that combines commissioned non-Ofsted provision for older young parents, spot-purchase arrangements for lower-volume 16–17 demand, ongoing monitoring of need and provider engagement. This will maintain flexibility, manage cost and ensure young parents receive	Priorities 4, 6 and 7

		support matched to their circumstances.	
Strengthen Section 17 accommodation prevention and joint working with Housing.	Respond to significantly increased costs of Section 17 accommodation by developing the private rental market to address the shortage of affordable temporary and long-term options.	Continue cross-directorate work between Children's Services and Housing to prevent homelessness, secure suitable short-term accommodation where required and reduce repeat crisis presentations. This supports family stability, reduces avoidable cost and helps children remain safely within their families wherever possible.	Priorities 1 and 7

7. Our care family – a snapshot

- Torbay was caring for 292 children as at 31 March 2026.
- The cared for population has reduced from 359 children in 2019/20 to 292 children in 2026, but Torbay's rate remains higher than national and regional averages.
- Family-based care remains the predominant placement arrangement, with children living with in-house foster carers, independent fostering agencies, relatives and friends.
- Placement sufficiency remains fragile, particularly for adolescents, sibling groups, children with disabilities, children with complex emotional or behavioural needs, parent and baby placements, emergency care and step-down from residential provision.
- Torbay continues to experience pressure from children placed more than 20 miles from home, limited local residential capacity and use of high-cost or unregistered provision for a small number of young people.
- Care experienced young people require a strengthened accommodation pathway, including Staying Put, supported accommodation, social housing, move-on options and transition planning for those with enduring needs.



Parent and child provision		
Year	Fostering	Residential
2021/22	8, including 1 in-house	1
2022/23	7, including 1 in-house	3
2023/24	7	3
2024/25	5	6
2025/26	0	8

Snapshot of Torbay's cared for population and placement profile		
Indicator	Latest position	Implication for sufficiency planning
Children cared for by Torbay	292 children at 31 March 2026	Continued focus is required to reduce avoidable entry into care while ensuring sufficient local placements for children who do need care.
Longer-term trend	Reduction from 359 children in 2019/20 to 292 in 2026	Progress is being made from the 2019/20 starting point, but Torbay's rate remains higher than national and regional averages and there has been an increase (of 12) in the figure from March 2026.
Family-based care	Approximately 74% of children were living in fostering or wider family arrangements in March 2026	Foster care, connected care and kinship arrangements remain central to local sufficiency.
Children placed more than 20 miles from home	94 children, around 32%, in March 2026	Local placement development and stronger commissioning are required to reduce distance from home where safe and appropriate.
High-cost unregistered provision	Five young people in March 2026	Reducing use of unregistered provision remains a key priority through planned local provision and improved matching.

8. Forward demand and sufficiency assumptions

This section sets out the forward demand and sufficiency assumptions that will inform Torbay's placement planning over the lifetime of the strategy. It is intended to provide a clear framework that can be populated and refined as more detailed forecasting, financial modelling and gap analysis are completed through the Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements and the supporting delivery action plan.

At this stage, the assumptions should be treated as planning assumptions rather than fixed predictions. The strategy uses the current evidence base, including cared for population trends, placement type data, fostering capacity, residential pressures, care experienced accommodation demand, SEND and complex need indicators, UASC trends and housing pressures. These assumptions will need to be tested against live data, finance information, provider intelligence and children and young people's lived experience.

The current baseline is that Torbay was caring for 292 children at 31 March 2026. The cared for population has reduced over time, but Torbay's rate remains higher than national and regional averages and the needs of children and young people are increasingly complex. The working assumption is therefore that overall numbers will remain broadly stable or reduce only gradually if Family Help, kinship, permanence and reunification activity are effective. However, even where numbers reduce, demand for speci0alist, local and high-quality provision may remain significant because of complexity, SEND, emotional wellbeing needs, adolescent risk, UASC and transition pressures.

Future demand for fostering is expected to remain focused on the availability of local carers who can support adolescents, sibling groups, children with disabilities or additional needs, parent and baby placements, emergency care, short breaks, respite and children stepping down from residential care. The action plan will quantify the number and type of fostering households required, alongside assumptions about foster carer recruitment, approvals, resignations, retirements, retention and net growth.

Future demand for residential and specialist provision is expected to remain concentrated in a smaller but high-complexity cohort of children and young people whose needs cannot be safely met in fostering at that point in time. This includes children with complex emotional, behavioural, disability-related, safeguarding, step-down or therapeutic needs. The delivery action plan will

identify the local residential beds and specialist provision required, the expected timeline for development, the relationship with the Children's Homes Programme, and the cost avoidance assumptions linked to reducing high-cost, out-of-area and unregistered provision.

Future demand for supported accommodation and post-16 pathways is expected to increase because of the growth in the care experienced cohort, Ofsted regulation of supported accommodation, housing market pressures and the need for more planned move-on options. The action plan will quantify expected demand for Staying Put, supported accommodation, semi-independent provision, move-on homes, social housing, young parent accommodation, tenancy sustainment and specialist post-16 pathways for young people with complex needs.

SEND, disability and complex need assumptions will be central to demand planning. Torbay's proportion of cared for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan remains above national and statistical neighbour levels, and this is likely to continue to affect placement choice, education continuity, transition planning and placement cost. Forecasting should therefore include children with EHCPs, children with disabilities, children requiring therapeutic support, children at risk of education disruption and young people who may need adult services or continuing accommodation support.

UASC demand should be treated as a continuing but fluctuating sufficiency pressure. Numbers may change in response to the National Transfer Scheme, local presentations, asylum accommodation arrangements and individual transition needs. Planning assumptions will include suitable fostering or supported accommodation, culturally responsive support, education and health access, legal and immigration advice, and care leaver accommodation pathways where young people remain in need of support into adulthood.

The assumptions in this section should be refreshed at least annually, and earlier if there are significant changes in demand, placement costs, provider availability, UASC pressures, SEND and complex need trends, Local Government Reorganisation, national reform, Ofsted regulation or delivery of local provision. The costed action plan should use this section as the starting point for a more detailed demand forecast and sufficiency gap analysis, setting out what provision is needed, by when, at what cost and with what expected impact on quality, outcomes and financial sustainability.

9. What we have achieved since the last strategy

- Torbay has reduced and stabilised the cared for population, from 359 children in 2019/20 to 292 children at 31 March 2026.
- The use of in-house fostering has improved, with a stronger focus on recruitment, retention, support and regional collaboration through Fostering South West.
- The Mockingbird model has been introduced to strengthen foster carer support, resilience, peer relationships and placement stability.
- There has been a stronger focus on kinship, connected care, permanence and safe reunification, including increased attention to family networks and Special Guardianship pathways.
- Torbay has strengthened its focus on reducing high-cost, out-of-area and unregistered provision, including through local children's home development and improved commissioning oversight.
- Care leaver accommodation and transition planning have become clearer strategic priorities, with continued work required to strengthen Staying Put, supported accommodation and move-on pathways.
- Corporate Parenting governance has been strengthened to provide greater oversight, assurance and challenge around sufficiency, stability, permanence, accommodation and young people's lived experience.

10. Our strategic priorities

🏠 Strategic Priority 1: Support more children to remain safely with their parents, families and wider networks

Current position. Torbay's cared for population has reduced and stabilised, from 359 children in 2019/20 to 292 children at 31 March 2026. This is positive progress, but Torbay's rate of children in care remains higher than national and regional averages. Deprivation, child poverty, housing pressure, SEND, domestic abuse, parental mental health, substance misuse and family stress continue to create pressure for families and demand for statutory services.

What we need to develop. Torbay needs to continue strengthening early help, Family Help, Family Hubs, family group decision-making, kinship and connected care, and safe reunification. Sufficiency planning must start before children enter care, by ensuring that families receive the

right help early enough to prevent avoidable escalation and that family networks are explored and supported at the earliest point.

Additional focus on kinship and connected care. Connected persons fostering and kinship care will be strengthened as a core part of Torbay's sufficiency approach. Family members, friends and other people connected to the child should be identified and considered as early as possible, with joint viability assessments completed alongside care planning so that children can remain within their family networks and communities wherever this is safe and in their best interests. This work will support permanence, reduce reliance on external provision where appropriate, and help children maintain identity, belonging, culture and important relationships.

We will:

- Embed the Family Help model and strengthen earlier, whole-family support through Family Hubs and locality working.
- Use family group decision-making routinely so that wider family and community networks are identified and supported earlier.
- Strengthen kinship and connected care pathways so more children can remain within their family networks where this is safe and in their best interests.
- Keep the need for care under active review and strengthen reunification planning where children can safely return home.
- Use data, audit and children's lived experience to understand what is preventing children entering care and what further support families need in order to reduce the rate and numbers of care admissions and the speed of safe reunification back to families.

How this priority connects to the wider strategy. Preventing avoidable entry into care is the starting point for sufficiency and financial sustainability. When families receive effective help earlier, and wider family networks are identified and supported, fewer children need to enter care unnecessarily. This reduces pressure on fostering, residential and supported accommodation, and allows resources to be focused on the children and young people who genuinely require more specialist support.

How we will know we are making a difference. We will see fewer avoidable entries into care, more children supported safely at home or within family networks, increased use of kinship and connected care, more purposeful reunification planning and stronger evidence that children and families are receiving help earlier.

Risks. Demand will remain high if Family Help, Family Hubs and family network approaches are not embedded consistently or quickly enough. Continued poverty, housing insecurity, domestic abuse, parental mental health, substance misuse and SEND pressures will increase family stress and lead to more children requiring statutory intervention. Insufficient capacity across partner agencies could also limit the impact of early help and prevention activity.

Children cared for by Torbay: trend data		
Year	Children cared for	Trend note
2019	361	Peak point in the current trend period.
2020	354	Small reduction from 2019.
2021	319	Reduction continued.
2022	299	Lowest point in the published trend period.
2023	314	Small increase from 2022 (UASC).
2024	300	Reduction from 2023 and 61 fewer than 2019.
2025	280	Latest local trend point included in the attached draft.
2026	292	Latest local Torbay position recorded at 31 March 2026.

Children in care: projection. The table below shows projected numbers of Children in Care in Torbay over the next three years. Three forecasting techniques have been used to provide a range of potential demand levels:

Low demand: Uses linear forecasting to project future demand based on the overall trend observed across all historical data. Each year is given equal weight and calculates a straight-line trend from 2019-2026. It predicts a continued reduction in our cohort, based on the long-term trend. It does not account for year-on-year fluctuations, such as the peaks we saw in 2023 and 2026, and may underestimate future demand.

Expected demand: Uses time-series forecasting that places greater weight on recent years, whilst still considering historical trends. It also accounts for fluctuations in demand, therefore being more responsive to recent changes in our cohort. It predicts a reduced, mostly stable cohort over the next three years.

High demand: Uses a rolling four-year average to calculate an estimated projection for each year. Unlike the above forecasting methods, it assumes demand will remain relatively consistent with recent years and does not rely on the continuation of longer-term trends. It projects a more modest reduction in the Cared For population over the next three years and has been adopted as the preferred scenario for further projections within this strategy.

Whilst the two forecasting models suggest a reduction in our cohort, recent historical performance has remained almost consistently above 290 Cared For children. Given the sustained pressures facing Children's Services and the risks associated with underestimating future demand, adopting a more cautious scenario seems a sensible approach.

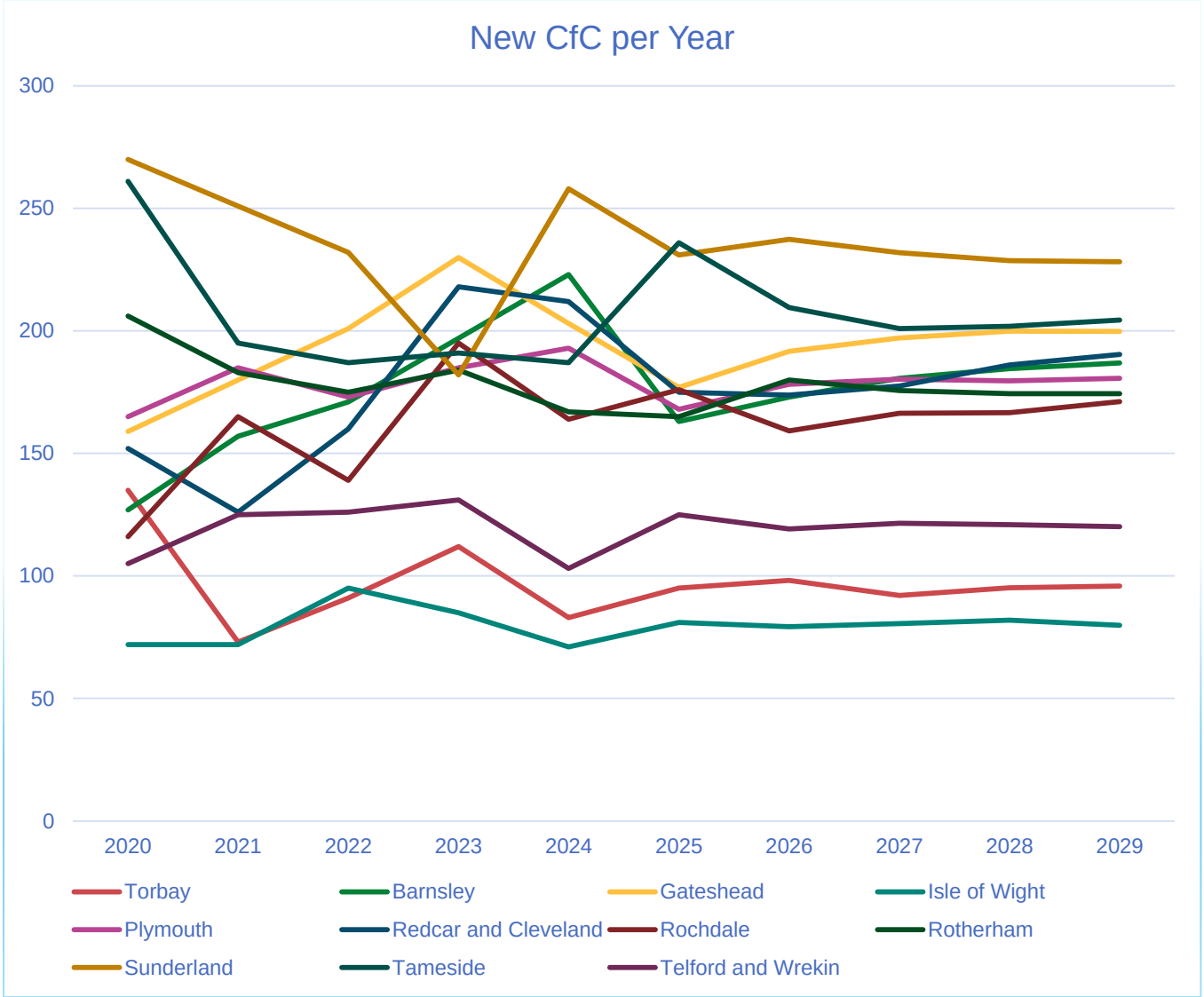
Children cared for by Torbay: projected forecast			
	Low-Demand Scenario (Linear Forecasting)	Expected Demand Scenario (Error, Trend and Seasonality Forecasting)	High-Demand Scenario (Based on 4-year-average)
2027	267	269	297
2028	259	262	292
2029	256	269	290

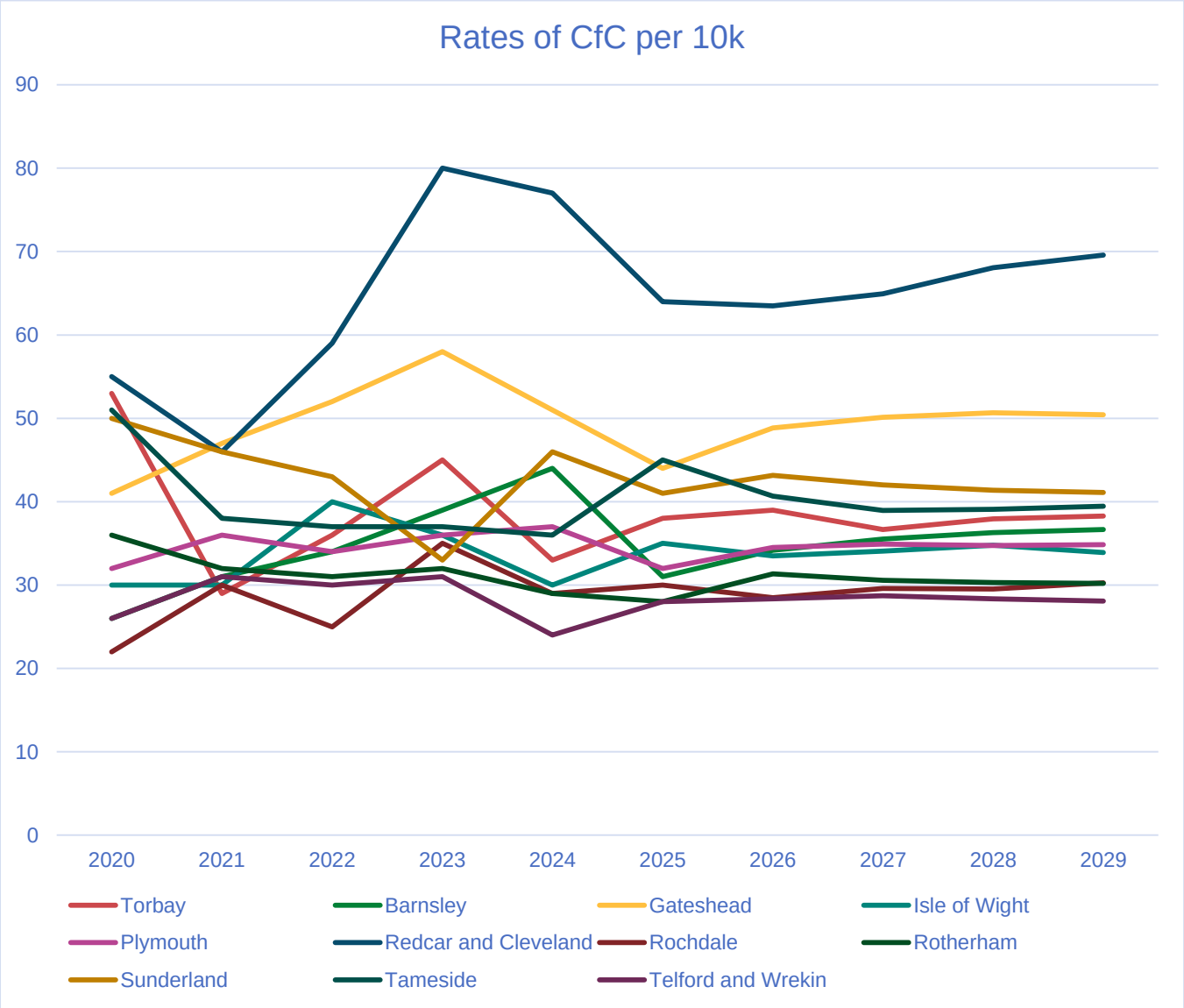
Entries into care: historical and projected figures. The below table, consistent with the methodology used for projected age profiles and out-of-area placements, uses a four-year rolling average to estimate the number of children expected to enter care over the next three years.

Numbers of children becoming cared for: historical and projected figures						
2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27 projected	2027/28 projected	2028/29 projected
72	78	88	95	83	86	88

Entries into care: comparator rates and projection. The table below shows Torbay's rate of new children becoming cared for per 10,000 children, alongside statistical neighbours and wider comparators. It includes confirmed rates for 2021–2026 and projected rates for 2027–2029 based on the attached forecasting dataset.

Entries into care per 10,000 children: comparator rates and projection									
Area	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027 projected	2028 projected	2029 projected
Torbay	29.0	36.0	45.0	33.0	38.0	39.0	36.7	37.9	38.3
Statistical neighbours average	36.7	38.5	41.7	40.3	37.8	38.4	39.4	39.8	39.9
South West	22.0	23.0	26.0	24.0	23.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
England	24.0	26.0	28.0	27.0	26.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A


New CfC per Year
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
2027
2028
2029
Torbay
Barnsley
Gateshead
Isle of Wight
Plymouth
Redcar and Cleveland
Rochdale
Rotherham
Sunderland
Tameside
Telford and Wrekin



Cared for population trend and comparator position:

The reduction to a figure of 292 cared for children at 31st March 2026 represents important progress, but the rate of children in care remains high compared with national and regional averages. The strategy should therefore continue to balance confidence in the reduction achieved with a clear recognition that Torbay must sustain prevention, permanence, family-based care and local sufficiency work over the life of the 2026–2029 strategy.

Placement hierarchy and matching approach:

Torbay's preferred placement approach should be clearly described as a hierarchy of options, beginning with support for children to remain safely at home, followed by wider family and connected care, in-house fostering, independent fostering, adoption or Special Guardianship where appropriate, supported accommodation for older young people, and residential provision only where this is the right plan for the child. This supports a consistent approach to matching and

helps ensure that placement decisions are based on children's needs, relationships, safety, permanence and best interests.

Age Group	Provision	Mar-24	Mar-25	Mar-26
Under 1	PR0 - Parents or other person with parental responsibility	3	1	1
	PR1 - Own provision by LA	23	9	10
	PR2 - Other LA provision	2	1	1
	PR3 - Other public provision	1	0	0
	PR4 - Private Provision	4	2	2
	PR5 - Voluntary/Third Sector Provision	0	0	0
	Under 1 total	33	13	14
1 to 4	PR0 - Parents or other person with parental responsibility	8	3	4
	PR1 - Own provision by LA	38	17	17
	PR2 - Other LA provision	3	1	1
	PR3 - Other public provision	2	1	1
	PR4 - Private Provision	21	9	10

	PR5 - Voluntary/Third Sector Provision	1	1	0
	1 to 4 total	73	32	33
5 to 9	PR0 - Parents or other person with parental responsibility	25	13	14
	PR1 - Own provision by LA	51	28	29
	PR2 - Other LA provision	0	0	0
	PR3 - Other public provision	0	0	0
	PR4 - Private Provision	42	23	24
	PR5 - Voluntary/Third Sector Provision	0	0	0
	5 to 9 total	118	64	67
10 to 15	PR0 - Parents or other person with parental responsibility	9	15	15
	PR1 - Own provision by LA	22	35	37
	PR2 - Other LA provision	3	5	5
	PR3 - Other public provision	0	0	0
	PR4 - Private Provision	28	45	47
	PR5 - Voluntary/Third Sector Provision	5	8	8

	10 to 15 total	67	108	112
16+	PR0 - Parents or other person with parental responsibility	0	0	0
	PR1 - Own provision by LA	1	7	8
	PR2 - Other LA provision	0	0	0
	PR3 - Other public provision	0	0	0
	PR4 - Private Provision	7	49	51
	PR5 - Voluntary/Third Sector Provision	1	7	7
	16+ total	9	63	66
	Grand total	300	280	292

Strategic Priority 2: Increase the number, range and capability of local foster carers

Current position. Family-based care remains central to Torbay's placement sufficiency approach. Torbay has increased the proportion of children placed with in-house foster carers, but sufficiency remains fragile because of recruitment pressures, an ageing foster carer profile, carer retirements and the increasing complexity of children's needs. There is particular pressure for adolescents, sibling groups, children with disabilities, parent and baby placements, emergency care, short breaks and step-down from residential care.

What we need to develop. Torbay needs a stronger and more targeted fostering offer. This includes recruiting more local carers, improving retention, expanding Mockingbird, strengthening training and therapeutic support, and improving support for connected and kinship carers. Local

fostering work will also need to align with Fostering South West and the national end-to-end fostering reforms while retaining local accountability for matching, safeguarding and support.

Additional focus on Fostering South West and carer support. Torbay will continue to work through Fostering South West to improve the journey for prospective foster carers, strengthen regional marketing and make better use of data and insight. At the same time, Torbay will retain local accountability for safeguarding, matching, statutory decision-making, relationships with carers and the quality of support provided to children and fostering families. The local fostering offer should remain visible, competitive and responsive, with strengthened training, supervision, peer support, Mockingbird, therapeutic advice and practical support for both newly approved and experienced carers.

Additional focus on recruitment targets and conversion. The fostering strategy will monitor not only the number of enquiries and approvals, but also the conversion rate, withdrawals, resignations, retirements and net growth in fostering households. Where recruitment targets are used, they will be clear about that they represent gross recruitment and expected net growth after carers leave the service. This will help Torbay understand whether recruitment activity is translating into the right number, range and capability of carers for the children who most need local family-based care.

We will:

- Refresh and deliver Torbay's Fostering Recruitment and Retention Strategy for 2026–2029.
- Target recruitment toward carers for older children, sibling groups, children with disabilities, children with complex needs, parent and baby placements, emergency care and step-down from residential provision.
- Expand the Mockingbird model and peer support arrangements to improve carer resilience and placement stability.
- Strengthen training, supervision, therapeutic support and out-of-hours advice for foster carers.
- Improve support for connected and kinship carers so children can remain within their family networks where appropriate.
- Work with Fostering South West to improve enquiry handling, prospective carer support, data insight and regional collaboration.

How this priority connects to the wider strategy. Increasing local fostering capacity links prevention, permanence and cost reduction. More local foster carers means more children can live in family-based care close to their schools, families and communities. It also creates more step-

down options from residential care, reduces reliance on Independent Fostering Agencies where local care can meet need, and strengthens the overall placement pathway.

How we will know we are making a difference. We will see more children placed with Torbay foster carers, improved foster carer retention, increased capacity for priority cohorts, fewer children placed with external agencies where local family-based care could meet need, and improved placement stability.

Risks. Recruitment of new foster carers may not keep pace with demand, particularly for adolescents, sibling groups, children with disabilities, parent and baby placements and children with complex needs. Retirements, carer fatigue, cost-of-living pressures and competition from independent fostering agencies may affect retention. If local capacity does not increase, Torbay may remain reliant on higher-cost external placements and children may be placed further from home.

Foster carer recruitment and retention activity			
Year	Enquiries	New	Leavers
2021/22	99	9	10
2022/23	111	8	5
2023/24	65	4	9
2024/25	67	9	11
2025/26	To be confirmed	14	16

Strategic Priority 3: Reduce reliance on out-of-area, high-cost and unregistered provision

Current position. Placement sufficiency remains a strategic risk. Torbay continues to experience pressure from children placed outside the area or more than 20 miles from home, limited local

residential capacity and use of high-cost or unregistered provision for a small number of young people. Some children need specialist provision because of complex emotional, behavioural, disability-related or step-down needs, but local options remain limited.

What we need to develop. Torbay needs to increase local residential and specialist provision, strengthen planned matching, reduce crisis-led placements and ensure that out-of-area placements are only used where they are clearly in the child's best interests. The development of local children's homes, step-down pathways and stronger commissioning oversight will be central to this priority.

Additional focus on local children's homes. Torbay's current local residential capacity remains limited and should be developed as part of the wider sufficiency programme. The strategy should make clear that additional regulated local children's homes are needed to reduce placement distance, improve access to local education, health and therapeutic support, and reduce reliance on high-cost external and unregistered provision. Any new provision should be based on robust evidence of need, clear business cases, realistic workforce models, Ofsted registration requirements and sustainable financial planning.

We will:

- Progress the development of local children's homes and specialist local provision.
- Develop step-down pathways from residential care into family-based or supported arrangements where this is appropriate.
- Strengthen senior oversight of high-cost, out-of-area and unregistered placements.
- Ensure every out-of-area placement is based on clear evidence of the child's needs, wishes, safety and best interests.
- Use the Regional Care Cooperative and Peninsula arrangements to improve market intelligence, regional commissioning and provider engagement.
- Improve matching, quality assurance and review arrangements for children placed at distance.

How this priority connects to the wider strategy. Developing local residential and specialist provision is essential to the wider improvement and savings plan. It will not replace the need for family-based care, but it will provide planned, regulated local options for children whose needs cannot currently be met safely in fostering. This will improve oversight, reduce placement distance, support step-down planning and reduce the use of high-cost, crisis-led and unregistered arrangements.

How we will know we are making a difference. We will see reduced use of out-of-area, high-cost and unregistered placements, more children living closer to home where safe and appropriate, stronger access to local education and health services, improved placement stability and better value from commissioned provision.

Risks. Local residential and specialist provision may not be developed quickly enough to meet demand because of property availability, workforce capacity, provider confidence, Ofsted registration timescales, planning requirements or financial constraints. Continued national market pressures may lead to limited placement choice, escalating costs and continued use of out-of-area, high-cost or unregistered provision in exceptional circumstances.

Residential placements more than 20 miles from home			
Year	% placed 20+ miles	Comment	Internal follow-up
2024/25	51%	Residential placements at distance remained a significant pressure.	Check whether this requires a graph or a supporting note in the residential section.
2025/26	33%	All were outside the local authority boundary.	Confirm whether this should be linked to local children's homes development.
2026/27 to date	64%	Early-year position shows renewed pressure at distance.	Check whether to include as YTD data or hold for internal monitoring only.

Children placed more than 20 miles from home and outside the local authority boundary									
Area	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Torbay	27%	33%	28%	29%	30%	31%	31%	32%	35%

South West	18%	20%	21%	23%	23%	24%	25%	26%	N/A
Statistical neighbours	12.8%	13.1%	12.4%	12%	11.9%	12.4%	13.1%	14%	N/A
England	15%	16%	16%	17%	17%	17%	18%	18%	N/A

Children placed more than 20 miles from home: projection. The below table provides a projection of the number and percentage of children placed over 20 miles from home and outside the local authority boundary over the next three years. The projections are based on the high-demand forecast for our cohort presented on page 16 and applies the average percentage of children placed out of area over the previous four years to estimate future demand.

Children placed more than 20 miles from home and outside the local authority boundary: projected figures			
Year	CfC Population Projected Figure	Projected % Out of Area	Projected Number Out of Area
2027	297	32%	95
2028	292	32%	93
2029	290	32%	93

Residential placement comparator					
Area	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Torbay	9%	6%	7%	6%	6%
South West	9%	10%	10%	10%	11%
Statistical neighbours	9.6%	9.4%	9.2%	9.1%	10.6%
England	9%	9%	9%	10%	10%

Strategic Priority 4: Improve sufficiency for children and young people with SEND, disabilities, complex needs and emotional wellbeing needs

Current position. Torbay's cared for population includes a significant proportion of children with SEND, disabilities, emotional wellbeing needs and complex lived experiences. Children with these needs are more likely to require specialist fostering, residential care, therapeutic support, specialist education provision and carefully planned transitions into adulthood.

What we need to develop. Placement planning needs to be more closely aligned with education, health, SEND, housing, adult services and commissioning. Children's living arrangements must support education, health and emotional wellbeing rather than disrupt them. Earlier joint planning is essential for children with enduring needs and for young people approaching adulthood.

We will:

- Strengthen joint planning between social care, SEND, education, health, housing, adult services and commissioning.
- Ensure placement matching considers education, EHCP provision, emotional wellbeing, health and transition needs from the outset.
- Improve access to therapeutic and emotional wellbeing support for children and carers.
- Develop local provision and support pathways for children with complex needs, disabilities and step-down requirements.
- Plan transitions into adulthood earlier for young people with disabilities, SEND or enduring care and support needs.
- Use data to identify children at risk of placement or education disruption and intervene earlier.

How this priority connects to the wider strategy. Children with SEND, disabilities, complex needs and emotional wellbeing needs are more likely to experience placement instability and higher-cost support if agencies do not plan together. By joining up social care, education, health, SEND, housing and adult services, Torbay will improve quality, reduce duplication, avoid late crisis responses and support children and young people to remain in the most appropriate local provision wherever possible.

How we will know we are making a difference. We will see improved placement stability for children with complex needs, fewer emergency or crisis-led placements, improved education

continuity, earlier transition planning, better access to specialist support and stronger outcomes for children with SEND and disabilities.

Risks. Fragmented planning across social care, education, SEND, health, housing and adult services will delay the right support being agreed for children with complex needs. Limited specialist provision, workforce pressures, CAMHS capacity, therapeutic support gaps and delays in transition planning may increase placement instability, education disruption and reliance on higher-cost provision. The updated data indicates that Torbay remains above national and statistical neighbour levels for children looked after with EHCPs, reinforcing the need for joint planning and specialist sufficiency oversight.

Children looked after with an Education, Health and Care Plan							
Area	2017	2019	2021	2023	2024	2025	2026
Torbay	30.0%	33.3%	37.9%	40.1%	39.6%	41.0%	38.0%
South West	31.6%	33.3%	37.8%	37.5%	38.5%	39.8%	N/A
Statistical neighbours	27.3%	24.4%	27.0%	28.0%	29.0%	31.5%	N/A
England	26.4%	26.7%	28.5%	30.5%	31.9%	33.9%	N/A

Children looked after with an Education Health and Care Plan: projection. The table below uses a four-year rolling average of the percentage of looked after children with an EHCP (from the table above), alongside the high-demand projected Cared For population figures, to provide projections for the percentage and number of looked after children we could expect to have an EHCP over the next three years.

Children looked after in Torbay with an Education, Health and Care Plan: projected figures			
Year	Projected CfC Population	Projected % with an EHCP	Projected Number with an EHCP
2027	297	39.7%	118
2028	292	39.7%	116
2029	290	39.7%	115

Children looked after with SEN but without an EHCP							
Area	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Torbay	32.3%	31.4%	22.6%	25.9%	24.7%	27.0%	31.3%
South West	31.6%	30.3%	27.0%	28.4%	28.3%	27.4%	28.0%
Statistical neighbours	29.2%	28.6%	27.4%	26.9%	26.8%	28.0%	26.9%
England	28.4%	27.9%	27.1%	27.1%	27.1%	27.6%	27.3%

Children looked after with SEN but without an Education, Health and Care Plan: projection.
The table below uses a four-year rolling average of the percentage of looked after children who are SEN but without an EHCP (from the table above), alongside the high-demand projected Cared For population figures, to provide projections for the percentage and number of looked after children we could expect to have SEN but be without an EHCP over the next three years.

Children looked after in Torbay with SEN but without an EHCP			
Year	Projected CfC Population	Projected % SEN without EHCP	Projected Number SEN without an EHCP
2027	297	27.2%	81
2028	292	27.2%	79
2029	290	27.2%	79

Average Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire score							
Area	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Torbay	13.9	14.5	14.3	15.7	16.2	14.9	16.2
South West	15.5	15.5	14.9	15.5	15.7	15.6	15.8
Statistical neighbours	14.5	14.4	13.6	14.4	13.9	14.9	15.3
England	14.2	14.1	13.7	13.8	14.4	14.7	14.9

♡ Strategic Priority 5: Secure permanence without avoidable delay

Current position. Torbay's current cared for population is increasingly weighted toward younger children and sibling groups, which makes timely permanence planning essential. Children who cannot return home need stable, loving and lasting arrangements without drift or delay. Permanence is achieved through reunification, kinship care, Special Guardianship, long-term fostering or adoption where this is the right plan for the child.

What we need to develop. Torbay needs to maintain a sharper focus on permanence from the earliest stage of involvement. This includes ensuring that the need for care is actively reviewed,

safe reunification is considered where appropriate, family networks are explored, Special Guardianship support is strengthened and adoption planning is timely where adoption is in the child's best interests.

Additional focus on adoption and early permanence. Adoption will continue to be considered carefully where it is the right permanence plan for the child. Torbay should continue to work closely with Adopt South West to ensure timely family finding, matching, panel oversight and transition planning. Early permanence standards should remain a focus so that children do not experience avoidable delay, particularly where they are part of a sibling group, have additional needs, are older, or require adopters able to provide therapeutic, trauma-informed and lifelong support.

We will:

- Strengthen permanence tracking and senior oversight for all children in care.
- Promote safe reunification where this is in the child's best interests and supported by robust assessment and planning.
- Support kinship and connected care as routes to permanence where appropriate.
- Strengthen Special Guardianship assessment, planning and support arrangements.
- Work closely with the Regional Adoption Agency to secure timely adoption for children where this is the right plan.
- Ensure children, families and carers are involved meaningfully in permanence planning.

How this priority connects to the wider strategy. Permanence is the bridge between prevention, placement stability and long-term financial sustainability. When children return home safely, live with family or connected carers, move to Special Guardianship, remain in stable long-term fostering or are adopted without avoidable delay, they are more likely to experience belonging and continuity. Timely permanence also reduces drift, frees placement capacity and prevents children remaining in care longer than necessary.

How we will know we are making a difference. We will see more children achieving permanence earlier, reduced drift and delay, improved timeliness for adoption where this is the right plan, stronger support for special guardians and long-term carers, and clearer evidence that care plans are purposeful and regularly reviewed.

Risks. Permanence planning may be delayed by court timescales, assessment capacity, availability of adopters or special guardians, support package pressures and delays in identifying

or assessing family networks. If permanence is not considered early and reviewed consistently, children may experience drift, placement instability or longer periods in care than necessary.

Destination of children leaving care				
Reason	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27 YTD
Stayed with current carers, including Staying Put	17	24	28	11
Adopted	12	11	19	5
Planned return home	10	16	28	6
Special Guardianship with former foster carer who was a relative or friend	15	19	16	6
Special Guardianship with former foster carer who was not a relative or friend	-	-	-	2
Special Guardianship made to carer(s) who was a relative or friend	-	-	-	2
Returned home under Child Arrangements Order	2	12	3	1
Left care to live with person with no parental responsibility	-	-	-	1
Accommodation on remand ended	-	-	-	3
Any other reason	-	-	-	2
Total children leaving care	97	117	88	39

Numbers of children leaving care: projection. The below table, consistent with the methodology used for other projections, uses a four-year rolling average to estimate the number of children expected to leave care over the next three years.

Numbers of children leaving care: historical and projected figures						
2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27 projection	2027/28 projection	2028/29 projection
100	97	117	88	101	101	102

Duration of care episodes at the point children ceased to be looked after						
Duration	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27 YTD
Under 2 weeks	14	9	0	6	4	2
2–8 weeks	12	1	0	2	1	2
8 weeks–6 months	7	8	5	9	5	2
6 months–1 year	15	17	29	27	13	3
1–2 years	24	21	22	29	21	14
2–3 years	12	6	11	13	21	2
3–5 years	10	10	9	7	6	5
5–10 years	19	19	13	15	10	4
10+ years	8	9	6	9	7	4
Total	121	100	97	117	88	38

🔑 Strategic Priority 6: Increase the quantity, quality and range of accommodation and support for care experienced young people

Current position. Care experienced young people need planned pathways into safe, suitable, stable and affordable accommodation. Torbay continues to experience pressures across Staying Put, supported accommodation, social housing, move-on options and accommodation for young people with complex or enduring needs. The introduction of Ofsted regulation for supported accommodation has also changed the commissioning and quality assurance landscape.

What we need to develop. Torbay needs a clearer and broader accommodation pathway for care experienced young people, including Staying Put, supported accommodation, semi-independent provision, social housing, private rented options where appropriate, and move-on support. Transitions should be planned, gradual and supported by trusted relationships rather than crisis-led.

Additional focus on supported accommodation regulation. The introduction of Ofsted regulation for supported accommodation has changed the provider landscape and must remain a key consideration for commissioning. Torbay will need to maintain close provider engagement, monitor registration and quality assurance risks, and ensure that 16- and 17-year-olds and care experienced young people are placed only in accommodation that is suitable, safe, regulated where required and able to meet their assessed needs.

Additional focus on care experienced young people aged 18–25. The growth in Torbay's care experienced cohort reinforces the need for planned, flexible and sufficient accommodation pathways into adulthood. As at March 2024, Torbay was supporting 277 care experienced young people aged 18–25, an increase of 74 young people over two years. This creates sustained demand for Staying Put, supported accommodation, semi-independent provision, social housing, affordable move-on options, tenancy sustainment and support linked to education, employment, emotional wellbeing and adult services where relevant.

We will:

- Strengthen the care leaver accommodation pathway from age 16 onward.
- Maximise Staying Put where this is right for the young person and the carer.
- Work with housing, providers and adult services to increase suitable move-on and supported accommodation options.
- Ensure young people with disabilities, SEND or enduring care needs have early transition planning and agreed accommodation pathways.
- Improve tenancy sustainment support, financial capability, emotional wellbeing support and access to education, employment and training.
- Use care experienced young people's views to shape future accommodation and support options.

How this priority connects to the wider strategy. Care experienced young people need accommodation pathways that build on the stability achieved earlier in their care journey. Stronger Staying Put, supported accommodation, move-on homes and tenancy sustainment will prevent crisis moves, reduce unsuitable accommodation, improve independence outcomes and free

supported accommodation capacity for younger people who need it. This is central to both quality improvement and cost reduction.

How we will know we are making a difference. We will see more care experienced young people in suitable accommodation, reduced use of emergency or unsuitable accommodation, increased Staying Put and planned move-on arrangements, improved tenancy sustainment and stronger independence, education, employment and wellbeing outcomes.

Risks. Suitable accommodation options may not keep pace with the growing and changing needs of care experienced young people. Housing market pressures, affordability, limited social housing, provider capacity, supported accommodation regulation, benefit restrictions and young people's complex support needs may increase the risk of unsuitable or emergency accommodation, tenancy breakdown or delayed move-on.

Care experienced young people aged 18–25

Snapshot date	Male	Female	Other	Total	Key implication
March 2022	109	93	1	203	Baseline position for rising accommodation demand.
March 2023	138	108	1	247	Year-on-year increase requiring wider accommodation and support options.
March 2024	157	119	1	277	Increase of 74 young people over two years, strengthening the need for planned move-on and supported accommodation.
March 2025	154	114	1	269	Decrease of 8 young people since 2024, but not reaching lower levels seen prior.
March 2026	154	114	1	269	Has remained steady since March 2025.

Care experienced young people, aged 18-25, projection. The table below uses a four-year rolling average to calculate a projection of how many care-experienced young people, aged 18-25, we may expect over the next three years. It assumes a broadly consistent number which mostly coincides with our recent history.

Care experienced young people in Torbay: historical and projected figures						
2023	2024	2025	2026	2027 projected	2028 projected	2029 projected
247	277	269	269	266	270	269

Care experienced young people by age and gender, March 2025 and March 2026											
Date / gender	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	Total
March 2025 male	7	21	25	23	20	20	20	13	0	0	149
March 2025 female	7	15	15	15	18	22	16	8	0	0	116
March 2025 non-binary	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
March 2025 total	14	36	40	38	38	42	36	21	0	0	266
March 2026 male	0	7	21	25	23	20	22	20	13	0	151
March 2026 female	0	7	15	15	15	18	20	16	8	0	114
March 2026 non-binary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
March 2026 total	0	14	36	40	38	38	42	37	21	0	266

Care experienced young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. The number of care experienced young people who are determined as at risk of or experiencing homelessness are listed has having the following accommodation codes: ‘V - Emergency Accommodation’ or ‘S - No fixed abode / homeless’. We have seen a moderate increase in this figure over the last five years.

Care experienced young people in Torbay, at risk of or experiencing homelessness: historical figures			
Snapshot date	Number at risk of homelessness	Total population	Percentage of total population
March 2022	3	203	1.5%
March 2023	4	247	1.6%
March 2024	4	277	1.4%
March 2025	5	269	1.5%
March 2026	5	269	1.5%

Care experienced young people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness: projection. The table below uses the same methodology as utilised for our Cared For cohort predictions, to provide expected numbers and percentages of the number of care-experienced young people who may be at risk of or experiencing homelessness over the next three years. The use of a rolling four-year average alongside the projected Care Experienced population figures has led to a steady predicted result across the next three years.

Care experienced young people in Torbay, at risk of or experiencing homelessness: projected figures			
Year	Projected CE Population	Projected % at risk of or experiencing homelessness	Projected number at risk of or experiencing homelessness
2027	266	1.5%	4
2028	270	1.5%	4
2029	269	1.5%	4

Care experienced young people in custody. The number of care experienced young people in Torbay who are in custody is determined by those listed with accommodation code 'X - In Custody'. We have seen this figure remain broadly consistent over the last five years.

Care experienced young people in Torbay, who are in custody: historical figures			
Snapshot date	Number in custody	Total population	Percentage of total population
March 2022	4	203	2%
March 2023	5	247	2%
March 2024	5	277	1.8%
March 2025	5	269	1.9%
March 2026	5	269	1.9%

Care experienced young people who are in custody: projection. The table below uses the same methodology as utilised above to provide expected numbers and percentages of the number of care-experienced young people who may be in custody over the next three years. The use of a rolling four-year average alongside the projected Care Experienced population figures has led to a steady predicted result across the next three years.

Care experienced young people in Torbay who are in custody: projected figures			
Year	Projected CE Population	Projected % in custody	Projected number in custody
2027	266	1.9%	5
2028	270	1.9%	5
2029	269	1.9%	5

Care experienced young people who are parents. Several of our former relevant care experienced cohort have since become parents. The last five years' worth of figures can be evidenced below and can be viewed as a percentage of our total population.

Care experienced young people in Torbay, who are parents: historical figures			
Snapshot date	Number who are parents	Total population	Percentage of total population
March 2022	23	203	11%
March 2023	25	247	10%
March 2024	25	277	9%
March 2025	25	269	9%
March 2026	25	269	9%

Care experienced young people who are parents: projection. The table below uses the same methodology as utilised above to provide expected numbers and percentages of the number of care-experienced young people who may be parents over the next three years. The use of a rolling four-year average alongside the projected Care Experienced population figures has led to a steady predicted result across the next three years.

Care experienced young people in Torbay who are parents: projected figures			
Year	Projected CE Population	Projected % who may be parents	Projected number who may be parents
2027	266	9.4%	25
2028	270	9.4%	25
2029	269	9.4%	25

Strategic Priority 7: Manage placement resources effectively through commissioning, market shaping, data and governance

Current position. Torbay needs robust commissioning intelligence, quality assurance, cost oversight and sufficiency forecasting to respond to placement market pressures. The Council must ensure that children are matched to the right home at the right time, that provision is safe and high quality, and that resources are used effectively to improve outcomes.

What we need to develop. Torbay needs a single sufficiency performance framework that brings together placement data, commissioning intelligence, provider quality, cost information, out-of-area placements, care leaver accommodation, placement stability and children's lived experience. This will support stronger strategic planning, market shaping and Corporate Parenting assurance.

Additional focus on governance and exception reporting. Delivery of the placements sufficiency strategy will be governed through the Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements, which is reported to Directors and Cabinet. The Corporate Parenting Board may receive updates where these relate to children's experiences, outcomes or corporate parenting responsibilities, but it will not own the strategy or the delivery plan. Reporting should remain exception-based and focused on sufficiency risks, financial impact, quality, outcomes and decisions required by senior leaders.

We will:

- Develop a single sufficiency performance framework and dashboard.
- Strengthen commissioning, contract monitoring, quality assurance and provider engagement.
- Use data and forecasting to identify placement gaps and future demand earlier.
- Improve oversight of cost, quality, matching and placement stability.
- Work through regional and sub-regional commissioning arrangements to improve market shaping and provider relationships.
- Report delivery through the Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements to Directors and Cabinet, with Corporate Parenting Board updates provided where relevant to children's experiences and outcomes.

How this priority connects to the wider strategy. Commissioning, data and governance are the mechanisms that bring all priorities together. A single sufficiency framework will allow Torbay to see whether prevention is reducing demand, whether fostering and residential developments are increasing local capacity, whether permanence is being achieved earlier, whether care

experienced young people are moving on safely, and whether these changes are improving quality while reducing avoidable spend.

How we will know we are making a difference. We will see improved sufficiency forecasting, stronger provider relationships, clearer oversight of quality and cost, better evidence of impact, more timely decision-making and regular reporting through the Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements to Directors and Cabinet.

Risks. Gaps in data quality, forecasting, commissioning capacity or financial oversight may limit Torbay's ability to identify demand early and shape the market effectively. Provider instability, regional market pressures, inflation, workforce shortages and insufficient quality assurance may affect placement availability, cost control and confidence in commissioned provision.

Placement type profile, March 2026

Placement type	Number	Percentage	Commissioning implication
In-house fostering	100	34%	Continue to grow and retain local foster care capacity.
Independent fostering	68	23%	Reduce reliance where local family-based care can safely meet need.
Relatives and friends	49	17%	Strengthen kinship and connected care pathways and support.
Residential	21	7%	Develop local children's homes and step-down options for children with complex needs.
Placed with parents	21	7%	Maintain robust oversight and reunification planning.
16+ provision	16	5%	Ensure sufficiency, quality and Ofsted compliance for supported accommodation.

Other placements	10	3%	Review to ensure appropriate matching and oversight.
Placed for adoption	3	1%	Continue timely permanence planning.
Foster to adopt	3	1%	Maintain early permanence options.
Parent and child residential	1	<1%	Monitor specialist provision needs and market availability.
Total	292	100%	Use as baseline for sufficiency dashboard and commissioning oversight.

11. Young person's voice: listening, acting and feeding back

Torbay's Placement Sufficiency Strategy is grounded in the voices, experiences and aspirations of cared for and care experienced children and young people. The Corporate Parenting Strategy describes the Council's relationship with children and young people as a "contract of trust" and makes clear that children and young people must be actively involved in decisions that affect their lives. This strategy carries that commitment into placement sufficiency: children and young people should not only be consulted about services before and after they are designed, but should help shape what good homes, good support and good transitions look like from the outset.

The Pledge within Torbay's Corporate Parenting Strategy states that, as corporate parents, we will support, empower and respect children and young people. It commits us to listen, act and stand beside them. For this sufficiency strategy, that means making sure children and young people are treated as individuals rather than labels; that they are involved in decisions about where they live and the support they receive; that information is explained clearly; that privacy and dignity are respected; and that young people are told what has changed as a result of what they have said.

Children and young people have already told Torbay what matters to them. They want to have a say in decisions, they want adults to hear what they are saying and understand what it means, and they want support that recognises the emotional impact of care and care experience. Young people have also spoken about the importance of having somewhere decent to live, staying

connected to people and places that matter to them, being supported with education, training and work, and not being expected to move into adulthood or independence before they are ready.

This strategy therefore commits to using children and young people's voice as a core part of sufficiency planning, commissioning, quality assurance and governance. Their views will inform how Torbay develops foster care, kinship care, residential homes, supported accommodation, move-on accommodation and transition support. This includes listening to children living in local and out-of-area placements, care experienced young people, young people with SEND, young parents, children and young people living in supported accommodation, and those whose needs are more complex or whose voice may be less often heard.

The voice of children and young people will be gathered through a range of routes, including the Children in Care Council, SEND Youth Forum, Young Person Panel, direct work with the Participation Team, care experienced consultation, placement reviews, pathway planning, provider engagement and feedback from children and young people involved in procurement or service design. Where children and young people are involved in shaping services, Torbay will close the feedback loop by explaining what has been heard, what has changed and, where change is not possible, why this is the case.

This section should be read alongside the Corporate Parenting Strategy, The Pledge and the governance arrangements that ensure children and young people's voices are visible within Corporate Parenting Board assurance. The success of this strategy will be judged not only by whether Torbay has enough placements and accommodation, but also by whether children and young people experience those homes and services as safe, stable, respectful, supportive and shaped around what matters to them.

What young people's voice means for this strategy

What children and young people have told us matters	What this means for sufficiency	How we will respond
"I want my say in decisions."	Children and young people need meaningful involvement in decisions about where they live, who supports them and what their future plan is.	Ensure placement planning, reviews, pathway planning and commissioning decisions include children and young people's views wherever possible.

“Don’t just talk to us. Hear what we have to say and understand what it means.”	Participation must lead to action, not simply consultation.	Build feedback loops into service design, provider reviews and Corporate Parenting governance so young people can see how their views influence change.
Young people want somewhere decent to live and support to move on in life.	Sufficiency must include quality, stability, safety, dignity and preparation for adulthood, not just availability of beds or placements.	Develop accommodation pathways that include supported accommodation, move-on homes, tenancy sustainment and gradual preparation for independence.
Young people want adults to be patient and understand the impact of care experience.	Placement and accommodation planning must consider trauma, emotional wellbeing, relationships and readiness for independence.	Strengthen therapeutic support, relationship-based practice, Staying Put, step-down arrangements and flexible support around young people’s needs.
Young people want to remain connected to the people and places that matter to them where it is safe.	Local sufficiency matters because distance from Torbay can affect family time, friendships, education, health support and identity.	Prioritise local family-based care, local residential provision and local accommodation options where these can safely meet need.
Young people want to be respected as individuals, not defined by care status or need.	Matching and commissioning must recognise identity, culture, strengths, aspirations and individual circumstances.	Use individual care planning, advocacy, participation and quality assurance to test whether provision feels respectful, inclusive and personalised.

12. Finance and value for money

Placement sufficiency is both a statutory responsibility and a significant financial priority for Torbay. The strategy is designed to improve outcomes for children and young people while also reducing avoidable pressure on high-cost, crisis-led and out-of-area provision. Financial sustainability will only be achieved if the Council and partners are able to intervene earlier, support

more children safely within their families and networks, strengthen local family-based care, develop local specialist provision and improve commissioning and accommodation pathways for care experienced young people.

The current financial pressures are driven by a combination of demand, complexity and market conditions. These result in high-cost residential placements, use of unregistered provision where suitable regulated alternatives are not available, Independent Fostering Agency placements where local foster care capacity is insufficient, Section 17 accommodation costs, temporary accommodation pressures, supported accommodation and specialist post-16 education provision. These pressures are not separate from sufficiency; they are direct indicators of where the local system needs more planned, preventative and local options.

The value-for-money approach within this strategy is therefore not simply about reducing unit costs. It is about securing the right provision at the right time, improving stability and outcomes, avoiding escalation where possible and ensuring that investment is directed toward provision that prevents higher-cost intervention later. This includes investing in Family Help, kinship and connected care, foster carer recruitment and retention, Mockingbird, local children's homes, specialist post-16 provision, supported accommodation, move-on accommodation and tenancy sustainment support.

The financial benefits of the strategy will come from the cumulative effect of the priorities working together, not from any single workstream in isolation. Earlier help should reduce demand for care; family network and permanence work should reduce the length and instability of care episodes; local fostering should reduce avoidable external placement use; local residential and specialist provision should reduce high-cost spot purchasing and unregistered arrangements; and stronger accommodation pathways should reduce emergency and unsuitable provision for care experienced young people. Savings and cost reductions will therefore be tracked alongside quality, stability and young people's experience, so that financial improvement does not happen at the expense of children's outcomes.

Financial oversight will be strengthened through the Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements, sufficiency performance framework, high-cost placement review arrangements, commissioning and contract management, and budget monitoring. This will include monitoring placement type, placement distance, cost, quality, stability, use of unregistered provision, step-down opportunities, Staying Put, supported accommodation throughput, care leaver accommodation outcomes and the impact of new local provision as it comes online. Reporting will be to Directors and Cabinet through the sustainability plan, with Corporate Parenting Board updates provided only where relevant to children's experiences, outcomes or corporate parenting responsibilities.

Finance and value-for-money priorities		
Area of financial pressure	Strategic response	Value-for-money measure
High-cost residential and unregistered provision	Develop local children's homes, strengthen matching, increase step-down options and maintain senior oversight of high-cost placements.	Reduced use of unregistered provision, fewer out-of-area placements where local care can meet need, improved stability and reduced reliance on crisis placements.
Independent fostering agency reliance	Increase local foster carer recruitment and retention, strengthen the fostering offer and expand support models such as Mockingbird.	More children placed with local Torbay foster carers, fewer external placements where local family-based care is appropriate, and improved placement stability.
Section 17 and temporary accommodation costs	Strengthen prevention work between Children's Services and Housing, improve early intervention and explore more planned accommodation options for families.	Reduced use of costly emergency accommodation, improved family stability and stronger prevention of homelessness.
Care leaver accommodation and supported accommodation pressures	Strengthen move-on pathways, Staying Put, supported accommodation, SHAP, Hotels to Homes and tenancy sustainment support.	Improved throughput from supported accommodation, fewer unsuitable accommodation arrangements and more young people sustaining tenancies.

Specialist post-16 provision and complex needs	Develop planned specialist post-16 commissioning arrangements and align social care, SEND, education, health and housing planning.	Reduced ad-hoc spot purchasing, clearer pathways for young people and better alignment between education, accommodation and support.
Market volatility, inflation and provider capacity	Improve commissioning intelligence, provider engagement, procurement planning, contract management and regional market shaping.	Better forecasting, stronger provider relationships, improved quality assurance and more predictable commissioning decisions.

13. Strategic risks and dependencies

The successful delivery of this strategy is dependent on the pace, alignment and effectiveness of the existing workstreams described above. The following cross-cutting risks should be monitored through the Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements, the sufficiency performance framework and senior leadership arrangements, with escalation to Directors and Cabinet where required.

Key risks associated with delivery of the strategy			
Risk	Why this matters	Related workstream / plan	Mitigation / assurance route
Local residential provision is delayed or does not come online at the required pace.	Continued pressure on out-of-area, high-cost and unregistered provision, with children potentially placed further from family, education, health and community links.	Children's Homes Programme; Cabinet report; DfE capital bid	Maintain senior programme oversight, clear procurement milestones, property and planning risk tracking, provider engagement and escalation through

			children's services and corporate governance.
Provider market appetite, affordability or workforce capacity is insufficient.	Procurements may fail, costs may exceed affordability assumptions or providers may be unable to recruit and retain the right workforce.	Children's Homes Programme; Specialist Post-16 Provision; supported accommodation commissioning	Use early market engagement, realistic tender timelines, provider forums, regional commissioning intelligence, robust cost modelling and contract management.
Foster carer recruitment and retention does not keep pace with demand.	Torbay will remain reliant on independent fostering agencies or residential provision for children whose needs could be met in local family-based care.	Fostering Offer; Fostering South West; Mockingbird; recruitment and retention strategy	Track recruitment conversion, approvals, resignations, carer feedback and sufficiency gaps; progress enhanced support, training, incentives and out-of-hours advice.
Accommodation pathways for care experienced young people remain blocked.	Young people may remain in supported accommodation for longer than needed or may experience unsuitable, unstable or costly temporary accommodation.	Housing Needs Analysis; 16+ Supported Accommodation; SHAP; Hotels to Homes; care leaver accommodation pathway	Develop move-on planning from age 16, strengthen housing partnership arrangements, monitor throughput and tenancy sustainment, and use young people's feedback to shape provision.
SEND, health, emotional wellbeing and housing plans are not sufficiently aligned.	Children with complex needs may experience delayed support, education disruption, placement instability or	Specialist Post-16 Provision; DfE capital bid; SEND and health planning; transition planning	Embed joint planning across social care, SEND, education, health, housing and adult services, with named escalation routes

	escalation into more costly placements.		for children with complex or enduring needs.
Supported accommodation regulation affects provider capacity and availability.	Some providers may choose not to register or may reduce provision, leading to fewer options for 16 and 17-year-olds and young parents who require regulated accommodation.	16+ Supported Accommodation; Young Parents Supported Accommodation; Housing Needs Analysis	Maintain provider engagement, monitor Ofsted registration risks, use spot-purchase arrangements carefully and review longer-term commissioning options.
Financial pressures increase faster than planned sufficiency improvements.	High-cost residential, unregistered, Section 17, temporary accommodation and specialist education costs may limit the Council's ability to invest preventatively.	Section 17 accommodation prevention; residential programme; specialist post-16 provision; sufficiency performance framework	Strengthen financial tracking, demand forecasting, cost avoidance reporting, senior oversight of high-cost placements and alignment with budget monitoring.
Children and young people's voice is not consistently used to shape provision.	Provision may meet technical sufficiency requirements but fail to reflect what children and young people say they need to feel safe, settled and prepared for adulthood.	Corporate Parenting Strategy; care experienced consultation; procurement co-production; supported accommodation listening circles	Embed participation in procurement, mobilisation, provider review, accommodation pathway design and Corporate Parenting assurance.

14. Conclusion

This strategy brings together Torbay's sufficiency evidence, current pressures and planned responses into a single 2026–2029 framework. It confirms that sufficiency is not only about securing placements when children enter care, but about building a whole-system approach that supports families earlier, strengthens kinship and connected care, grows local fostering, develops local specialist and residential options, secures permanence, and improves accommodation pathways for care experienced young people.

The next stage is to complete the remaining data gaps, create the required graphs, test the financial assumptions and translate the strategy into a costed delivery plan. This should include clear ownership, timescales, risks, dependencies, impact measures and reporting arrangements so that Torbay can demonstrate progress against quality, stability, locality, permanence, young people's experience and value for money.

Delivery of these priorities will be overseen through the Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements, which is reported to Directors and Cabinet. The placements sufficiency strategy is a key delivery mechanism for that sustainability plan and should therefore be governed through the same route. Progress should be monitored through a supporting SMART action plan, reviewed regularly and updated in response to changes in local demand, national reform, regional commissioning arrangements, provider market pressures and financial performance.

Governance will ensure that the strategy remains coherent as an improvement and financial sustainability programme. Reports should show how the priorities connect, what progress is being made, what impact young people say the changes are having, what cost avoidance or savings are being delivered, and where Directors or Cabinet need to act to remove barriers. The Corporate Parenting Board may receive updates where there are relevant implications for children's lived experience, stability, permanence, accommodation or outcomes, but it will not be the owning or primary reporting forum for delivery.

15. Summary of high-level success measures

The high-level success measures should be considered together rather than separately. The overall test is whether Torbay is creating a more joined-up local system in which children enter care only when necessary, receive high-quality local support where possible, achieve permanence without delay, move into adulthood with safe accommodation and trusted relationships, and experience services that they have helped to shape.

- Reduction in avoidable entries into care and continued stabilisation of the cared for population.
- Increase in the number and proportion of children living with Torbay foster carers.
- Reduction in reliance on Independent Fostering Agency, high-cost, out-of-area and unregistered provision where local care can safely meet need.
- Increase in local provision for children with complex, SEND, disability-related or step-down needs.
- Improved timeliness and quality of permanence planning, including adoption, Special Guardianship, kinship care, long-term fostering and reunification where safe.
- Increase in care experienced young people living in suitable, stable and affordable accommodation.
- Improved use of sufficiency data, forecasting, commissioning intelligence and market management, quality assurance and financial oversight.
- Stronger evidence that children and young people's voices are informing sufficiency planning and placement development.

16. Recommendations and next steps

The next stage of this work should be to move from strategic intent to a fully costed delivery plan. The strategy sets out the direction of travel and the key priorities for improvement; the action plan will need to translate these priorities into specific actions, accountable leads, timescales, resource requirements, savings assumptions, risks, dependencies and measures of impact. This will ensure that Torbay can track whether the strategy is improving quality, meeting need, taking young people with us and reducing avoidable cost.

Recommendation 1: Develop a costed delivery action plan

Develop a SMART action plan for the full 2026–2029 period, with a clear first-year delivery plan for 2026/27. The plan should identify the actions required under each strategic priority, linked milestones, named owners, delivery partners, timescales, dependencies, risks, data measures and reporting routes. It should distinguish between actions that require new investment, actions that can be delivered within existing resources, and actions that are expected to release capacity or reduce cost over time.

Recommendation 2: Cost the proposals and test the savings assumptions

Complete a financial appraisal of each major workstream, including Family Help and prevention, kinship and connected care, fostering recruitment and retention, Mockingbird, local children's homes, specialist post-16 provision, supported accommodation, move-on accommodation and care leaver tenancy sustainment. The appraisal should identify implementation costs, staffing implications, commissioning costs, capital requirements, potential external funding, cost avoidance, expected savings, and the timeframe over which any reductions are likely to be realised.

Recommendation 3: Identify gaps in current provision and capacity

Undertake a detailed gap analysis against current and forecast need. This should include gaps in local foster care capacity, kinship and connected care support, residential beds, specialist provision for children with complex needs, provision for children with SEND and disabilities, supported accommodation, move-on accommodation, accommodation for young parents, provision for UASC and pathways for young people with enduring care and support needs. The analysis should also identify gaps in data quality, commissioning capacity, provider market intelligence, workforce, participation and governance.

Recommendation 4: Prioritise actions that improve quality and reduce avoidable cost

Use the action plan to prioritise actions that have the strongest combined impact on quality, sufficiency and value for money. This should include reducing avoidable entry into care, increasing local family-based placements, reducing high-cost external and unregistered provision, improving step-down pathways, reducing placement distance, improving permanence, increasing supported accommodation throughput and strengthening move-on options for care experienced young people. Savings should be tracked alongside quality and outcome measures to ensure that financial improvement is driven by better planning and better provision, rather than by reducing support.

Recommendation 5: Build young people's voice into delivery and assurance

Ensure children and young people are involved in shaping the action plan and testing whether delivery is making a difference. This should include children in care, care experienced young people, young people with SEND, young people living in supported accommodation, young parents, children placed out of area and young people whose voices are less often heard. The action plan should include clear feedback loops so that young people know what has changed as a result of their views.

Recommendation 6: Establish clear governance for delivery

The action plan should be owned through the Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements and reported through the existing route to Directors and Cabinet. Reporting should be exception-based and focused on progress, risks, barriers, impact, financial performance, cost avoidance, savings delivery and decisions required. A quarterly sufficiency report should bring together data on demand, placement type, placement distance, cost, quality, stability, permanence, care leaver accommodation and young people's lived experience. Corporate Parenting Board updates may be provided where relevant to children's experiences and outcomes, but the Board will not own the plan or be the primary reporting route.

Recommendation 7: Confirm the immediate next steps

- Agree the final strategic priorities and success measures.
- Complete the sufficiency gap analysis and demand forecast.
- Develop the SMART delivery action plan for 2026–2029, with a detailed first-year implementation plan.
- Cost each action and identify whether it requires investment, can be delivered within existing resources, or is expected to generate cost avoidance or savings.
- Identify quick wins, medium-term developments and longer-term commissioning or capital projects.
- Confirm the Budget Sustainability Plan for Placements as the governance route, with reporting to Directors and Cabinet and Corporate Parenting Board updates only where relevant to children's experiences and outcomes.
- Agree how children and young people will be involved in action plan development, procurement, provider review and ongoing assurance.
- Review the strategy and action plan at least annually, and earlier if Local Government Reorganisation, national reform or demand changes require this.

Appendix 1: Placement Sufficiency Delivery Action Plan 2026–2029

1. Purpose

This action plan sets out the high-level milestones through which Torbay Council and its partners will deliver the Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2026–2029. It brings together the strategy's seven priorities and the relevant commitments in the 2026/27 Medium-Term Financial Plan Financial Sustainability Plans for Placements, Fostering Families, Managing the Higher Needs Block and Locality Model, and Home to School Transport.

The action plan gives particular priority to reducing reliance on high-cost external residential, out-of-area, emergency and unregistered provision. Residential cost pressure cannot be addressed through price negotiation alone. Delivery will require a coordinated programme of demand management, senior gatekeeping, robust individual placement review, safe step-down, stronger family-based alternatives, development of regulated local provision, improved commissioning and earlier support for children and families.

The plan will be reviewed at least quarterly and refreshed annually to reflect demand, outcomes, financial performance, market conditions and the views of children and young people.

2. Delivery principles

- Children's safety, welfare, relationships, identity, education and long-term outcomes will remain central to all decisions.
- Residential care will be used where it is the right plan for the child, not as a result of gaps elsewhere in the system.
- Every high-cost placement will have a clear purpose, planned review point and exit or step-down plan where this is safe and appropriate.
- Local family-based and regulated provision will be increased in response to evidenced need.
- Children's Services, Finance, Assets, Housing, SEND, Education, Health and Commissioning will work as a single sufficiency system.
- Financial impact will be tracked alongside quality, stability, distance from home and children and young people's lived experience.
- Performance will be reported by exception, with risks, delays and changes to financial assumptions escalated promptly.

3. Strategic outcomes by March 2029

By March 2029, Torbay aims to have:

- Reduced reliance on high-cost external residential, out-of-area, emergency and unregistered placements.
- Increased the range of regulated local residential and specialist provision.
- Increased local foster care capacity, including carers able to support adolescents, sibling groups, children with disabilities, parent and baby placements, emergency care and step-down from residential care.
- Strengthened prevention, kinship, reunification and permanence pathways to avoid unnecessary entry to care and reduce avoidable duration in care.
- Improved stability, matching, education continuity and access to health and therapeutic support.
- Strengthened supported accommodation and move-on pathways for care experienced young people.
- Delivered improved financial sustainability, contributing to the required reduction in placement expenditure over the Medium-Term Financial Plan period.

4. High-level delivery milestones

Workstream	High-level action	Milestone	Target date	Lead and key partners	Intended impact and measures
Governance and financial grip	Confirm Director-level sponsorship and accountability across the placement gateway, accommodation and sufficiency programme.	Clear ownership, decision routes and escalation arrangements approved.	September 2026	Director of Children's Services; Children's Services; Finance; Commissioning	Faster decisions; clear accountability; monthly reporting against outcomes, placement use and financial impact.

Residential pressure: baseline	Establish a single residential and high-cost placements baseline covering need, weekly cost, location, registration status, education, health, placement duration, review point and potential alternatives.	Baseline and priority cohort agreed and refreshed monthly.	September 2026	Head of Service; Commissioning; Finance; SEND; Health	Complete and reliable evidence base; all high-cost placements visible to senior leaders.
Residential pressure: review and step-down	Operate a monthly high-cost placement review board. Require every high-cost residential, unregistered and bespoke placement to have an outcome-focused plan, review point and safe exit, step-down or	All current high-cost placements reviewed and action plans agreed; new placements reviewed at gateway and monthly thereafter.	October 2026, then monthly	Director-level sponsor; Operational Heads of Service; Commissioning; Finance; SEND; Health	Reduced duration and cost of high-cost placements; increased planned step-downs; reduced unregistered use.

	permanence pathway.				
Residential pressure: gatekeeping	Strengthen the accommodation needs and placement gateway so residential admission is based on evidenced need, alternatives considered, intended outcomes, maximum review period and senior authorisation.	Revised gateway criteria and decision record implemented.	October 2026	Children's Services; Commissioning; Finance; SEND; Legal	Fewer crisis-led admissions; stronger challenge; improved matching and cost containment.
Residential pressure: local provision	Translate demand analysis into quantified targets for local regulated residential beds and specialist provision, including priority cohorts, service model,	Local residential sufficiency specification and quantified capacity requirement approved.	October 2026	Children's Services; Commissioning; Assets; Finance; SEND; Health	Clear local capacity target linked to forecast need and reduced external reliance.

	workforce, property requirements and financial assumptions.				
Residential pressure: property pipeline	Agree a prioritised property and provider pipeline for small local children's homes, specialist provision and step-down accommodation.	Preferred options, delivery route, ownership, indicative cost and mobilisation timetable agreed.	December 2026	Children's Services; Assets; Commissioning; Finance; Legal	Deliverable pipeline for local regulated capacity; reduced distance from home and external-market exposure.
Residential pressure: business case	Approve phased business cases for the Children's Homes Programme and any specialist provision, including the Department for Education capital proposal	Investment and commissioning decisions secured for phase one.	January 2027	Director of Children's Services; Finance; Assets; Commissioning; Cabinet or delegated decision route as required	Mobilisation of local provision; quantified cost avoidance and improved outcomes.

	where applicable.				
Residential pressure: mobilisation	Procure or appoint providers, recruit workforce, complete registration activity and mobilise agreed local provision.	First phase of additional regulated local provision operational.	By September 2027, subject to property, procurement and registration	Commissioning; Provider; Assets; Children's Services; Ofsted liaison	Additional local beds; fewer external placements; improved oversight, education and health continuity.
Residential pressure: further capacity	Review the impact of phase one and approve any additional provision required for 2028/29.	Phase-two decision based on updated demand, outcomes and savings evidence.	March 2028	Sufficiency Programme Board; Finance; Commissioning; Assets	Capacity remains aligned to changing need and Medium-Term Financial Plan delivery.
Commissioning and market management	Review all high-cost fees, uplifts and bespoke packages; strengthen contract compliance, negotiation, framework use and escalation where cost is not justified by	Fee-challenge protocol and monthly financial impact report embedded.	October 2026, then monthly	Commissioning; Finance; Operational Services	Immediate cost containment; negotiated reductions; improved value and provider accountability.

	assessed need.				
Regional commissioning	Develop a shared provider, placement and rate intelligence baseline with Devon County Council and Plymouth City Council and agree a strategic joint commissioning framework.	Regional baseline completed; governance and market-engagement principles agreed.	November 2026	Commissioning; Devon County Council; Plymouth City Council; Finance	Stronger market intelligence, negotiating position and regional influence.
Regional commissioning options	Appraise joint frameworks, block purchasing and shared commissioning options for residential, specialist and post-16 provision.	Options and recommendation presented for decision.	January 2027	Commissioning; Finance; Legal; regional partners	Reduced spot purchasing and future cost avoidance.
Fostering: local offer	Approve and implement a competitive Torbay foster carer offer covering	Foster carer offer launched and communicated.	October 2026	Director of Children's Services; Fostering Service; Finance;	Improved recruitment, retention and placement stability; reduced

	allowances, fees, training, supervision, peer support, therapeutic advice, out-of-hours support and retention.			Communications	Independent Fostering Agency reliance.
Fostering: targeted recruitment	Implement evidence-led recruitment and conversion activity focused on adolescents, sibling groups, children with disabilities and complex needs, parent and baby placements, emergency care and residential step-down.	Monthly funnel established covering enquiries, assessments, approvals, withdrawals, leavers and net growth.	October 2026, then monthly	Fostering Service; Fostering South West; Communications	Increased capacity matched to pressure cohorts.
Fostering: capacity milestones	Deliver an interim milestone of 10 additional approved fostering households	Interim and full-year recruitment positions reported, including household	December 2026 and March 2027	Fostering Service; Director-level sponsor	More local family-based placements; reduced Independent Fostering Agency and

	and work towards 30 additional approvals, while explicitly reporting net growth after resignations and retirements.	capability and placements created.			residential use where appropriate.
Fostering: retention and stability	Implement the retention and support framework, including Mockingbird development, support for challenging placements, respite, therapeutic input and enhanced supervision.	Retention framework implemented and impact reviewed.	December 2026, with review in March 2027	Fostering Service; Health; therapeutic services	Reduced carer attrition, fewer disruptions and more sustainable step-down placements.
Prevention and family networks	Embed Family Help, family group decision-making, kinship and connected care so that family	Consistent pathway and audit framework in place.	December 2026	Early Help and Children's Social Care; Family Hubs; Legal; partners	Fewer avoidable entries into care; increased kinship and connected care.

	alternatives are explored before admission and throughout care planning.				
Reunification and permanence	Review children with potential for safe reunification, Special Guardianship, adoption or another permanence arrangement, with clear support plans and senior oversight.	Priority cohort reviewed and permanence tracker strengthened.	December 2026, then quarterly	Children's Social Care; Legal; Fostering; Adopt South West	Reduced drift and duration in care; placement capacity released safely.
SEND and complex needs	Establish an integrated review of children at risk of residential admission or placement breakdown, bringing together social care, SEND, education, health and	Joint risk cohort and preventative plans reviewed monthly.	October 2026	Children's Services; SEND; Education; Health; Commissioning	Fewer emergency placements; improved stability and earlier support.

	commissioning.				
SEND commissioning	Complete the shared provider, rate and placement intelligence baseline and use it to inform regional commissioning, local sufficiency and challenge of high-cost packages.	Baseline informs commissioning intentions and financial modelling.	November 2026	SEND; Commissioning; Finance; regional partners	Greater cost control and stronger local or regional alternatives.
Post-16 specialist pathways	Refresh the post-16 pathway and sufficiency plan, including specialist education, supported accommodation, care leaver housing and transition to adult services.	Demand, gaps, commissioning intentions and transition responsibilities agreed.	December 2026	Children's Services; SEND; Education; Housing; Adult Services; Commissioning	Reduced bespoke purchasing; planned transition and accommodation pathways.
Supported accommodation and move-on	Re-establish structured provider engagement and agree an	Provider forum operating; pathway gaps and development	November 2026	Children's Services; Housing;	Better throughput, reduced crisis placements, improved

	improvement plan for supported accommodation, move-on housing, Staying Put, young parent accommodation and UASC transitions.	actions agreed.		Commissioning; providers	quality and tenancy sustainability.
Education continuity and transport	Ensure local sufficiency development and placement decisions consider education continuity and transport implications from the outset. Review transport costs linked to distant placements and identify opportunities for route optimisation, shared transport, personal transport	Integrated placement, education and transport impact assessment included in gateway decisions.	December 2026	Children's Services; Education; SEND; Home to School Transport; Finance	Reduced disruption, improved attendance and avoidance of unnecessary transport cost.

	budgets and independence planning.				
Data and forecasting	Create a quarterly sufficiency dashboard covering demand, admissions, placement type, residential use, distance from home, unregistered placements, vacancies, fostering capacity, stability, step-down, permanence, provider quality and cost.	Dashboard agreed and used for exception reporting.	October 2026, then quarterly	Performance and Intelligence; Finance; Commissioning; Children's Services	Single view of delivery, risk, outcomes and financial impact.
Children and young people's voice	Build feedback from children and young people into placement reviews, service specifications,	Feedback method and reporting route agreed; themes reported at least twice yearly.	December 2026	Participation Service; Commissioning; operational teams	Provision reflects lived experience; improved safety, support, belonging and preparation

	provider quality assurance and evaluation of new provision.				for independence.
Financial benefits	Validate the contribution of high-cost placement review, step-down, local provision, fostering growth, commissioning grip, prevention and permanence to the overall placement savings requirement.	Costed benefits profile approved and tracked against the Medium-Term Financial Plan.	November 2026, refreshed quarterly	Finance; Director of Children's Services; workstream leads	Transparent tracking of cashable savings, non-cashable cost avoidance and investment requirements.
Annual refresh	Refresh the demand forecast, gap analysis, capacity targets, milestones and financial assumptions.	Updated action plan approved for the following year.	March each year	Sufficiency Programme Board; Corporate Parenting Board; Finance	Action plan remains responsive to demand, outcomes, market changes and financial pressures.

5. Financial framework

The Placements Financial Sustainability Plan identifies a requirement to reduce the placements budget by £4 million over two and a half financial years. The contribution from this action plan will be developed and validated across five linked routes:

1. High-cost placement review, reduced duration and safe step-down.
2. Development of regulated local residential and specialist provision.
3. Increased in-house fostering, kinship and other family-based alternatives.
4. Stronger commissioning, fee challenge, contract management and regional market influence.
5. Prevention of avoidable entry to care, safe reunification and timely permanence.

The current MTFP assumptions identify increasing cashable and non-cashable benefits across 2026/27 to 2028/29. These remain planning assumptions and will be validated through live placement data, individual placement changes, provider rates, delivery timescales and approved investment decisions. Progress reports will distinguish clearly between:

- Cashable savings released from budgets.
- Non-cashable savings that contain or avoid forecast growth.
- One-off savings.
- Investment and transition costs.
- Slippage, risks and changes to the expected benefits profile.

6. Governance and reporting

The Director of Children's Services will act as Senior Responsible Owner for delivery. A cross-council Sufficiency Programme Board will coordinate delivery across Children's Services, Finance, Commissioning, Assets, Housing, SEND, Education, Health and Adult Services.

Operational workstreams will maintain detailed plans beneath this high-level appendix. The programme board will receive monthly information on residential and high-cost placements and quarterly updates on the wider action plan. Reporting will focus on progress, impact, exceptions, decisions required and financial delivery rather than routine operational activity.

The Corporate Parenting Board will receive strategic assurance on placement sufficiency, stability, permanence, distance from home, care experienced accommodation and children and young people's lived experience. Financial delivery will be reported through the council's established MTFP and budget monitoring arrangements.

7. Core measures

The following measures will be monitored:

- Number and weekly cost of residential placements.
- Number of high-cost, unregistered, emergency and bespoke placements.
- Number and percentage of children placed outside Torbay or more than 20 miles from home.
- Percentage of high-cost placements with a current review point and exit or step-down plan.
- Residential admissions and step-downs.
- Local regulated residential beds commissioned, developed and occupied.
- Foster carer enquiries, assessments, approvals, withdrawals, resignations and net household growth.
- Number of carers available for priority cohorts.
- Use and cost of Independent Fostering Agency placements.
- Placement stability and unplanned endings.
- Entries into care, reunification, kinship, Special Guardianship, adoption and other permanence outcomes.
- Supported accommodation capacity, quality, vacancies, move-on and tenancy sustainability.
- Education continuity, attendance and transport impact for children placed at distance.
- Cashable savings, non-cashable cost avoidance, investment costs and forecast variance.
- Feedback from children and young people about safety, stability, location, relationships and support.

This page is intentionally left blank

TORBAY COUNCIL

Meeting: Cabinet **Date:** 20 October 2026

Wards affected: All wards

Report Title: Torbay Young Futures Hub and Local Youth Transformation Programme

When does the decision need to be implemented? Following expiry of the call-in period.

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Nick Bye, Lead Cabinet member Children's Services

Director Contact Details: Nancy Meehan Director of Children's Services

1. Purpose of Report

1.1.1 Torbay has been selected to take part in the national Young Futures Hubs and Local Youth Transformation programme. The opportunity provides funding and support to strengthen Torbay's youth offer and to co-produce the area's first long-term Youth Strategy with children and young people.

1.2 The attached programme overview sets out the proposed strategic framework, governance, workstreams, indicative timetable and funding profile. Cabinet is asked to note the opportunity and endorse the proposed direction of travel, recognising that the detailed service model and Youth Strategy will be developed through evidence, partnership working and meaningful co-production with young people.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

2.1.1 The proposals support a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay by creating a coordinated, accessible and sustainable youth support system. The programme will focus on improving mental health and wellbeing, increasing opportunities, reducing vulnerability to crime and exploitation, strengthening the youth workforce and ensuring young people have a meaningful voice in decisions that affect them.

2.1.2 The programme responds to the current absence of a Torbay Youth Strategy and creates an opportunity to develop a new and innovative approach with children and young people. It will also support the Council to strengthen delivery of its statutory duty under section 507B of the Education Act 1996 and align local arrangements with the National Youth Strategy, Families First Partnership expectations and the Young Futures programme.

3 Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

3.1.1 That Cabinet notes the Torbay Young Futures Hub and Local Youth Transformation Programme overview set out at Appendix 1.

3.2 That Cabinet endorses the proposed strategic direction, including development of a multi-venue Young Futures Hub model and co-production of Torbay's first Youth Strategy with children and young people.

3.3 That the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, be authorised to progress programme mobilisation, governance and co-production arrangements, and to bring forward the resulting Youth Strategy and any decisions requiring further approval through the appropriate governance route.

4 Appendices

Appendix 1: Torbay Young Futures Hub and Local Youth Transformation Programme Overview

5 Background Documents

- Department for Culture, Media and Sport Young Futures Hubs and Local Youth Transformation programme information supplied to the Council.
- Relevant programme guidance, funding agreements and delivery partner documentation as issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Supporting Information

6 Introduction

6.1.1 Torbay currently has a range of youth services delivered across the Council and voluntary, community and partner organisations, but does not have a single long-term Youth Strategy or fully integrated youth infrastructure. The Young Futures programme provides a time-limited opportunity to undertake a comprehensive needs analysis, map provision, strengthen governance and safeguarding, develop the workforce and create a sustainable multi-agency model. The intended target age range is 10 to 18, extending to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities, with flexibility to reflect local need.

7 Options under consideration

7.1.1 **Preferred option – progress the Young Futures Hub and Local Youth Transformation programme.** This secures external support and funding, enables meaningful co-production and provides a structured route to a sustainable youth system and Youth Strategy.

7.1.2 **Develop a Youth Strategy without participating in the programme.** This could provide a local framework but would not benefit from the same level of funding, national support, transformation capacity or connection to Young Futures Hubs.

7.3.1 Maintain current arrangements. This would avoid immediate mobilisation activity but would leave the current strategic gap unresolved and risk losing the opportunity for external investment and system-wide improvement.

8 Financial Opportunities and Implications

8.1.1 The indicative programme funding comprises up to £100,000 Stage 2 funding for planning and co-production, up to £300,000 per year for Young Futures Hub frontline delivery, up to £500,000 for Local Youth Transformation activity and up to £125,000 capital funding for building and digital improvements.

8.1.2 Final allocations, conditions, eligible expenditure and any Council contribution remain subject to the formal grant arrangements and Finance Team advice. Sustainability beyond March 2029 will be addressed through a future funding strategy, commissioning framework and business-as-usual plan.

9 Legal Implications

9.1.1 The programme will support the Council's duty under section 507B of the Education Act 1996 to secure sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities and facilities for young people. Delivery must also comply with relevant safeguarding, equality, procurement, information governance and data protection requirements. Formal legal advice will be sought as the delivery model, partnership agreements, information-sharing arrangements and commissioning proposals are developed.

10 Engagement and Consultation

10.1.1 Co-production with children and young people is central to the programme rather than a one-off consultation exercise.

10.1.2 A Youth Advisory Board is proposed, with young people comprising at least 40% of the programme board, and engagement will use the Lundy Model.

10.1.3 The programme aims to hear from at least 500 young people, including those with SEND, care-experienced young people, young carers, LGBTQ+ young people, traveller communities, rural communities and other groups whose voices may be less often heard. Partners across the statutory and voluntary and community sectors will also be engaged through the landscape review, governance arrangements and workstreams.

11 Procurement Implications

11.1.1 No specific procurement decision is sought at this stage. Any future procurement or commissioning arising from the implementation plan will follow the Council's Contract Procedures and the Procurement Act 2023, with early advice from Procurement. Opportunities for local voluntary and community organisations, small and medium-sized enterprises, lotting and social value will be considered when detailed requirements are known.

12 Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

12.1.1 No material environmental impact arises from noting and endorsing the strategic direction. The programme will prioritise best use of existing community spaces rather than creating new access points.

13 Associated Risks

13.1.1 Key risks include;

- delay in allocation of the national delivery partner;
- insufficient programme capacity;
- weak cross-system ownership;
- failure to engage a representative range of young people;
- fragmented data and referral arrangements;
- and the risk that grant-funded activity is not sustainable beyond 2029.

13.1.2 These risks will be managed through clear senior sponsorship, programme governance, dedicated workstreams, a comprehensive needs analysis, safeguarding and information-governance frameworks, active co-production, regular reporting and early development of a sustainability and future funding plan.

13.1.3 Failure to proceed would risk loss of external investment and continuation of the current strategic gap.

14 Equality Impact Assessment

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age	• 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. • 55% of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. • 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	The programme is specifically intended to benefit young people aged 10 to 18, extending to 25 for young people with SEND. Younger children and young adults outside the programme range may experience a different level of direct benefit.	Use the permitted local flexibility to reflect need, ensure age-appropriate provision and connect young people to wider early help and adult services where required.	Children's Services and programme partnership; throughout design and delivery.
Carers	• At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. • 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care.	Young carers may face barriers to participation because of caring responsibilities, time constraints and the need for flexible support. The programme offers a positive opportunity to strengthen the graduated response and make young carers' needs more visible.	Provide flexible and accessible engagement, include young carers in co-production, and align the programme with the improved Young Carers graduated response and assessment arrangements.	Children's Services and partners; mobilisation onwards.

Care experienced	• As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	Care-experienced young people are identified as a priority cohort and may face barriers to opportunity, wellbeing and stable support. The programme provides a positive opportunity to design accessible, trusted and non-stigmatising support with them.	Ensure representation of care-experienced young people in governance and co-production, link delivery to corporate parenting responsibilities and monitor reach and outcomes.	Children's Services and Corporate Parenting partners; throughout the programme.
Disability	• In the 2021 Census, 23.9% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.	Young people with SEND are included up to age 25 and may experience physical, sensory, communication, digital or service-access barriers. Inclusive design should improve access, but there is a risk of unequal benefit if accessibility is not built in from the outset.	Co-design with young people with SEND; complete accessibility and transport reviews; provide reasonable adjustments, accessible communications and a mix of face-to-face, outreach and digital access.	Children's Services, SEND partners and programme board; design and delivery.
Gender reassignment	• In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth.	Inclusive, non-stigmatising provision should have a positive impact. Some young people may face discrimination or may be reluctant to identify themselves in engagement activity.	Use inclusive language, confidential participation routes, staff training and links with specialist organisations.	Programme board and Youth Voice workstream; throughout.
Marriage and civil partnership	• Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the	No differential impact is currently identified. The detailed design will remain	Keep under review through co-production	Programme board; review

	time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.	alert to the needs of young parents and family circumstances.	and the updated equality assessment.	at key design stages.
Pregnancy and maternity	• Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3). • For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0).	Young parents may require flexible, welcoming provision and support to overcome practical barriers to participation.	Provide flexible access, appropriate facilities and links to family and health support.	Programme partnership; design and delivery.
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: • 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh • 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African • 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups • 96.1% as White • 0.4% described their ethnicity another way.	Young people from minoritised ethnic communities may experience additional barriers, under-representation or differing levels of trust in services.	Use targeted outreach, culturally competent practice, representative engagement and monitoring of participation and outcomes.	Programme board and partners; throughout.

	• Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.			
Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following; • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddist • 0.2% are Hindu • 0.6% are Muslim • Less than 0.1% are Sikh • 0.1% are Jewish • 0.7% have another religion • 43.2% have no religion • 6.3% did not answer	Meeting times, activities or venues could create barriers for some faith groups if not planned inclusively.	Engage faith and community organisations, provide reasonable flexibility and ensure provision is welcoming to young people of all beliefs and none.	Programme partnership; design and delivery.
Sex	• 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.	Needs and patterns of engagement may differ. The model should avoid reinforcing stereotypes and ensure equitable access, safety and choice.	Monitor participation and outcomes, provide safe and mixed delivery options, and consult young people on what helps them feel welcome.	Programme board and delivery partners; throughout.
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows;	LGBTQ+ young people are identified for representative engagement and may experience stigma, safety concerns or	Co-design inclusive and confidential support, train the workforce and	Programme board and Youth Voice

	• 89% as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian • 1.1% as Bisexual • 0.1% as Pansexual • 0.1% described their sexuality another way • 7.4% of people didn't answer the question	reluctance to access mainstream provision.	work with specialist services.	workstream; throughout.
Armed Forces Community	• In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. • In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.	No differential impact is currently identified, although children in Armed Forces families may experience mobility, separation or transition-related needs.	Keep under review and link with relevant education, family and community support where needed.	Programme partnership; review during needs analysis.
Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	• Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	Young people experiencing poverty or deprivation are a priority group and may face transport, digital and cost barriers. Open-access, outreach and community-based provision should have a positive impact if resources are targeted according to need.	Use needs analysis and local data to target provision; consider travel, cost and digital exclusion; provide outreach and detached youth work in areas of greatest need.	Programme board and delivery workstreams; needs analysis onwards.
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of	• For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between	The programme is expected to have a positive public health impact through earlier support, improved mental health	Embed public health expertise in governance, align pathways with	Public Health, Children's Services and

the population of Torbay)	males who live in Torbay's least and most deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females.	and wellbeing, trusted relationships, increased opportunities and reduced vulnerability to harm.	health and mental health partners, and monitor reach and outcomes.	health partners; throughout.
Human Rights impacts		The programme supports children's rights to be heard and to access services that promote wellbeing and development. Participation must be meaningful, safe, inclusive and accompanied by clear feedback about how young people's views have influenced decisions.	Apply the Lundy Model, safeguarding and informed-consent arrangements; provide accessible information and feedback; and protect privacy in engagement and data-sharing.	Programme board and Youth Voice workstream; throughout.
Child Friendly	The overview proposes a youth-led model, a Youth Advisory Board and at least 40% young people's representation on the programme board, with an ambition to engage more than 500 young people.	The proposal has a strong positive child-friendly impact because young people will help shape the strategy, governance, service model, locations and digital offer. Leadership commitment and sustained partnership ownership will be essential to make participation influential and the model sustainable.	Use child-friendly communications, accessible meeting times and locations, representative recruitment, feedback loops and outcome monitoring. Review the impact assessment as the detailed Youth Strategy and hub model are co-produced.	Director of Children's Services, programme board and Youth Voice workstream; throughout the programme.

15 Cumulative Council Impact

15.1.1 The programme is intended to align and strengthen existing Council work across children's services, education, public health, community safety, housing, youth justice and participation. Potential cumulative impacts will be managed through the proposed programme board, shared workstreams and alignment with Families First Partnership developments and other transformation activity.

16 Cumulative Community Impacts

16.1.1 The programme depends on coordinated work with schools, colleges, health partners, police, the voluntary and community sector, faith organisations and local employers. The landscape review and partnership framework will identify overlapping initiatives, gaps and pressures so that the programme complements rather than duplicates existing activity.

This page is intentionally left blank

Torbay Young Futures Hub & Local Youth Transformation Programme

Introduction

Torbay has been successful in our expression of interest for Young Futures Hubs. The timeline of delivery is mapped by the department of Digital, Cultural, Media and Support (DCMS) with key criteria to meet the funding markers alongside localisation of a long-term sustainable youth offer led by the Local Authority to include statutory and voluntary partners. We believe that the strength of our expression of interest was our clear aspirations for the children and young people of Torbay; to ensure they are supported throughout their childhood journey into adulthood and the welcoming of support from DCMS to write our long-term Youth Strategy with the co-production from young people.

The target age range within the DCMS criteria is 10-18, reaching to 25 for young people with SEND. Torbay With Youth currently supports the whole journey of children and young people's lives beyond the range of Best Start in Life, therefore we will plan across our partnership to ensure the scope of ages that DCMS gives flexibility to will be provided access to the services we offer. The National Youth Strategy runs in conjunction with the Families First Partnership expectations, and statutory duty under section 507b of the Education Act 1996, to secure "sufficient" educational and recreational activities and facilities that improve the wellbeing of young people, with the right support at the right time across the whole system.

A short programme summary provided by DCMS is provided in Annexe A.

1. Strategic Aim

To establish a sustainable, youth-led, multi-hub model youth support system across Torbay that:

- Improves mental health and wellbeing
- Reduces vulnerability to crime and exploitation
- Increases opportunities for young people
- Strengthens the local youth sector across the partnership
- Embeds youth voice in decision-making with criteria for co-design based on the Lundy Model
- Develops a long-term Youth Strategy for Torbay aligned with Youth Matters and Young Futures objectives.

1. Vision Statement

By March 2029, Torbay will have a coordinated, accessible and sustainable youth ecosystem centred around a Torbay 'With Youth' partnership model in multiple venues across Torbay.

Young people will have:

- Somewhere to go which is always welcoming
- Someone they trust who can provide the support and advice they need
- Services that work together to provide a consistent experience
- Opportunities to achieve their potential
- A meaningful voice in shaping local services

The model will provide a permanent foundation for youth services beyond the life of the programme. The programme expects that best use is made of the spaces available, rather than creating new building access points for young people.

Engagement with young people should be achieved through three primary mechanisms:

- Strategic hub placement: Establishing Young Futures Hubs within high-need geographic areas to ensure proximity to the target cohort, effectively creating a model of targeted open access.
- Partner-led identification: Local authorities should use local data, insight, and the expertise of trained professionals and partners to identify, engage, and support these young people to access provision.
- Strategic outreach and detached youth work: Young Futures Hubs should provide a targeted outreach and detached service for young people in spaces and areas that they feel most comfortable.

2. Programme Objectives

Objective 1: **Young Futures Hub (DCMS terminology)**	**Objective 2:** **Local Youth Transformation (LYT)**
Establish a multi venue hub (model subject to landscape review and needs analysis findings) across Torbay which: • Delivers open-access youth provision • Provides targeted support • Hosts multiple partner agencies • Operates evenings and weekends • Acts as a gateway into wider services • Serves as the anchor for workforce development and youth participation.	Develop a sustainable youth infrastructure by: • Creating Torbay's first Youth Strategy • Strengthening governance, audit and data arrangements with a clear Safeguarding Framework • Developing workforce capacity and quality of work • Bringing together and amplifying youth voice into one clear structure • Enhancing partnership working • Improving digital access and data systems.

3. Programme Governance

Executive Sponsor

Director of Children's Services

Programme Board

Suggested Young Futures Partnership Board

Membership:

- Director of Children's Services
- Public Health
- Community Safety
- Education
- Youth Justice
- Police
- Torbay Safeguarding Children's Partnership
- NHS / Mental Health Partners
- VCSE Representatives
- Schools and Colleges
- Young People (minimum 40% representation)
- Youth Advisory Board Co-Chairs

Suggested Delivery Team to work alongside Delivery Partner and Grant Manager assigned by DCMS.

Project Manager (Commissiong Team)

Responsible for:

- Programme management
- Risk management
- Reporting
- DCMS liaison

Partnership Manager (Community Safety)

Responsible for:

- Stakeholder engagement
- VCSE coordination
- Partnership development
- Co-production activity

Workstream Leads

- Youth Voice
- Workforce Development
- Young Futures Hub
- Youth Strategy
- Data & Evaluation
- Communications

4. Suggested Workstreams, whilst awaiting delivery partner from DCMS

Theme	Deliverables	Success Measures
Needs Analysis and Mapping across the whole partnership	• Equality Impact Assessment • Youth provision mapping • Data collation • Gap analysis • Needs assessment • Demographic analysis • Transport and accessibility review • Hub feasibility assessment	• Comprehensive landscape review completed • Priority delivery areas identified • Service pathways mapped • Governance, oversight and scrutiny • Inclusion board oversight
Co-production and Youth Voice	• Youth Advisory Board established • Youth Voice Framework developed • Lundy Model adopted • Co-production standards agreed • Ongoing youth consultation programme • Inclusion Board	• 500+ young people engaged • Representation from SEND, care experienced, LGBTQ+, rural communities, other identified minority groups, travellers, young carers and those in kinship care • Young people involved in governance and decision-making planned at flexible, accessible times for them • An intersectional, trauma attuned approach with an expansion of young peoples identified language that cares embedded in every area of the eco-system, practice and polices.
Hub Model Development	• Hub model and locations confirmed • Building readiness assessment • Capital investment plan	Core Offer to include: **Increasing Opportunities** • Careers advice • Employability support • Volunteering pathways • Skills development

	• Operational model developed • Service specifications completed • Referral pathways agreed	• Social action programmes **Improving Mental Health** • Youth work support • Mental health triage • Wellbeing activities • Peer support **Crime Prevention** • Diversionary programmes • Addressing Extra Familial Risk and Harm • Online Harm • Contextual safeguarding • Exploitation support • Youth justice pathways • Safe places, safe people and responses for missing children
Workforce Development	• Youth Endowment Fund evidence-based practice guidelines • Workforce strategy • Training framework for Youth Work • Peer Youth Worker pathway • With Youth Crew Volunteer / Mentoring pathway • Workforce competency framework	• Increased number of qualified youth workers • Improved retention • Stronger progression pathways • Youth work qualifications and apprenticeships • NYA Standard Qualification Framework
Partnership Development And Governance	• Torbay with Youth Partnership Framework • VCSE Steering Group • Partnership Agreements • Referral protocols • Data-sharing agreements • Informed consent arrangements • Data retention • Audit frameworks	Effective multi-agency and collaborative working: • Education providers / schools • Colleges • NHS • CAMHS • Public Health • Police • Youth Justice Service • DWP • VCSE organisations • Faith Organisations • LGBTQ+ services • Traveller services • Local employers

		• Safeguarding Partnerships
Digital Development	• Co-designed digital youth offer • Information portal • Service directory • Youth engagement platform • Communications strategy	• Improved access to information • Better service coordination • Increased youth engagement and co-production

5. Timeline

Our onboarding with DCMS commenced on the 16 September 2026 with a final session taking place on 14 October 2026. There has been a delay with DCMS allocating a delivery partner, therefore we estimate the timeline provided by DCMS below will have slipped by approximately one month.

Stage 1: Mobilisation and Onboarding (September to October 2026)

Milestone	Target
Programme mobilisation	Sept 2026
Governance established	Sept 2026
Youth Advisory Board established	Sept 2026
Project team recruited	Oct 2026
Stage 2 funding received	Oct 2026

Stage 2: Planning and Co-creation (September 2026 to February 2027)

Milestone	Target
Landscape review completed	Nov 2026

Milestone	Target
Youth consultation completed	Dec 2026
Service mapping completed	Dec 2026
Hub options appraisal completed	Jan 2027
Draft implementation plan	Jan 2027
Final implementation plan submitted	Feb 2027

Stage 3: Implementation and Strategy Development (March 2027 to August 2028)

Milestones and timeframes dependant on implementation plan

Stage 4: Sustainability and Legacy (August 2028 – March 2029)

Deliverables to include:

- Sustainability plan
- Future funding strategy
- Commissioning framework
- Evaluation report
- Business as usual plan

6. Indicative Funding Profile

Funding Stream	Purpose
Up to £100k Stage 2 Funding	Planning and co-production
Up to £300k YF Hub Funding (per year of programme)	Frontline delivery
Up to £500k LYT Funding	Transformation activities
Up to £125k Capital Funding	Building and digital improvements

7. Expected Legacy by March 2029

Torbay Young Futures Hub & Local Youth Transformation Programme

Torbay will have:

- A fully operational multiple venue, network of accessible safe spaces for young people.
- A published Torbay Youth Strategy.
- Embedded youth participation structures.
- A strengthened professional youth work workforce.
- A sustainable partnership model through Torbay With Youth.
- Integrated support pathways across health, education, community safety and children's services.
- Improved outcomes for young people in relation to opportunity, wellbeing and vulnerability.

Our Preparation

We are conscious this is a whole system approach for our young people and have benefited greatly from the experiences of early adopter Local Authorities in their honesty of time commitments, challenging conversations and alignment of value bases. We have heard incredible examples of young people's participation in their own offer leading to positive outcomes and sustainability.

Whilst we await our DCMS delivery partner, we have already spent time reviewing frameworks within our current Local Authority With Youth offer, to align our findings of improvement recommendations to Young Futures Hubs, the National Youth Strategy and the Families First Partnership.

We have highlighted:

- Children and Young people of Torbay need to be offered a consistent resilient and inclusive Independent Advocacy service at all levels of need
- The benefit of the With Youth young people's design (logo) being implemented to "kick start" YFH collaboration and co-production from the offset
- Youth Drug and Alcohol Service strategic safeguarding and audit arrangements to be established
- Torbay Youth Drug and Alcohol Services Framework to be aligned with DfE YDAS Services Framework
- We have worked towards an improved Young Carers graduated response, practice standards and accessible assessment. Timelines of support, visit requirements and plans to be reportable.

- The recording area for Young Carers to be visible to workers within the system to understand every child's journey, in order for their information to be included in monthly audits.
- A move towards preventative rather than reactive approach to Youth Homeless Prevention utilising family led meetings and Family Help assessments / plans at the Targeted Family Help level of need.
- The Youth Homeless Prevention strategy requires an update, including the Joint Housing Protocol in line with FFP requirements of a new front door model and earlier help.
- The Joint Housing Assessment to sit within LCS as a statutory document within Social Work pathways.
- Substantially reducing referral mechanisms to work towards one external once internal pathway across With Youth supporting data collection and analysis of needs through Power Bi
- A move to one recording system across With Youth, in line with Family Help, with all workers receiving training to undertake Family Help assessments that are within an audit framework
- Centralising the information and feedback we have from our young people to avoid saturation and duplication of questionnaires and meetings as we implement Young Future Hubs
- That the Young People's Participation Strategy is aligned with Young Futures Hubs, a whole Council approach and place-based information broadening the voices of young people across their eco-system.

We are privileged and excited to have the opportunity to co-design a long-term sustainable strategy with the children and young people of Torbay, for their community eco-system to wrap around the needs of their life journey. We are realistic that there is an incredible amount of work to be done across our Statutory and VSCE partnership requiring governance and support at every level of need and interdependency. We welcome this joined up approach across the entire system and look forward to getting started with the DCMS delivery partner to deliver the best possible outcomes for the children and young people of Torbay with the right support at the right time, in the right place in the right way.

Annexe A

Young Futures Hubs	Local authority led, these are open-access spaces providing support focused on mental health and wellbeing, improving opportunities, and reducing vulnerability to crime. They also provide targeted support for those needing tailored interventions. Through a multi-agency approach, they will collaborate with organisations across the health, crime, youth and career sectors, ensuring young people can access reliable and accessible support within their local communities.
Local Youth Transformation	Funding to local authorities to improve their ability to meet their statutory duty for youth services in their area and build their capability to lead and deliver them. This will focus on systemic improvements, such as workforce training and partnership building, rather than frontline delivery.

Young Futures Programme	**Programme summary**
Young Futures Hubs	As above, open access spaces providing support focused on mental health and wellbeing, improving opportunities, and reducing vulnerability to crime.
Local Youth Transformation	Multi-agency panels, delivered through Violence Reduction Units/Serious Violence Duty Partnerships, that identify young people vulnerable to being drawn into crime and connect them to appropriate local support. Young Futures Hubs will refer young people vulnerable to becoming involved in crime, as outlined in the Young Futures Panels guidance and/or receive referrals from Young Futures Panels

Target cohort

Young Futures Hubs are open to all young people aged 10 to 18 (up to 25 for young people with SEND) with flexibility to change the age range according to local need. Within this open access approach, local authorities should prioritise engagement and support for young people showing early risk factors linked to poor outcomes in mental health, opportunity and crime (see table below). Evidence shows that early intervention delivered through trusted adults with welcoming, accessible provision is effective in preventing escalation and improving long-term outcomes.

Young Futures Hubs should provide non-stigmatising support that builds trust, strengthens resilience, and connects young people to the right help at the right time. While delivery should reflect local context and need, local authorities are expected to ensure that resources are focused on young people at risk of becoming Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), vulnerable to being drawn into crime, or developing poor mental health outcomes.

While anyone can access services, hubs should be particularly accessible and tailored toward those with early risk factors, with the aim for 60% of young people accessing Young Futures Hubs targeted services having one or more early risk factor(s).

The following list is not exhaustive and provides early indicators that young people may be at risk. This is to be used alongside practitioner insight and consideration of individual circumstances.

List of early risk indicators across programme objectives
Early risk indicators include:

- being disengaged, excluded or absent from school/ not in education, employment or training
- probable mental health condition
- looked after/care-experience
- harm-involved social networks
- experience of poverty or deprivation
- anti-social behaviour (perpetration of) or previous offending (particularly lower-level crimes such as stealing or minor theft)
- having a special educational need or disability (SEND)
- being in contact with social care, or parents/carers contacted by social or educational services about young persons' behaviour

- having a parent/carer or guardian with a disability or mental health condition (including substance misuse)
- multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences

TORBAY COUNCIL

Meeting: Cabinet **Date:** 20 October 2026

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Hackney Carriage Tariff Increase

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Councillor Tranter, Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities

Director Contact Details: Anna Coles, Director of Adults and Community Services

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 On 21 July 2026, Cabinet considered the suggested increase to the Hackney Carriage Tariff and resolved to commence the public consultation on the proposed Table of Fares. The consultation was undertaken in accordance with the statutory process set out in section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (LGMPA76).

1.2 In accordance with the LGMPA76, notice of the proposed fare increases was published in the *Torbay Weekly* on 13 August 2026 under the Public Notices section (page 36). A copy of the notice is included at Appendix 1. The notice invited objections to be submitted by 4 September 2026. Any objections received must be duly considered before the revised Table of Fares can come into effect, either as originally advertised or with such amendments as may be considered appropriate.

1.3 Two objections were received during the consultation period. Whilst neither objection proposed an alternative fare structure, both objectors expressed opposition to any increase in taxi fares.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

2.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, allows the Council to set the maximum level of charges to be levied by all Hackney Carriages operating under its control.

The Council does not have powers to set fares for journeys in private hire vehicles.

2.2 The setting of the Table of Fares (tariff) is an executive function of the Council.

2.3 The Tariff was last increased in October 2024.

2.4 The Table of Fares (Tariff) should be set to enable sustainable income for drivers, future investment in vehicles and to clearly set rates that minimise the opportunity for overcharging or confusion.

2.5 In accordance with the statutory procedure set out in Section 65 of the LGMPA76, the Council must consider the two objections received and set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date, on which the tariff shall come into force with or without further modifications.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

3.1 That the Table of Fares (Hackney Carriage Tariff) as advertised be approved and come into force on 4 November 2026.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Public Notice in Torbay Weekly on 13 August 2026

Appendix 2: Table of consultation responses

Background Documents

Report considered by the Cabinet on 21 July 2026
https://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=741&MId=24500&Ver=4

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council's Cabinet approved the proposed changes to the Table of Fares on 21 July 2026. The decision could not be advertised immediately as a two-week period is required during which Councillors may request that the decision be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board. This process is known as a "call-in". Following the expiry of the call-in period, notice of the proposed fare changes was published in the *Torbay Weekly* on 13 August 2026 as part of the statutory consultation process. Details of the proposals were also made available on the Council's website to invite comments and objections from interested parties.

All licensed drivers and vehicle proprietors were emailed with a link to the proposed table of fares and were given until 4 September 2026 to make any comments or objections.

1.2 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (LGMPA76), allows the Council to set the maximum costs and fares that drivers may charge the public for journeys taken in a taxi. The Council does not have powers to set fares for journeys in private hire vehicles. Members should note that drivers may charge a lower fare or offer a discount if they wish and they can negotiate fares for travel outside of the district boundaries.

1.3 Taxi fares are made up of an initial hiring charge (flag fall) and a mileage rate, both of which are expressed in terms of distance and or time. This is because when a hired taxi is stationary or moving at less than 6mph in traffic the meter continues charging by time instead of distance. It can never charge both time and distance at the same time.

1.4 The Table of Fares (Tariff) should be set to enable sustainable income for drivers, future investment in vehicles, and to clearly set rates that minimise the opportunity for overcharging or confusion.

1.5 The Tariff has to be displayed within all taxis to allow passengers to calculate the approximate cost of their journey. Section 4 of Torbay Council's Hackney Carriage Byelaws requires taximeters to be fitted in every licensed hackney carriage vehicle, which are calibrated and sealed. Once set, all drivers must display the maximum fare on their taximeter. This ensures consistency across all taxis and provides public confidence that the fare they are charged is correct.

1.6 In accordance with the statutory procedure set out in Section 65 of the LGMPA76, if no objections to the variation of the Tariff were received, or if all objections were withdrawn, the revised Tariff would have come into operation on the date of the expiration of the consultation period.

However, as objections were made and not withdrawn, the Council must consider the objections and set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date, on which the tariff shall come into force with or without further modifications.

1.7 The Table of Fares were advertised to come into effect on 1 October 2026, however the legislation requires that any tariff must come into force with or without further modifications, no later than two months from the expiration of the consultation period (4 September 2026), which is no later than 4 November 2026.

2. Consultation responses

2.1 A table showing the two consultation responses received can be seen in Appendix 2.

2.2 Neither of the two objectors proposed an alternative fare structure, however both objectors expressed opposition to any increase in taxi fares.

2.3 The proposed Table of Fares was developed following a request from the Torbay Licensed Taxi Association (TLTA). To facilitate agreement on the proposed revisions, the Licensing Department arranged meetings with representatives of the TLTA, the Torquay United Licensed Driver Association (TULDA) and other members of the hackney carriage trade. The resulting proposal reflects the outcome of those discussions.

2.4 There are currently 188 hackney carriage vehicle proprietors and 549 dual licensed drivers that can drive a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle. Therefore, only a very small percentage of licensees objected to the public consultation.

3. Conclusion

3.1 A balance needs to be struck between the legitimate right of the trade to a viable and sustainable livelihood and the needs of the travelling public to have a safe and affordable service. The cost-of-living crisis has resulted in escalating vehicle purchase, maintenance and fuel costs. These costs are no longer absorbed through the existing Tariff. If the fares are not increased on a regular basis in line with inflation, then many potential drivers will be discouraged from entering or staying in the trade, leading to a shortage of supply and a decline in the quality of the service.

3.2 The proposed Tariff increase is a reasonable overall rise with an average overall rise of 4.6% for Tariff 1 and 3.8% for Tariff 2. The two additional tariffs for vehicles taking 5-8 passengers show a higher increase, however these costs have incorporated the current extra charges and will make the fare meter charge clearer for passengers.

3.3 It is considered that the proposed uplift will assist those taxi drivers licensed through the Council to face the rise in fuel costs and other cost of living rises and support Torbay's taxi trade to make a viable living, therefore reducing the number of drivers leaving the trade for better remunerated work and encouraging consideration of investment in newer environmentally friendly vehicles.

3.4 Cabinet must consider the two objections in Appendix 2 and decide whether to approve the Table of Fares as advertised or amend it. The determined Table of Fares must come into force on a date as agreed by Cabinet, which must be no later than two months after the original end date of the consultation. However, a two-week period ('call – in') is required for Councillors to request that any decision is reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Table of Fare stickers for every vehicle take at least two weeks to be printed, therefore it is recommended that the new Table of Fares comes into effect on 4 November 2026.

5. Financial Opportunities and Implications

5.1 There are no financial risks to the Council by increasing the taxi tariff.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Council must ensure they follow the prescribed public consultation has outlined in this report to comply with section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

7. Engagement and Consultation

7.1 As outlined above, the Council undertook a public consultation regarding the proposed amendments to the tariff. However, as objections have been made and not withdrawn, the matter must return to Cabinet to consider the objections and set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date, on which the Tariff shall come into force with or without further modifications.

8. Procurement Implications

8.1 There are no procurement implications.

9. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

9.1 There are no negative carbon footprint or other environmental implications resulting from amending/uplifting the Taxi Tariff. The proposed uplift should encourage members of the trade to invest in cleaner more efficient vehicles.

10. Associated Risks

10.1 There are no significant risks.

11. Equality Impact Assessment

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age	18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old. 55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. 27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	These proposals are not intended to adversely impact on this client group. However, it is important to note that younger people may be disproportionately impacted as they may rely more on taxis for social and educational purposes. Older people may also be disproportionately impacted due to their increased reliance on taxis and the door-to-door service they provide. Public transport, including taxis play a crucial role in helping people to stay connected and maintain independence when they are unable to drive, and are therefore of particular significance to older residents aged over 65 and to younger people who may not have access to a car. Aging is linked with reduction in personal car use and are therefore more reliant on taxis especially as it is a door-to-door service. The availability of public transport is also very important to all adults and	There are grants available to support vulnerable groups to access transport. Low-income families, children with a special need or medical condition or if a child's school is more than 2 miles away may also be eligible for school transport. Existing home-to-school transport policies and support arrangements will continue to operate. The Council will continue to assess eligibility for transport assistance in accordance with statutory	N/A

		parents who do not have a car for work and social activities. Some children and young people, particularly those with SEND, Education Health and Care Plans, mobility difficulties or other vulnerabilities, rely on taxis to access education, training and activities. The Council recognises that increases in transport costs can have a disproportionate impact on families who rely on taxi transport where suitable alternatives are unavailable. However, statutory home-to-school transport arrangements are subject to separate assessment and funding arrangements and are not determined by the Hackney Carriage tariff alone. The proposal is not expected to prevent access to education but may increase transport costs for some families and organisations where taxi journeys are arranged privately. Maintaining a sustainable local taxi fleet supports the continued availability of transport options for children and young people who require specialist transport arrangements.	requirements. Families experiencing financial hardship may also be signposted to appropriate support services where appropriate.	
Carers	At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these provided 50 hours or more of care.	Carers are more likely to experience deprivation and therefore any rise in costs will have an impact on this group. They may also require a hackney carriage to travel with the person they are caring for or travel to support them.	Carers may be able to access funding to support transport costs.	N/A

Disability	In the 2021 Census, 23.8% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.	People with disabilities are more likely to be negatively impacted due to their reliance on taxis and the door-to-door service they provide. They are also more likely to experience financial difficulty/poverty. This includes SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) students, although, as with other groups, the impact varies depending on how transport is funded. Any increases are likely to have an impact on the Local Authorities finances who fund the school transport provision. The Council have a register of all wheel chair accessible vehicles at Helping disabled passengers - Torbay Council However, maintaining a sustainable Hackney Carriage service is important to ensure continued availability of transport across Torbay. Without periodic tariff increases, there is a risk of reduced driver numbers and reduced service availability, which could have a greater adverse impact on groups that rely heavily on taxi services. The proposed increase is therefore considered proportionate, balancing affordability with the need to maintain a viable transport service.	There may be grants available to support vulnerable groups to access transport. Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.	Licensing Officers and Police Officers
Gender reassignment	In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same	The Department for Transport (DfT) FS13 report highlights how discrimination is part of daily life for trans people and generates 'behaviours of avoidance', particularly to	Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated	Licensing Officers and Police Officers

	as their sex registered at birth. This proportion is similar to the Southwest and is lower than England.	using public transport. This group tend to use taxis and private hire vehicles instead of other means of public transport and therefore may be more adversely impacted by any increase in fares. However, maintaining a sustainable Hackney Carriage service is important to ensure continued availability of transport across Torbay. Without periodic tariff increases, there is a risk of reduced driver numbers and reduced service availability, which could have a greater adverse impact on groups that rely heavily on taxi services. The proposed increase is therefore considered proportionate, balancing affordability with the need to maintain a viable transport service.		
Marriage and civil partnership	Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.	These proposals are not intended to impact on this client group.	Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated	Licensing Officers and Police Officers
Pregnancy and maternity	Over the period 2010 to 2021, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 63.7 per 1,000) than England (60.2) and the South-West (58.4). There has been a notable fall in	These proposals are not intended to impact on this client group. The DFT FS13 report identified that public transport plays a vital role in supporting social inclusion for many parents with young children and therefore they may be more adversely impacted by any increase in fares. However, maintaining a sustainable Hackney Carriage service is important to	Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.	Licensing Officers and Police Officers

	the numbers of live births since the middle of the last decade across all geographical areas.	ensure continued availability of transport across Torbay. Without periodic tariff increases, there is a risk of reduced driver numbers and reduced service availability, which could have a greater adverse impact on groups that rely heavily on taxi services. The proposed increase is therefore considered proportionate, balancing affordability with the need to maintain a viable transport service.		
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as white. This is a higher proportion than the South-West and England. Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.	The DFT FS13 report identifies that 'people from BAME background are less likely to have access to a private vehicle, be more reliant on public transport to access employment. Furthermore 'for many people from a BAME background having regular, affordable, clean and efficient transport is essential'. There is also evidence that individuals from a minority background are more likely to experience poverty and therefore any increase in fares will have an impact. However, maintaining a sustainable Hackney Carriage service is important to ensure continued availability of transport across Torbay. Without periodic tariff increases, there is a risk of reduced driver numbers and reduced service availability, which could have a greater adverse impact on groups that rely heavily on taxi services. The proposed increase is therefore considered proportionate, balancing affordability with the need to maintain a viable transport service.	Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated	Licensing Officers and Police Officers

Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.	The DFT FS13 report identifies that certain groups of people, face an increasing risk of being victims of religious hate crime. For people who have a marked religious identity through clothing there is a heightened risk for harassment or discrimination. It is reported that this is particularly true for women who are already more vulnerable regardless of the way they dress. Therefore, any increase in fares will have an impact. People from certain faith communities may rely on taxi services where safety concerns, cultural considerations, accessibility needs or travel patterns influence transport choices. The Council recognises evidence that some people who display visible signs of their faith may experience harassment or discrimination whilst travelling and may therefore prefer door-to-door transport options. Any increase in taxi fares may therefore have a greater financial impact on some individuals. However, the proposal supports the continued availability of a regulated and licensed taxi service that can provide a safer transport option for many passengers. The increase is considered proportionate when balanced against the need to maintain a sustainable service that remains available to those who rely upon it.	Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated	Licensing Officers and Police Officers

Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male	Females are more likely to experience poverty and are more likely to use taxis and other public transport. The DFT FS13 report identifies that 'as women are more likely than men to live on low incomes, work part time and undertake paid work in the home and in the community, such as being carers for dependent relatives, poor quality unreliable and expensive transport has a far bigger impact on he lives of women'. The report also identified that women may not have access to a car during the day as they 'either cannot afford one or the family car is being used by a partner'. The F13 report also identifies women make greater use of taxi's than men, increasing with age, where women over 70 make double the amount of trips than men. Any increase in fares may encourage more females to risk walking home at night or using unlicensed vehicles. A UK Survey Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated Licensing Officers and Police Officers by Plan International found that 62% of young women take taxis home at least monthly for safety reasons. Around 6 in 10 young women use taxis due to anxiety about other routes at night. 9 in 10 women report feeling unsafe walking alone after dark (www.gov.uk/government/speeches/women and-girls-walking-safety).	Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated	Licensing Officers and Police Officers

		The Council has considered concerns that higher fares could discourage some individuals from using licensed transport, potentially increasing personal safety risks. However, the proposed increase seeks to maintain a sustainable and regulated Hackney Carriage service which supports the continued availability of safe transport options. Failure to review fares in line with rising operating costs may reduce the availability of licensed drivers and vehicles, potentially creating greater risks for passengers. The proposed increase is therefore considered a proportionate response to rising operating costs whilst maintaining access to licensed transport services.		
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, 3.4% of those in Torbay aged over 16 identified their sexuality as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or, used another term to describe their sexual orientation.	Recent research by the Department for Transport indicates perceptions of personal safety can significantly influence transport choices and that experiences of harassment, discrimination and anti-social behaviour may affect an individual's willingness to use public transport. Other research has found that LGBT+ individuals may experience heightened concerns about safety and harassment when travelling and may alter their travel behaviour as a result. Consequently, some LGBT+ individuals may be more reliant on taxis and private hire vehicles for travel, particularly where they receive these modes to be safer or more secure than other public transport.	Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated	Licensing Officers and Police Officers

		Any increase in taxi fares could therefore have a disproportionate impact on these individuals. However, maintaining a viable taxi fleet supports continued access to licensed and regulated transport options for LGBT+ residents and visitors. The proposed increase is considered proportionate in supporting the long-term availability and reliability of these services.		
Veterans	In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. In Torbay, 5.9 per cent of the population have previously serviced in the UK armed forces.	Some veterans could be negatively affected by taxi fare increases. This will depend on a number of factors, many of which link into the other categories such as sex, age, disability and socio-economic impacts.	Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated	Licensing Officers and Police Officers
Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	The taxi tariff has to be raised to balance the legitimate right of the trade to a viable livelihood and the needs of the travelling public. The cost-of-living crisis has hit the taxi trade hard most notably through the escalating vehicle purchase, maintenance and fuel costs. These costs	The Council recognises that increases in transport costs can disproportionately affect people on low incomes, people experiencing deprivation and households already impacted by cost-of-living pressures. Taxis may represent a significant expense for some residents but are often an essential transport option where public transport is unavailable, inaccessible or unsuitable. The proposed tariff increase may therefore increase financial pressures for some individuals	Existing support arrangements relating to home-to-school transport, social care transport and other statutory transport assistance schemes will continue to operate. The Council will continue to signpost residents experiencing financial	N/A

	are no longer absorbed through the existing tariff.	and families, particularly those who rely on taxis to access employment, education, healthcare, caring responsibilities and essential services. However, the Council must also consider the sustainability of the Hackney Carriage trade. Vehicle purchase costs, maintenance costs, insurance premiums and fuel costs have all increased significantly since the previous tariff review. Failure to maintain a viable fare structure could result in fewer licensed drivers and vehicles operating within Torbay, reducing transport availability for the residents who depend on these services most. The proposed increase seeks to achieve a balanced and proportionate approach by supporting both service affordability and service availability.	hardship towards appropriate support services where available. [Taxi Tariff | Word]	
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	N/A	Access to affordable transport is an important determinant of health and wellbeing. Taxi services support access to healthcare, social activities, employment, education and community participation. If transport becomes unaffordable, some residents may experience increased social isolation or difficulty accessing essential services. However, maintaining a sustainable Hackney Carriage fleet also contributes positively to public health by ensuring transport remains available to those who need it, particularly older people, disabled	N/A	N/A

		people and vulnerable residents. The proposal seeks to balance affordability with the continued availability of services.		
Human Rights impacts	There are no human rights impact with regards to the taxi tariff.	Consideration has been given to the Human Rights Act 1998. The proposal may engage Article 8 (respect for private and family life) where individuals rely on taxi transport to maintain family relationships, access healthcare, participate in community life or remain socially connected. The proposal may also engage Article 2 of Protocol 1 (right to education) where taxi transport forms part of a child's access to education. However, the proposed tariff increase is considered proportionate and justified, reflecting increased operating costs and the need to maintain a viable and accessible Hackney Carriage service. Existing statutory transport duties, safeguarding arrangements and support mechanisms remain in place and are not altered by this proposal. The Council therefore considers any interference with Convention rights to be limited, proportionate and justified in pursuit of a legitimate aim.	N/A	N/A
Child Friendly	Torbay Council is a Child Friendly Council, and all staff and Councillors are Corporate Parents and have a responsibility towards cared for and care	The Council has considered this proposal in the context of its Corporate Parenting responsibilities. Care experienced children and young people are more likely to experience financial disadvantage, poorer health outcomes and barriers to accessing education, employment and social	N/A	N/A

	experienced children and young people.	opportunities. Some may rely on taxis for contact arrangements, education, health appointments or independent living activities. Whilst any increase in fares could have a greater financial impact where journeys are privately funded, the proposal is not expected to create significant barriers to access because statutory support arrangements remain in place where applicable. Maintaining a sustainable Hackney Carriage service also supports the availability of transport options that care experienced young people may need to access services and opportunities.		
[S13: Future of Transport - Equalities and access to opportunity - rapid evidence review (publishing.service.gov.uk)]				

12. Cumulative Council Impact

None

13. Cumulative Community Impacts

None

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 1:

Public Notice

Page 36 of the Torbay Weekly on Thursday 13 August 2026

PUBLIC NOTICES

Hackney Carriage Fare Tariff

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

In accordance with the provisions of the above Act, Torbay Council gives Notice that it proposes to amend the table of fares for Hackney Carriages plying for hire, as set out below, such amendments to take effect on **1 October 2026**.

Any objection to the proposed amendments should be made in writing and addressed to the Regulatory Service Manager at the address below, to be received no later than **Friday 4 September 2026**. If objection is duly made and is not withdrawn, the Council shall set a further date, not later than two months after the specified date on which the revised table of fares shall come into force, with or without modifications, as decided by them after consideration of the objections. A copy of this Notice has been made available for inspection at the address below.

Dated: 13 August 2026

Town Hall, Castle Circus,
Torquay TQ1 3DR
Email: licensing@torbay.gov.uk

Proposals

Tariff	Fares for up to four passengers
1	For all hirings commencing between 7am and 9pm from Monday to Saturday inclusive except those mentioned in Tariff 2. **Initial Charge** £4.50 for the first 470 yards (430 metres) or part thereof and 20p for each subsequent 145 yards (133 metres) or part thereof. **Waiting time** 20p for every 30 seconds or part thereof.
2	For all hirings commencing between 9pm and 7am from Monday to Saturday inclusive, all day Sundays and Bank Holidays. Also, between 7pm on Christmas Eve until 7am on Boxing Day and between 7pm on New Years Eve until 7am on the 2nd of January. **Initial Charge** £5.10 for the first 470 yards (430 metres) or part thereof and 25p for each subsequent 145 yards (133 metres) or part thereof. **Waiting time** 25p for every 30 seconds or part thereof.
Tariff	**Fares for 5, 6, 7, or 8 passengers**
3	For all hirings commencing between 7am and 9pm from Monday to Saturday inclusive except those mentioned in Tariff 4. **Initial Charge** £5.50 for the first 470 yards (430 metres) or part thereof and 25p for each subsequent 145 yards (133 metres) or part thereof. **Waiting time** 25p for every 30 seconds or part thereof.
4	For all hirings commencing between 9pm and 7am from Monday to Saturday inclusive, all day Sundays and Bank Holidays. Also, between 7pm on Christmas Eve until 7am on Boxing Day and between 7pm on New Years Eve until 7am on the 2nd of January. **Initial Charge** £6.10 for the first 470 yards (430 metres) or part thereof and 30p for each subsequent 145 yards (133 metres) or part thereof. **Waiting time** 30p for every 30 seconds or part thereof.
Additional charges – No extra charges will be made for luggage, prams, pushchairs or wheeled trolleys	
Booking Charge At the discretion of the operator for each booking made in advance which requires the driver to drive to the hirer's designated pick-up point. The Hirer must have been informed of the charge at the time of making the booking. **Maximum Charge: £1**	
£3 for each hiring carried out between 7pm on Christmas Eve until 7am on Boxing Day and between 7pm on New Years Eve until 7am on 2nd January.	
£1.50 for each uncaged animal, except guide, hearing and other assistance dogs	
£100 for the soiling of the interior or exterior of a cab	
For charging purposes only Two children between the ages of 3 years and 6 years shall be regarded as one person. A child under the age of 3 years shall not be reckoned. The meter will be reset at the start of each journey, charges for distance and time registering automatically and additional charges being set by the driver.	



This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 2: Consultation responses for the Taxi Tariff 2026

No.	Response	Reply from Taxi Licensing
1	I strongly object to the new tariff increases as I think we're almost to expensive all ready. This will push the customers to Uber even more. Why wasn't the vote put out to all hackney drivers? Surely that's the way to get a genuine count on the proposal. **Second follow up email in reply to Licensing Teams response:** I personally and six other cabbies I know think we don't need any increase at all. Not counting multi seaters of course. The last increase was quite an increase and very notable difference. The current fuel crisis will soon fall to previous costs so we just have to swallow the extra cost.	Thank you for your email. We will include your email within the consultation responses. The draft proposals were discussed with the TLTA, TULDA and other taxi representatives that attend quarterly taxi trade meetings; however the proposals are then advertised so that everyone can comment on the proposals. As we have received an objection, this will go back to a Cabinet meeting to reconsider, and they will then make a final decision. If you would like to suggest an alternative increase, then please email me prior to the 4 September so that this can be included in the Cabinet report.
2	I really don't think there is a need for an increase at time	Thank you for your email. We will add your objection to the consultation responses As we have received an objection, this will go back to a Cabinet meeting to reconsider, and they will then make a final decision. If you would like to suggest an alternative increase, then please email me prior to the 4 September so that this can be included in the Cabinet report.

This page is intentionally left blank

TORBAY COUNCIL

Meeting: Cabinet **Date:** 20th October 2026

Wards affected: All Wards

Report Title: Destination Management Plan Review

When does the decision need to be implemented? 10th December 2026

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Councillor Jacqueline Thomas, Cabinet Member for Tourism, Culture & Events and Corporate Services and Chairwoman of Standards Committee, jacqueline.thomas@torbay.gov.uk

Director Contact Details: Alan Denby, Director of Pride in Place, alan.denby@torbay.gov.uk

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet and Council to approve the refreshed Destination Management Plan, following the review and public consultation.

1.2. The DMP has been reviewed and refreshed so Torbay can remain competitive, respond to a changing visitor market and make the most of its tourism growth potential. It sets out a collaborative, place-based and business-led approach to improving the visitor experience, supporting sustainable and inclusive tourism, and strengthening Torbay's position as the UK's premier coastal destination.

1.3. The DMP provides a single strategic framework for developing and managing Torbay as both a visitor destination and a place. It sets out how businesses, communities and partners can work together to grow a vibrant visitor economy that benefits residents and visitors. While the English Riviera remains Torbay's visitor brand, the refreshed DMP takes a wider place-based approach, aligned with the Torbay Story and the Corporate and Community Plan. It recognises the visitor economy as part of wider place-shaping, supporting employment and skills, culture, investment, infrastructure, community pride and wellbeing.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

2.1. The DMP will support growth in Torbay's visitor economy by celebrating its unique heritage, culture and natural environment. It will help strengthen Torbay's position as the UK's premier coastal destination, improve the visitor experience and build pride in place.

2.2. The plan sets out a more collaborative, business-led and place-based approach, underpinned by a clear framework. It recognises the visitor economy as a key economic strength and growth sector, supporting jobs, businesses and inward investment.

2.3. The refreshed DMP supports a more sustainable, inclusive and year-round visitor economy. It will help strengthen Torbay's visitor offer, improve resilience for local businesses and communities, and support a destination that works well for residents and visitors.

2.4. The refreshed DMP delivery model strengthens leadership and governance through a place and business-led approach. This includes the creation of a Visitor Economy Cluster to align priorities, maximise resources and delivery, and give the visitor economy a stronger voice in decision-making.

2.5. The DMP supports the Council's vision of a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay by helping to grow the visitor economy, support local businesses and jobs, and attract inward investment. It positions tourism as a key economic strength while keeping communities, place quality and the visitor experience at the centre of destination management.

2.6. Cabinet will be considering the proposal at its meeting on 20 October 2026 and are requested to make recommendations to Council as set out in paragraph 3 below. A copy of the Cabinet's decision will be published prior to the Council meeting.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

3.1. That Cabinet recommends to Council:

that the refreshed Destination Management Plan 2026-2036, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved and implemented through the proposed partnership-led delivery, governance and monitoring arrangements.

4. Appendices

Appendix 1: Torbay Destination Management Plan
Appendix 2: Torbay Destination Management Plan Baseline Report (evidence base)

5. Background Documents

- English Riviera Destination Management Plan (2022-30) - English Riviera Destination Management Plan - Torbay Council
- Torbay Economic Growth Strategy (2022-30) - Economic Growth Strategy - Torbay Council
- Economic Strategy Evidence Base - Economic Strategy Evidence Base - Torbay Council

Supporting Information

6. Introduction

6.1. The review, stakeholder engagement and public consultation for the DMP are now complete. This report brings forward the refreshed Plan for approval, so it remains relevant, responds to changing market conditions and supports a more resilient, productive and sustainable visitor economy.

6.2. The DMP is a strategic policy framework sitting beneath the Torbay Economic Growth Strategy and is currently led by the Destination Management Group (DMG). Delivered through a partnership approach, DMG members take collective responsibility for setting direction, co-ordinating activity and driving outcomes across the destination. As part of the DMP review the governance management structure has also been reviewed.

6.3. The current DMP has delivered tangible outcomes to strengthen Torbay's year-round visitor economy. This includes the development of Geopark Discovery Experiences, growth in business tourism through Meet English Riviera, the creation of the SUP Hub positioning Torbay as the UK home of paddleboarding and securing the 2026 SUP World Cup, revitalised events such as Seafood Feast, strengthened cruise tourism, improved event impact reporting, and effective partnership-led business support during the 2024 Cryptosporidium outbreak.

6.4. The DMP review comes at a pivotal time for stabilising and growing Torbay's visitor economy. With significant place development and investment, it's time to reflect on the current DMP and its approach to ensure the plan will support the destination to develop, unlock new opportunities and remain competitive in an evolving marketplace.

6.5. Torbay's future success will depend not only on its ability to showcase its unique assets, but also on the strength of its foundations. The Torbay Story provides a narrative that celebrates the area's rich cultural heritage, locally distinctive food and drink, the South West Coast Path and internationally recognised Agatha Christie and the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark status offers powerful tools for storytelling and attracting new audiences to support year-round tourism.

6.6. The refreshed DMP proposes a shift towards a more business-led place-based approach, where businesses play a stronger role in shaping, leading and delivering activity within the priorities. This approach recognises that businesses are best placed to develop sector-specific initiatives, build and shape the destination narrative, and respond quickly to market opportunities. The DMP provides the strategic framework within which delivery can thrive, with Torbay Council playing a key enabling role by supporting, coordinating and feeding into delivery where appropriate, while also strengthening the collective voice of the sector at a strategic level.

6.7. Torbay Council plays an important enabling role in delivering the DMP by supporting public services and place-shaping activity that affect the visitor experience. This includes parking,

public realm improvements, tackling antisocial behaviour, enabling events, cultural programming and business support. Working with partners, these services can help improve the quality of place, increase footfall and support local businesses.

6.8. Although Torbay Council is not solely responsible for delivering the DMP, the review recommends identifying dedicated resources within Torbay Council to support implementation of the DMP, facilitate collaboration among partners, oversee delivery of the priorities and actions, and support monitoring and reporting.

7. Options under consideration

7.1. Adopt the refreshed DMP as set out in Appendix 1. This is the recommended option because it provides an up-to-date strategic framework for Torbay's visitor economy, reflects consultation feedback and sets out a clearer approach to delivery, governance, monitoring and partnership working.

7.2. Do not adopt the refreshed plan and continue with the existing DMP. This option is not recommended because the current Plan no longer fully reflects the latest visitor economy evidence, market conditions, consultation feedback or proposed delivery and governance arrangements.

8. Financial Opportunities and Implications

8.1. The DMP is a partnership framework to support Torbay's visitor economy and wider place priorities. It is not intended to be delivered by the Council alone.

8.2. The recommendation for a dedicated resource to manage DMP implementation should be reviewed within existing Economic Development budgets and resources. This would support coordination, partner engagement, action planning, monitoring and reporting, following a similar approach to other growth sectors as set out in the Economic Growth Strategy.

8.3. The DMP priority most relevant to the Council is Priority 7: 'Destination Ready – Strengthening Infrastructure and Accessibility', which relates to public services, the public realm, town centres, and transport. The Plan proposes developing the action plan with relevant leads and key stakeholders, aligning it with existing service planning. This is likely to involve refining current plans or engaging tourism partners, rather than requiring additional resources or creating significant financial implications.

9. Legal Implications

9.1. There are no legal implications arising directly from this proposal.

10. Engagement and Consultation

10.1. Various engagement activities have been undertaken during the review and development of the DMP, including Destination Management Group and key stakeholder deep dives, an online business and stakeholder survey, one-to-one interviews and group sessions. These activities provided wide-ranging input, supported detailed discussion of the vision and priorities, and helped identify stakeholders interested in supporting delivery and the development of the action plan.

10.2. Engagement findings have informed the refreshed DMP, demonstrating strong support for changes to management and governance, and a more business-led approach. Feedback has shaped the Plan by strengthening its focus on sustainability, year-round tourism, and shared ownership. As a result, the DMP better reflects local priorities, has strong business and stakeholder buy-in, and provides a more robust foundation for effective delivery and long-term impact.

10.3. The six-week public consultation on the draft DMP is now complete. It ran from 22nd July to 2nd September and included the following activity to encourage residents and businesses to complete the online survey.

- Local businesses – via Torbay Council's monthly business newsletter, the English Riviera BID Co distribution list and presentation at the Torbay Business Forum.
- Residents – via local press and Torbay Council channels, including social media, e-newsletter One Torbay and website.

10.4. The online survey ran from 22nd July to 2nd September on Torbay Council's consultation page and received 261 responses. Respondents supported the overall direction of the DMP with 86% supporting the Vision Statement, 78% supporting the proposed key priorities and 65% supporting the proposed governance arrangements.

10.5. Top line analysis of consultation feedback shows:

- 86% of respondents agree with the Plan's Vision Statement (55% strongly agree, 31% agree).
- 78% agree with the Plan's key priorities (39% strongly agree, 39% agree).
- 65% of respondents agree with the proposed governance arrangements (25% strongly agree, 40% agree).
- The consultation was primarily resident-led, accounting for 83% of responses, alongside 10% from businesses and 2% from organisations. Responses were received from across Torbay, including Torquay, Paignton and Brixham, as well as a smaller number from outside the area. This gives strong community insight and should be considered alongside ongoing engagement with businesses, sector partners and delivery bodies.

10.6. The survey also included an open free-text question asking whether respondents had any other comments on the DMP and its approach to growing the visitor economy. This feedback has been analysed, and the following key themes were identified:

- **Town centres and public realm:** Respondents highlighted the importance of clean, well maintained and welcoming town centres, seafronts, gateways and visitor routes. Feedback included litter, graffiti, vacant buildings, public toilets and the general appearance of key places.
- **Safety and visitor experience:** Concerns were raised about anti-social behaviour, perceptions of safety and the need for town centres, car parks and public spaces to feel safe and welcoming for residents and visitors.
- **Infrastructure, transport and accessibility:** Feedback referred to parking, public transport, signage, walking, and cycling routes, and the need for visitor facilities and experiences to be inclusive and accessible.
- **Regeneration and place management:** Respondents linked visitor economy growth with wider town centre regeneration, better place management, visible improvements to high streets and support for local businesses to trade throughout the year.
- **Heritage, culture and identity:** There was strong interest in making better use of Torbay's distinctive assets, including the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark, Agatha Christie connections, cultural and historic assets, the marine environment and the individual identities of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham.
- **Residents and local benefit:** Respondents wanted tourism growth to benefit local communities, improve quality of life for residents and involve a wider range of voices, including residents and small businesses, in delivery.
- **Sustainability:** Feedback supported the Plan's sustainability objectives, but asked for clearer actions on environmental protection, biodiversity, climate resilience, the marine environment and sustainable transport.
- **Delivery, funding and governance:** Respondents asked for clearer responsibilities, decision making arrangements, delivery timescales, resources, baselines and measurable outcomes. Some also raised concerns about complex governance arrangements and duplication.
- **Clarity of the Plan:** Some respondents felt the document should use plainer English, shorter explanations and clearer descriptions of what will be delivered.
- **Future opportunities:** Suggestions included better digital visitor information, more events, water based activities, international promotion and improved town centre management. A small number of respondents suggested considering a visitor levy or tourism tax as a possible future funding option, and some referred to the potential implications of Local Government Reorganisation.

10.7. The draft DMP has been updated to respond to the consultation findings where changes are within the Plan's scope. Amendments have strengthened references to sustainability, accessibility, sustainable travel, heritage assets, destination identity, governance, delivery arrangements, monitoring and reporting. Wording has also been reviewed to make the final DMP clearer and easier to understand, including reducing jargon and explaining the role of partnership working, the Visitor Economy Cluster and annual progress reporting more plainly.

10.8. Some feedback raised through the consultation relates to issues that affect visitor perceptions but sit outside the direct scope of the DMP, such as anti-social behaviour,

homelessness, street cleanliness, public realm maintenance, transport and wider regeneration. These themes have been shared with the relevant Council services and partners so they can inform wider place-based activity, service planning and future delivery discussions.

10.9. Feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 12th August 2026 has also been considered. The Board supported the revised DMP and highlighted areas including sports tourism, visitor markets, performance data, resources, governance, cultural ambitions, Local Plan alignment and branding. These points have been reviewed as part of the final Plan and will inform action planning. The Board resolved unanimously that Cabinet be advised of its support and that marketing opportunities are monitored, with an ERBID update received in twelve months' time.

10.10. Overall, the public consultation does not indicate a need for a fundamental rewrite of the Plan. It demonstrates broad support for the vision, priorities and strategic direction, while showing a clear expectation that the final DMP should be more practical, measurable and delivery focused.

11. Procurement Implications

11.1. The procurement for the DMP review has been completed. A three-quote procurement process was undertaken, inviting local and regional suppliers to submit proposals in line with Torbay's commitment to Community Wealth Building. Following this process, the supplier was appointed.

11.2. The decision now being sought is to approve the refreshed DMP. No further procurement is required as part of this decision.

12. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

12.1. The refreshed DMP is aligned to strategy and activity including the Torbay Climate Partnership, A Greener Way for Our Bay, the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark and the assets of our blue and green space within Torbay.

12.2. The refreshed DMP supports Torbay's sustainability ambitions by making sustainability one of its core priorities. It provides a framework for partners to develop actions that support a more sustainable, environmentally responsible and economically resilient visitor economy, including sustainable travel, protection of natural assets, climate resilience and responsible visitor behaviour.

13. Associated Risks

13.1. If the refreshed DMP is not approved, Torbay risks continuing with an outdated framework that does not fully reflect current visitor economy evidence, consultation feedback, market conditions or the need for stronger delivery arrangements. This could weaken partnership confidence, reduce the ability to coordinate activity and limit progress on destination quality, sustainability, accessibility and year-round visitor economy growth.

13.2. The updated Plan focuses on maximising Torbay's tourism potential through a more business-led approach and a new governance structure, strengthening the visitor economy and Torbay's wider place offer. This supports Torbay's attractiveness as a place to live, work, visit, and invest, contributing to broader economic growth.

14. Equality Impact Assessment

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age	• 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. • 55% of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. • 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	The visitor economy supports employment opportunities for people of all ages, including younger people entering the workforce and older residents seeking flexible employment, volunteering or social opportunities. The DMP's focus on skills development, destination improvements, culture, events and placemaking has the potential to enhance quality of life for children, young people, working-age adults and older residents. Improved accessibility, public spaces and visitor facilities may particularly benefit older residents and families with children.	Not applicable	
Carers	• At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. Accessibility is a core theme within the	Not applicable	

	• 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care.	Plan, including improved movement around Torbay, accessible visitor routes, public transport, walking, wheeling and inclusive public spaces. This supports residents and visitors with disabilities by recognising accessibility as part of destination quality and visitor experience.		
Care experienced	• As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	he visitor economy provides employment, apprenticeships, training and volunteering opportunities that can support positive outcomes for care experienced young people and care leavers. The refreshed DMP places a strong emphasis on workforce development, skills and business collaboration, which may help increase pathways into employment and training across the visitor economy. The Plan is not expected to have adverse impacts on care experienced young people. Through delivery planning, partners will be encouraged to consider how opportunities within the visitor economy can be promoted to care experienced young people and care leavers, supporting the Council's wider Corporate Parenting responsibilities	Not applicable	
Disability	• In the 2021 Census, 23.9% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. Accessibility is a core theme within the	Not applicable	

	or mental health condition or illness.	Plan, including improved movement around Torbay, accessible visitor routes, public transport, walking, wheeling and inclusive public spaces. This supports residents and visitors with disabilities by recognising accessibility as part of destination quality and visitor experience.		
Gender reassignment	• In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all.	Not applicable	
Marriage and civil partnership	• Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all.	Not applicable	
Pregnancy and maternity	• Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the	Not applicable	

	but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3). • For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0).	visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all.		
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: • 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh • 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African • 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups • 96.1% as White • 0.4% described their ethnicity another way. • Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.	A thriving visitor economy can support employment and business opportunities for people from all ethnic backgrounds. The DMP promotes an inclusive approach to destination management and seeks to ensure Torbay is welcoming to residents, businesses, employees and visitors from diverse communities. No adverse impacts have been identified. Delivery of the Plan should promote inclusive marketing, engagement and participation opportunities that reflect the diversity of communities and visitors.	Not applicable	

Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following; • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddhist • 0.2% are Hindu • 0.6% are Muslim • Less than 0.1% are Sikh • 0.1% are Jewish • 0.7% have another religion • 43.2% have no religion • 6.3% did not answer	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all. No specific adverse impacts are anticipated. The DMP seeks to support an inclusive visitor economy and destination experience that is welcoming to people of different faiths and beliefs. Future destination promotion, events and visitor information should seek to reflect and respect the diversity of residents and visitors	Not applicable	
Sex	• 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The Plan focuses on workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all. The visitor economy provides significant employment opportunities across a range of sectors. The DMP's focus on skills,	Not applicable	

		employment, business growth and destination management may create benefits for both women and men. Consultation feedback highlighted the importance of creating safe and welcoming public spaces, which may positively affect people's confidence to participate in the visitor economy as residents, workers and visitors.		
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows; • 89% as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian • 1.1% as Bisexual • 0.1% as Pansexual • 0.1% described their sexuality another way • 7.4% of people didn't answer the question	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all. The DMP promotes an inclusive and welcoming destination for residents, employees, businesses and visitors. No evidence has been identified to suggest that people sharing this protected characteristic would be adversely affected by the Plan. Through delivery arrangements, partners should continue to promote an environment that is welcoming, respectful and inclusive for all communities.	Not applicable	

Armed Forces Community	• In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. • In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all.	Not applicable	
Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	• Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports both the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. By focusing on workforce development, business collaboration and improved accessibility, the Plan helps create fairer access to employment, skills, services and opportunities, supporting people across different ages, abilities, backgrounds and socio-economic circumstances, while positively contributing to long-term economic resilience.	Not applicable	
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	• For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between males who live in Torbay's	Providing increased employment opportunities can take households from 'workless' to working. This can provide additional income for families to support a healthier lifestyle.	Not applicable	

	least and most deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females.	The plan also looks to support the wider place area, improving Torbay's attractiveness as a place to live, work and invest, which could increase civic pride and wellbeing.		
Human Rights impacts		The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports both the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. By focusing on workforce development, business collaboration and improved accessibility, the Plan helps create fairer access to employment, skills, services and opportunities, supporting people across different ages, abilities, backgrounds and socio-economic circumstances, while contributing to improved health, inclusion and long-term economic resilience. No adverse impacts on human rights have been identified. The Plan supports an inclusive and accessible approach to destination development which is consistent with the principles of equality, participation and non-discrimination.	Not applicable	
Child Friendly		The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports both the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. By improving infrastructure, inclusive place-making and the quality of visitor	Not applicable	

		experiences, the DMP supports Torbay as a destination that is welcoming and accessible for children and families. The DMP has the potential to create positive outcomes for children and young people through improvements to public spaces, accessibility, culture, events, active travel opportunities and the wider visitor economy. A stronger and more sustainable visitor economy may also create future employment, skills and apprenticeship opportunities for young people. The Plan supports a destination that is welcoming to children, young people and families and no adverse impacts on children's rights have been identified. Consideration should be given during delivery to ensuring that the voices of children and young people are reflected in future visitor experience and placemaking initiatives		

15. Cumulative Council Impact

15.1. None identified. The priorities and recommendations within the DMP are expected to support a more joined-up approach across Council services.

16. Cumulative Community Impacts

16.1. None identified. The community impacts are expected to be positive.

TORBAY COUNCIL

TORBAY

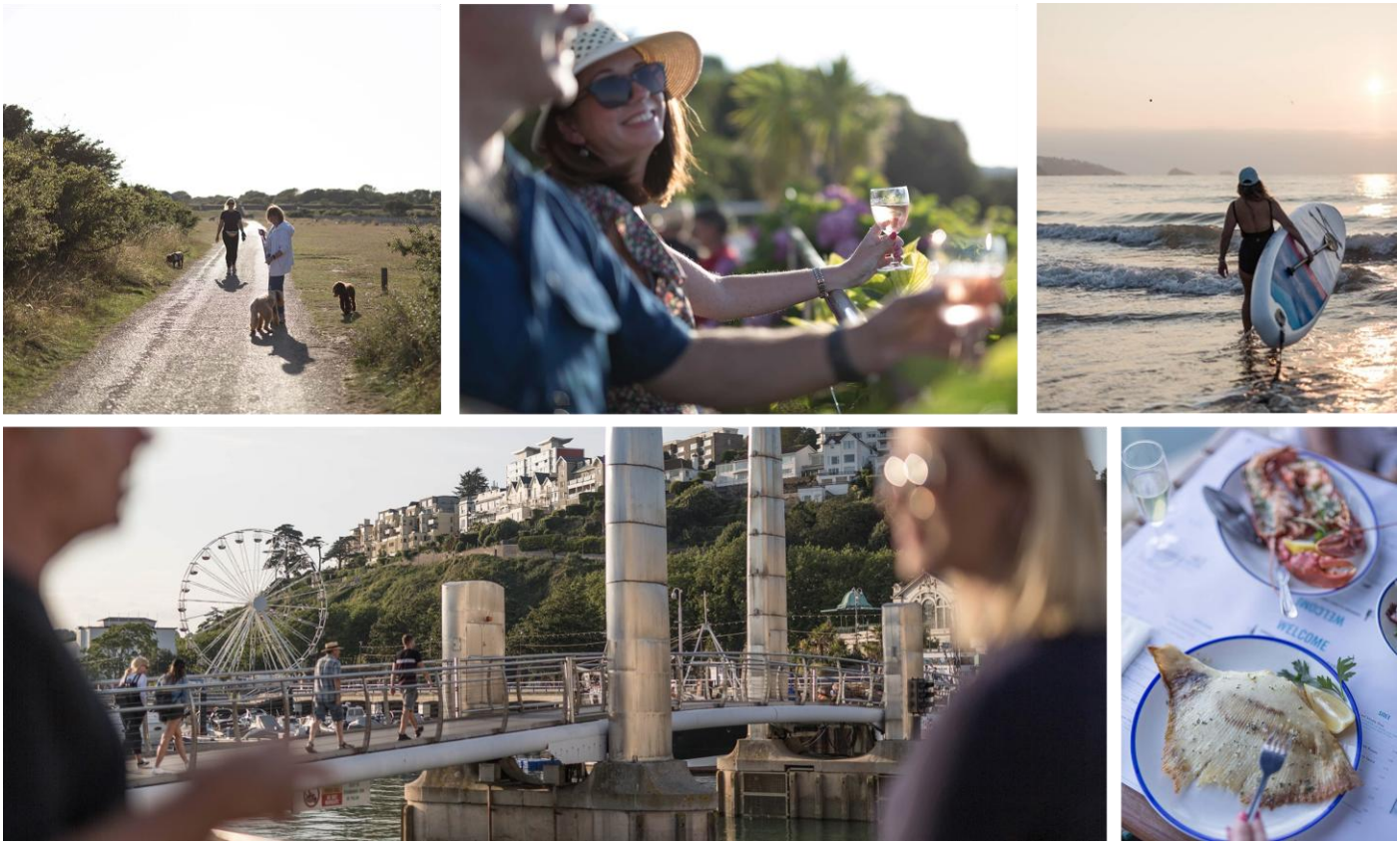


Photo: Collection of images from the Torbay Story

Torbay Destination Management Plan 2026-2036 Draft

Shaping the future of Torbay as sustainable, vibrant and the UK's premier coastal destination.

Experience the beauty, embrace the community, elevate the future.

Contents

Torbay Destination Management Plan 2026-2036 Draft 1
Contents 2
1. Introduction 3
1.1. About the Destination Management Plan (DMP) 3
1.2. Vision and Priorities 4
2. Current Position 6
2.1. National and Regional context 6
2.2. The Value of Tourism: Torbay's current position 7
2.3. Changing market conditions 8
2.4. Strategic Alignment 8
3. Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities 10
3.1. Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Risks 10
3.2. Visitor and stakeholder feedback 11
3.3. Core Challenge and Response 12
3.4. Direction and Strategic Response 12
4. Priorities, Actions & Implementations 14
4.1. Strategic Priorities 14
4.2. Delivery Approach 15
4.3. High-Level Actions 17
4.4. Outcomes and Measures 22
Appendix 1: Evidence Base and Context 25
National value of Tourism 25
Value of Tourism for the South West 25
Appendix 2: Trends in the Evolving Landscape of Tourism 27
The National Challenge 28
Appendix 3: Strategic Alignment 30
Appendix 4: Delivery, Governance and Monitoring Framework 33
Appendix 5: Engagement and Consultation Summary 35
Appendix 6: Glossary and Definitions 37

1. Introduction

1.1. About the Destination Management Plan (DMP)

The DMP asks local businesses, partners and the community to work together to make Torbay a better place to visit. It supports sustainable and inclusive tourism growth, helping the visitor economy develop in a way that benefits residents, businesses and the environment. By working together, Torbay can celebrate its natural beauty, heritage and culture to strengthen its position as the UK's premier coastal destination.

The DMP provides a place-based framework for Torbay as a visitor destination. This means looking at Torbay as a whole place, including its economy, communities, environment, culture, transport, public spaces and local identity. It aligns with the Torbay Story and the Council's Corporate and Community Plan, bringing together businesses, partners and stakeholders around a common vision and direction. It recognises the visitor economy as a key sector that supports jobs, businesses and town centres, while also contributing to wider outcomes such as skills, infrastructure, culture and community wellbeing.

Tourism plays an important role in shaping how Torbay as a place is experienced by both residents and visitors. It supports local jobs and businesses, influences town centres and public spaces, and helps shape how Torbay is seen as a place to live as well as visit. The English Riviera will remain the destination brand, providing a strong and consistent identity through which Torbay is promoted and working with partners to ensure a coherent visitor offer.

This new Plan sets out long-term priorities to improve quality, support a year-round economy, and attract higher-value visits (that bring greater local benefit, such as longer stays, more local spend or visits outside the busiest summer months). It also responds to key challenges, including seasonality, changing visitor expectations, place quality and workforce pressures.

The DMP is a business-led plan, with delivery shared across businesses and partners. The Council's role is to act as a facilitator and enabler, by bringing partners together, supporting coordination and helping to unblock issues where possible. A structured partnership approach will underpin the Plan, ensuring clear roles, responsibilities, decision-making and accountability across stakeholders. Delivery will be supported by a phased action plan, co-designed with businesses and partners. Progress will be monitored through agreed measures, helping partners track impact, respond to opportunities and align resources and investment.

This DMP marks a shift towards a more coordinated, place-based and business-led approach to destination management, building on Torbay's established strengths and driving forward its

position as the UK's premier coastal destination. It has been shaped by public and private sector engagement. A new governance structure will support delivery, with ongoing collaboration through partnership meetings, targeted workshops and joint initiatives.

1.2. Vision and Priorities

The DMP aims to support sustainable and inclusive tourism that attracts investment and showcases Torbay as an appealing destination for visitors, residents, and investors. It is a strategic policy document written mainly for businesses, partners, councillors and organisations involved in Torbay's visitor economy.

Vision

To make Torbay and the English Riviera the UK's premier year-round coastal destination. We will celebrate and protect our cultural heritage, coastline, marine environment and natural landscapes. The Plan will improve the visitor experience, support local businesses and create a strong visitor economy that benefits everyone.

The Plan will strengthen the English Riviera's distinctive national and international proposition, making clearer why visitors should choose Torbay over other coastal destinations.

Priorities

To support the vision, the DMP focuses on seven priorities that provide the framework for delivery and set out where partners will work together to improve Torbay as the UK's premier coastal destination.

Priority 1: Driving leadership, governance, and collaboration. Establishing clear roles and responsibilities among destination stakeholders, while creating flexible routes for businesses, residents, community groups and partners to shape delivery through the Visitor Economy Cluster and future action planning.

Priority 2: Having a clear narrative – one voice, one vision. Developing a cohesive narrative that brings Torbay's visitor economy together, connects with the aspirations of the Torbay Story, and supports Torbay's ambition as the UK's premier coastal destination.

Priority 3: Making data-powered decisions – unlocking insights for success. Establishing clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor tourism performance and visitor satisfaction and track progress against the Plan's priorities. Gathering feedback and providing insights will help tailor services and marketing strategies effectively.

Priority 4: Elevating visitor experience and innovating products. Focusing on product development, innovation and year-round events.

Priority 5: Paving the way for sustainability. Protecting and celebrating Torbay's natural assets, coastline, sea and marine environment, including the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark, while supporting sustainable and regenerative tourism practices that benefit businesses, communities, visitors and the environment.

Priority 6: Empowering talent - workforce development and training. Investing in skills development and career pathways to raise aspirations, change perceptions of tourism and hospitality careers. Working with education providers and local businesses to deliver industry-relevant training that will strengthen workforce skills, improve service quality, support business resilience, and enhance the overall visitor experience.

Priority 7: Destination ready - strengthening infrastructure and accessibility. Prioritising investment in the revitalisation of public spaces, natural assets, and town centres and collaborating with local transport providers to improve connections and strengthen Torbay's welcoming, inclusive and accessible environment.

Overall, the DMP provides a shared framework to strengthen Torbay's visitor economy by focusing on sustainability, community benefit, economic growth and the area's distinctive cultural and natural assets. Through coordinated action and partnership working, the Plan will support a more resilient, year-round visitor economy that responds to current challenges and future opportunities.

It also aligns with Torbay's ambition to become a Child-friendly place, recognising the importance of ensuring children and young people feel safe, included and valued within the destination.

The visitor economy can also support wider outcomes, including community wellbeing, aspiration and opportunities for future generations.

Its success will depend on active participation from businesses, partners and the community, turning the shared framework into collective action across the destination.

2. Current Position

This section sets out the position of Torbay's visitor economy in 2026, drawing on data, trends, and stakeholder insights to inform this DMP and its priorities.

Torbay's visitor economy is a key part of the local economy and identity. It supports jobs, businesses, and town centres, contributes to culture and community pride, and helps make Torbay an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest. It also plays an important role in delivering the Council's wider ambitions for inclusive economic growth, thriving communities and improved place quality.

However, the sector is operating within a changing national and regional context. Visitor behaviour is evolving, costs are rising, and competition between destinations is increasing. While Torbay has strong assets and remains a popular destination, performance is uneven and key challenges remain. This shows the need for a more joined-up approach, with clearer priorities and a stronger focus on results.

2.1. National and Regional context

Across the UK, tourism continues to make a significant contribution to the economy, generating around £147 billion in 2024, which represented around 5% of the national economy, and supporting over 2.4 million jobs. This includes roles in hospitality, attractions, transport and retail.[1]

Domestic tourism remains the largest part of the market, but demand for overnight stays has declined in real terms in recent years, reflecting cost-of-living pressures and continuing competition from international destinations.

Within the South West, tourism generated £11.1 billion in economic output in 2024 and supported around 194,000 jobs (8% of the UK's tourism jobs).[1] The region has a strong reliance on domestic visitors and seasonal demand, with three quarters of overnight spend coming from UK visitors. This creates both opportunities and challenges for destinations such as Torbay, particularly in terms of extending the visitor season and increasing value.

To support regional tourism, the Devon and Partners Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) is set to provide leadership and influence for the visitor economy at national and regional levels. The LVEP will help partners work together on shared priorities, including funding, data, skills, sustainable tourism and regional promotion. For Torbay, this context reinforces the importance of

[1] VisitBritain/VisitEngland (2026) Economic Value of Tourism in the United Kingdom, Published 20 January 2026

strengthening the year-round offer, increasing visitor value, and maintaining competitiveness within a changing market.

2.2. The Value of Tourism: Torbay's current position

Torbay has a well-established visitor economy, supported by its coastline, heritage, cultural assets, and the English Riviera brand. It remains a popular destination for both overnight and day visitors and continues to make a significant contribution to the local economy.

The Volume and Value of Tourism to Torbay

- GDP Contribution: Torbay recorded total tourism spend of £428.8 million in 2024, representing 4% of the region's tourism GDP.[2]
- Employment: Torbay recorded 5,624 FTE tourism jobs, accounting for approximately 12% of total employment. [2]
- Domestic Tourism - Overnight Trips: Torbay received a total of 754,000 domestic overnight trips (3.1 million nights) in 2024, spending £230.8 million. With an average spend per trip of £384 and £83 per night in 2023, Torbay ranked among Devon's stronger performing districts. The average length of stay of 4.6 nights was also well above the county average and notably higher than more urban destinations such as Exeter and Plymouth. [2]
- Domestic Tourism - Day Visits: In Torbay, there were 2.7-million-day visits, representing 4% of the total for the region, and spending £137.9 million. [2]
- International Tourism: Torbay attracted 79,000 inbound trips (547,000 nights), with a total spend of £47 million.[2]

However, Torbay's visitor economy has followed a mixed and uneven post-pandemic recovery. Visitor numbers rebounded in 2021 and 2022 but have since weakened, remaining below 2019 levels in 2024, indicating that overall volumes have not yet stabilised. [3]

Total visitor spending recovered to pre-pandemic levels in 2024, although in real terms spending in 2024 was actually still around 20% below 2019 levels. Full-time employment has not mirrored the recovery, improving modestly in 2021–2022 before declining again in 2023 and 2024, highlighting persistent structural and labour market challenges.[3]

---

[2] The Economic Impact of the Torbay Visitor Economy 2024 Produced on behalf of the English Riviera BID Company by The South West Research Company Ltd October 2025

Overall, the post-pandemic period[3] points to a visitor economy that is generating stronger revenues from fewer visitors, but with ongoing difficulties in sustaining jobs and rebuilding workforce capacity. This highlights a shift towards fewer visitors generating greater value, alongside a need to strengthen quality and long-term resilience. However, the sector is undergoing structural change, with increased competition, cost pressures and shifting visitor expectations.[3]

2.3. Changing market conditions

Visitor behaviour is constantly evolving, with several key trends shaping future demand. These include growing interest in authentic local experiences, outdoor and coastal activities, value for money, sustainable travel, digital planning tools and opportunities to extend the season beyond the busiest summer months:

- Visitors increasingly seek **authentic, local, and experience-led offers**, particularly linked to culture, heritage and food
- There is growing demand for **outdoor, coastal and wellbeing experiences**, aligning with Torbay's strengths
- Visitors are more **cost-conscious**, often choosing shorter stays and looking for value
- Expectations around **sustainability** are increasing, with demand for low-impact travel and responsible destinations
- **Digital tools** and platforms are increasingly shaping how visitors plan and experience trips
- There is an opportunity to **extend the season**, with increased interest in off-peak travel

At the same time, the sector faces wider pressures. Rising costs and economic uncertainty are affecting both visitors and businesses. Workforce shortages and skills gaps can also affect service quality. Destinations also need to respond to climate risks, environmental pressures and fast changes in technology and data. These factors show the need for a visitor economy that is more resilient, flexible and focused on high value.

2.4. Strategic Alignment

This DMP aligns with a range of local strategies that support economic growth, regeneration, culture, transport, climate action and community wellbeing. This ensures tourism complements

[3] Spend data from DMP QR ME Tracker – DMP Review using ONS CPIH inflation index

wider work across Torbay, rather than planned in isolation. The full list of strategies is set out in Appendix 3.

These strategies all point in the same direction. They show the need to improve the visitor economy through investment, innovation, strong partnerships and a clear place-based approach. They also support Torbay and the English Riviera's ambition to become the UK's leading year-round coastal premier destination by celebrating and protecting its cultural heritage, coastline, marine environment and natural landscapes. This includes improving the visitor experience, supporting local businesses and creating a strong visitor economy that benefits everyone.

Strategies stress the importance of community involvement, improving infrastructure, and fostering a sense of place to create a welcoming environment for both residents and visitors. Leveraging Torbay's rich heritage and food culture is seen as vital for attracting diverse audiences and enhancing the overall visitor experience.

Collectively, these strategic initiatives form a comprehensive framework that underscores Torbay's commitment to enhancing its visitor economy while prioritising sustainability, community engagement, and economic growth. By leveraging its unique assets and fostering collaboration among stakeholders, Torbay will firmly position itself as the UK's premier coastal destination that attracts visitors year-round, supports local businesses, and enriches the community.

3. Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

To understand Torbay's position in 2026, engagement has been carried out with businesses and key stakeholders through one-to-one meetings, workshops, and an online survey alongside the public consultation. The findings have informed an assessment of strengths, challenges, opportunities, and risks, providing a clear picture of Torbay's current position and future potential. The following sections summarise the key findings from this engagement.

3.1. Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Risks

3.1.1. Strengths

Torbay is a well-established coastal destination, with a substantial visitor accommodation offer and a visitor economy that plays an important role in supporting jobs, businesses, and the area's identity. Its key strengths include a high-quality natural environment, with coastline, beaches, the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark and the South West Coast Path. Together with a strong cultural and heritage offer; these assets make Torbay an attractive destination for leisure and outdoor activities.

The area also benefits from a recognised tourism identity, a growing programme of events and strong cultural associations, including its connection to Agatha Christie. Torbay's appeal is also shaped by the distinct identities of the three towns of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham, each offering different strengths, character and visitor experiences. Accessibility supports visitor access, and recent investment in the public realm is beginning to improve perceptions and create positive momentum.

These strengths provide a solid foundation for future growth. There is an opportunity to build on them by linking the visitor economy more closely with wider priorities such as regeneration, skills, health and wellbeing, and town centre improvement, while ensuring environmental assets are protected.

3.1.2. Challenges

Despite these strengths, they do not always result in a consistent, high-quality visitor experience. Tourism in Torbay remains highly seasonal, which creates fluctuations in demand and pressures on local infrastructure.

There are also ongoing concerns about the condition and visitor perception of town centres, including issues with maintenance and the quality of the retail offer. Investment in infrastructure and attractions has not kept pace with expectations in some areas.

The sector faces workforce challenges, including skills gaps and recruitment difficulties, which can affect service quality. In addition, perceptions of antisocial behaviour and wider place quality issues can influence how the destination is viewed by visitors and investors.

There is also a lack of clarity around Torbay's overall positioning, target audiences, and messaging, which highlights the need for a stronger and more consistent place narrative.

3.1.3. Opportunities

There are clear opportunities to strengthen Torbay's visitor economy through a more joined-up and year-round approach. These include developing higher-value experiences, extending the visitor season and increasing overall visitor spend.

Opportunities also exist to continue investing in regeneration and public realm improvements, expand the events programme, and make better use of Torbay's cultural and heritage assets, including the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark and Agatha Christie brand. These can help create a more distinctive and marketable offer.

There is potential to grow business tourism, support workforce development, and provide stronger support for local businesses. Improving transport and connectivity, including walking, cycling and public transport, will also support a more sustainable visitor economy.

More broadly, greater collaboration across organisations will be critical to deliver these opportunities effectively.

3.1.4. Risks

The risks that may affect the performance of the visitor economy include continued seasonality, economic uncertainty, and rising costs, all of which may affect business resilience.

Torbay also faces strong competition from other UK coastal destinations. Perceptions of the area may continue to affect visitor and investor confidence if not addressed.

There are longer-term risks linked to workforce sustainability, environmental pressures, and the need to grow tourism in a way that is sustainable and balanced with community needs.

In addition, improving the use of data and performance monitoring will be important to support better decision-making and maintain confidence among partners.

3.2. Visitor and stakeholder feedback

Feedback from businesses and visitors provides consistent messages about Torbay's strengths and areas for improvement.

Visitors consistently praise Torbay's natural environment, coastline, attractions, and hospitality. The range of activities, value for money and welcoming atmosphere are also seen as positive, making Torbay an attractive destination for both first-time and returning visitors.

At the same time, feedback also identifies concerns about the condition and appearance of town centres, cleanliness, the range of shops and visitor facilities, signage, and transport connectivity. Visitors also note the limited availability of activities outside the main season.

Overall, this shows that while Torbay has strong core assets, these are not always matched by consistent quality across the whole visitor experience.

3.3. Core Challenge and Response

Torbay has a strong foundation as a visitor destination, but the main challenge is delivery. Evidence and stakeholder feedback show that activity is often fragmented, with unclear roles and responsibilities and limited coordination between organisations.

The DMP addresses this by focusing on a more coordinated and practical approach. This includes prioritising a smaller number of high-impact actions, setting clear ownership and accountability, strengthening partnership working, and improving how progress is monitored.

It also emphasises the need for a clear and consistent place narrative, and for the visitor economy to support wider local priorities, including community wellbeing and quality of life.

3.4. Direction and Strategic Response

The evidence points to a clear direction for the future of Torbay's visitor economy: improving the quality and consistency of the visitor experience, supporting a more balanced year-round and higher-value offer, strengthening the link between the visitor economy and overall place quality, and increasing visitor value, extending the season and spreading benefits more evenly across Torquay, Paignton and Brixham, rather than simply increasing peak-summer visitor volume.

It will also require a clearer and more consistent destination narrative, alongside action to address workforce and skills challenges. In addition, there is a need to embed sustainability and accessibility across the visitor offer, and to improve the use of data and insight to support decision-making. Delivering this will require stronger coordination, clearer leadership and more effective partnership working across the sector. Without this, the challenges are likely to continue and limit future growth.

This DMP responds by setting out a clear, long-term framework for a more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive visitor economy. It aligns with the ambitions of the Council's Community and Corporate Plan and wider strategies for economic growth, regeneration, culture, transport, and climate.

This evidence highlights the need for a more coordinated, delivery-focused approach to managing the visitor economy. The following section sets out the priorities and delivery model that will guide this approach.

4. Priorities, Actions & Implementations

This section sets out how the priorities in this DMP will be delivered, including the approach, governance, roles, and responsibilities, and how partners will work together to achieve the Plan's outcomes.

For partners and businesses, the DMP provides a clear route to engagement and delivery. It sets out where collaboration is needed, how activity will be coordinated, and how organisations can contribute within their own roles. This includes participating in action groups, aligning activity with agreed priorities, and supporting the shared ambition for Torbay as a destination.

Delivery will be based on a coordinated, partnership-led model, with the Council acting as a facilitator and enabling collaboration across the destination. Governance, delivery planning and performance monitoring will provide the structure for turning the Plan into action.

A set of example actions and delivery opportunities has been developed through stakeholder engagement and is included in the supporting appendices. These actions provide practical guidance on how each priority can be delivered and will inform the development of detailed delivery plans. The next stage of work will be to develop the action plan collectively through the Visitor Economy Cluster and wider partnership working, with businesses, residents, community groups and partners helping to shape what is taken forward as delivery develops.

4.1. Strategic Priorities

The DMP is structured around seven priorities, which provide the framework for delivery.

Priority 1: Driving leadership, governance, and collaboration

This priority focuses on strengthening how the visitor economy is coordinated and delivered across Torbay. It will improve governance, clarify roles and responsibilities, reduce duplication, and ensure that activity across partners is aligned with shared outcomes. It also recognises that delivery must remain flexible, with businesses, residents, community groups and underrepresented voices able to help shape priorities through the Visitor Economy Cluster, priority action groups, future action planning and wider opportunities to get involved as the DMP develops.

Priority 2: Having a clear narrative – one voice, one vision

This priority focuses on developing a clear and consistent identity for Torbay as a destination. It aims to strengthen how the visitor economy is positioned and communicated, ensuring alignment with the Torbay Story and improving overall perception.

Priority 3: Making data-powered decisions – unlocking insights for success

This priority focuses on improving how data and insight are used to support decision-making and performance management. It aims to strengthen understanding of visitor behaviour, market trends, and destination performance.

Priority 4: Elevating visitor experience and innovating products

This priority focuses on enhancing the overall visitor experience and strengthening the quality and distinctiveness of the destination offer. It aims to support innovation and develop a more diverse, experience-led, and year-round product. Heritage, culture and place identity will be central to this, including the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark, Agatha Christie, Torre Abbey, historical buildings and the distinct identities of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham.

Priority 5: Paving the way for sustainability

This priority focuses on ensuring that the visitor economy develops in a way that is environmentally responsible, inclusive and locally beneficial. It supports long-term sustainability while protecting and celebrating Torbay's natural and cultural assets, including the coastline, sea, marine environment and English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark. It also provides space for regenerative tourism approaches to be explored and developed collaboratively, where businesses and communities consider them important.

Priority 6: Empowering talent: workforce development and training

This priority focuses on strengthening the workforce and supporting businesses to improve quality and resilience. It aims to ensure that Torbay can deliver high-quality visitor experiences and adapt to changing market conditions.

Priority 7: Destination ready: strengthening infrastructure and accessibility

This priority focuses on ensuring that Torbay has the infrastructure, connectivity and accessibility needed to support a high-quality visitor experience. It aims to improve the overall functionality and attractiveness of the destination, with better movement around Torbay by walking, cycling, public transport and accessible routes around the destination.

4.2. Delivery Approach

Delivery of the DMP will be coordinated through a strengthened partnership approach led by the Visitor Economy Cluster (VEC). The VEC will be the main group responsible for agreeing

priorities, monitoring progress, identifying issues and opportunities, and considering where additional resources may be needed.

Priority Action Groups will be established to deliver specific DMP priorities where there is a clear need, sufficient interest and the right partners to take action forward. These groups will report into the VEC, helping to turn the DMP into practical delivery while ensuring activities remain coordinated, flexible and focused on shared outcomes.

The VEC will also act as the main voice for the visitor economy within the Torbay Place Leadership Board. This will help ensure that visitor economy priorities are linked to wider place-based objectives, including regeneration, town centre development and investment. Issues requiring wider support or decisions beyond the sector can be escalated through this route.

As delivery of the DMP progresses, the roles, responsibilities, membership and engagement arrangements of the VEC and Priority Action Groups will be reviewed to ensure they remain effective and representative. The model below shows how businesses, representative organisations, wider partners contribute to DMP delivery.

Torbay Council will support delivery of the DMP by acting as a facilitator, helping the VEC and Priority Action Groups work together effectively and enabling collaboration across partners.

Delivery of the DMP will be phased over its lifetime. A co-designed action plan, agreed by the VEC and Priority Action Groups, will set out clear priorities while retaining flexibility to respond to changing needs and opportunities. Early activity will focus on strengthening coordination, governance and quick-win improvements, while medium and longer-term actions will support investment, infrastructure and more complex projects. This phased approach will enable steady progress while remaining adaptable to future priorities and opportunities.

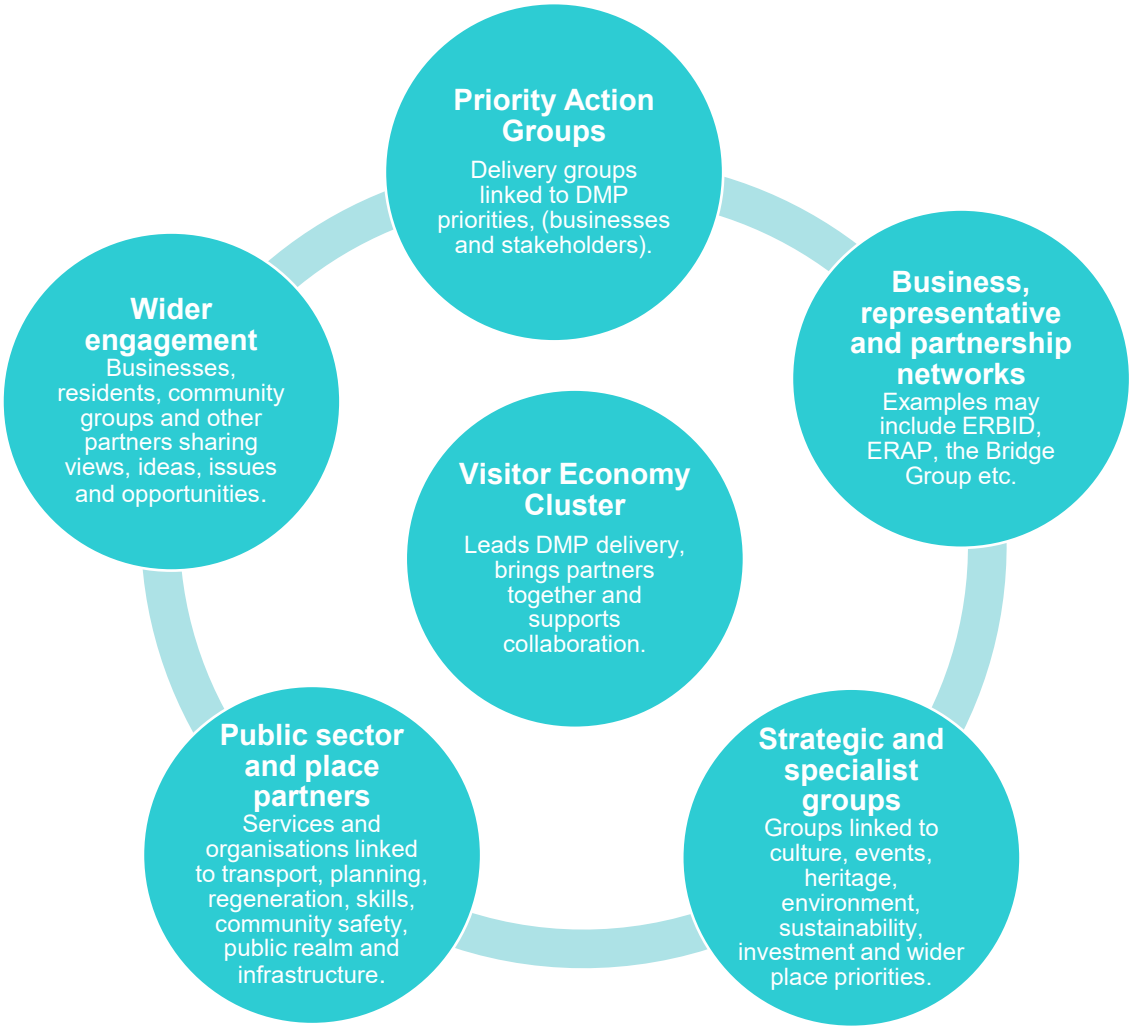


Figure 1: Visitor Economy Cluster delivery and collaboration model

4.3. High-Level Actions

At this level, the DMP provides a policy framework to guide delivery rather than a fixed list of detailed actions. It will help align Council activity, investment and wider strategies with visitor economy priorities, while supporting strong collaboration across businesses and partners. This includes activity to improve destination quality, support sustainability, strengthen the workforce and encourage more year-round visitors.

The actions and recommendations below, and in the appendices, are examples to guide delivery. They will be refined and agreed through the Visitor Economy Cluster, action groups and wider partnership working as delivery develops, including consideration of visitor readiness, destination quality and the priorities businesses, residents, community groups and partners identify as most important.

As delivery progresses, there will be ongoing opportunities for businesses and partners to contribute ideas, align existing activity, and identify new areas for collaboration. Delivering the

priorities will require sustained partnership working, clear leadership, and appropriate resourcing. The Council will play an enabling role, but delivery will be shared across the wider destination.

Priority 1: Driving leadership, governance, and collaboration

- Bring experienced local business leaders and a broad range of stakeholders together through the Visitor Economy Cluster. The VEC will support coordination, advocacy and oversight of the DMP, while remaining flexible so membership, involvement and areas of focus can evolve as delivery develops, grows and new opportunities for participation emerge.
- Use the DMP as a practical framework to align tourism initiatives with regeneration and planning efforts, ensuring clarity on all organisation's contributions.
- Identify dedicated resources within Torbay Council to support implementation of the DMP and facilitate collaboration, partner engagement, action planning, monitoring and reporting.
- Create clear communication, education and engagement routes to help businesses, residents, community groups and partners understand the DMP, why it matters, and how they can contribute to future delivery planning and wider opportunities as the Plan develops, without predetermining who will lead or fund individual actions.
- Partner with key stakeholders, including the Devon and Cornwall Police and local housing providers, to align on community safety and homelessness initiatives.
- Actively engage local businesses, residents and community groups in the DMP through clear communications, accessible engagement opportunities, joint events and collaborative initiatives, so people understand progress, available support and different ways to get involved over the lifetime of the Plan.
- Use the action planning process to test which issues matter most to businesses and communities, agree where collaboration will add most value, and identify appropriate partners, resources and funding routes as opportunities emerge.
- Inspire a culture of innovation among Torbay businesses and tourism operators to adopt new approaches and enhance the visitor experience.

Priority 2: Clear narrative – one voice, one vision

- Strengthen the link between the visitor economy and the Torbay Story, recognising tourism as a key driver of Torbay's identity, economy and future ambitions.

- Build on Torbay's strong destination identity by strengthening how its USPs, sense of place, history, creativity, culture and community spirit are reflected across the visitor economy, with a clear focus on quality, authentic experiences, community values and aspiration.
- Create a proactive communications strategy aimed at countering negative and promoting positive stories about Torbay (whilst acknowledging and addressing negative feedback).
- Use successful initiatives that highlight community strengths and success stories from local businesses and community initiatives to build a positive narrative around Torbay.
- Target outreach programmes to connect with younger demographics to gather insights about their perceptions of Torbay.

Priority 3: Data-powered decisions – unlocking insights for success

- Leverage available datasets to gather insights on visitor demographics and interests to guide targeted marketing and product development.
- Create protocols for data sharing among stakeholders to ensure transparency and effectiveness.
- Design consultation approaches that are sensitive to the current pressures faced by local businesses, such as virtual meetings, surveys, or small focus groups that respect their time constraints. Streamline the process of conducting surveys to prevent businesses being overwhelmed and to ensure higher response rates.
- Define and agree Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the success of tourism initiatives and marketing efforts.
- Use data analytics to create detailed visitor profiles that identify key demographics, interests, and spending patterns, enabling more targeted marketing efforts, and gather insights from visitors and stakeholders about their experiences and suggestions for improvement
- Perform assessments of major events to determine their economic impact on the local economy. This should include visitor numbers, spending patterns, and feedback from local businesses.

Priority 4: Elevating visitor experience and innovating products

- Encourage a mindset shift among stakeholders from traditional tourism models to innovative, value-driven approaches that prioritise quality experiences over quantity.

- Encourage businesses to innovate and adapt their tourism offer to meet changing market demands and visitor preferences. Organise networking events or product innovation labs for local businesses to connect and collaborate on tourism initiatives and ideas.
- Create unique, themed experiences centred around Torbay's cultural, active, outdoor and natural attractions, including the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark and Agatha Christie as flagship assets.
- Diversify the visitor base, particularly developing strategies, and products to attract a younger audience and maximise the Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) market.
- Develop a strategy for co-ordinating events across Torbay to ensure great things to see and do and avoid scheduling conflicts; and increase the variety and frequency of events throughout the year.
- Create tangible visitor products and experiences which businesses can easily get on board with including local food/drink offers, events and digital tools.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy and sustainable model to grow business tourism that includes clear goals, responsibilities, and expected outcomes.
- Create experiences that are inclusive, accessible and appealing to children, young people and families, alongside ensuring that the visitor offer reflects the needs of a diverse range of users throughout the year.

Priority 5: Paving the way for sustainability

- Put Torbay’s sea, coastline, marine environment and English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark at the centre of the sustainable visitor offer, supporting experiences that help visitors understand, enjoy and respect these assets.
- Ensure that attractions and public areas are fully accessible to all visitors.
- Ensure the DMP governance includes measures to oversee the integration of environmental protection measures into tourism development and develop sustainable travel initiatives.
- Explore regenerative tourism approaches through future action planning and wider delivery activity, focusing on ideas that businesses, residents and partners see as practical and beneficial, such as visitor giving, volunteering, conservation activity, local supply chains and community-led projects.

- Promote local produce, cuisine and craft, strengthening local supply chains and collaborative links between the visitor economy and local producers and suppliers.

Priority 6: Empowering talent: workforce development and training

- Promote the wide range of roles and career pathways available in tourism and hospitality, from seasonal jobs to long-term careers helping to change perceptions of the sector as low-skilled and showing it as rewarding, skilled and flexible work that can suit different lifestyles and ambitions.
- Use current and future skills funding to develop courses and training for the sector, building upon previous courses and experience (such as the use of modular training); and include immersive work experience, Apprenticeships, Adult Skills Fund or Skills Bootcamps.
- Encourage businesses to attend local events including school's career days and jobs fairs to showcase opportunities in the visitor economy.
- Encourage greater involvement from Torbay businesses in tourism initiatives and workforce development. Establish mentorship programmes that connect experienced professionals with young people entering the tourism workforce. Involve young people in the planning and implementation of workforce development initiatives.
- Focus on quality assurance measures and implement training programmes to improve service levels and product knowledge and develop initiatives to support local tourism and hospitality businesses with enhancing their offer and visibility.
- Develop accessible business support that provides resources, training or financial assistance to help local businesses adapt to changing market conditions and enhance their offer.

Priority 7: Destination ready: strengthening infrastructure and accessibility

- Establish ongoing assessments of the DMP and approach to support the visitor economy in adapting to changing demands.
- Invest in infrastructure upgrades, such as updated and improved signage, to enhance visitor experiences and community satisfaction and safety, and focus on enhancing the visual appeal, functionality and accessibility of entry points to Torbay.

- Ensure that additional public and private funding opportunities to sustain regeneration efforts beyond initial public funding phases remain high on the agenda. Particularly programmes for medium-sized and larger investors to develop mixed-use properties and hotels.
- Collaborate with local transport providers to strengthen services, including evening services and better connections to attractions, to enhance accessibility for visitors.
- Ensure that public spaces, transport and infrastructure are safe, inclusive and accessible for children and young people, supporting a destination that works well for residents as well as visitors.
- Continue to invest in the improvement and maintenance of public spaces, including natural assets and town centres to enhance the overall visitor experience ensuring these spaces are inclusive and accessible for all. Address the condition and infrastructure of existing bedspaces and visitor facilities.
- Position planning, heritage, and regeneration as enablers of sustainable growth, supporting delivery, and ensuring development that reinforces Torbay's identity, while protecting its distinctive townscapes, seafront character, and historic and natural assets.
- Promote sustainable transport options by encouraging walking, cycling and public transport as primary ways to explore Torbay, supported by a joined-up, user-friendly, and accessible network that includes safe cycling routes, improved connectivity across the Bay, and enhanced direct links to key attractions and destinations.
- Work with relevant Council services and partners to align visitor economy priorities with town centre development, community safety and place-making activity. This should include clear communication with businesses and visitors where issues affect perceptions of the destination.

4.4. Outcomes and Measures

Over the life of the Plan, the DMP will support organisations, businesses and communities to work together towards a stronger, more resilient and more sustainable visitor economy for Torbay. The focus will be on turning the Plan's priorities into practical outcomes: clearer partnership delivery, increased business participation, stronger community benefit, more year-round visitor activity, improved destination quality and responsible growth. These outcomes will also support long-term improvements such as higher visitor spend, stronger links with regeneration, transport, culture and skills, and a continued focus on inclusion, accessibility and community wellbeing, including the experiences of children and young people.

Progress will be measured using agreed indicators. These will cover areas such as visitor value and volume, visitor satisfaction, destination quality, sustainability, workforce development and business engagement. Baselines will be used where they are available, so progress can be reviewed clearly over time. This will support regular monitoring, reporting and improvement.

Performance will be reviewed through the delivery framework, with updates provided through the Visitor Economy Cluster governance structure. An annual progress report will summarise achievements, milestones, challenges and areas for improvement.

Full details of indicators, targets and reporting arrangements are set out in the supporting appendices.

4.4.1. Strategic Growth Indicators

The following indicators will be used to monitor progress over the lifetime of the Plan:

1. Visitor Growth Indicators

- Increase in total value of staying visitors (annual and monthly figures reported in real terms)
- Length of Stay – in days (working against the current baseline) [4]

2. Visitor Satisfaction Survey Indicators

- Improve the *Overall Impression* score to 4.5 over the Plan period. [5]
- Improve visitor perception of *the cleanliness of the streets* to 4.25 over the Plan period.[5]
- Net Promoter Score (NPS): to evaluate how likely visitors are to recommend Torbay to others. *Move baseline to 70 over the period of the Plan (Staying Visitors)*

3. Sustainability Indicators

- Consider sign up to the GDS Index or find an alternative, to track progress against a range of measures and against peer group. (Tracks the broader progression against a range of sustainability measures that will be relevant for Torbay and enables benchmarking against similar destinations)

[4] The average length of stay provides a useful indication of the types of visitors coming to Torbay; e.g., shorter stays suggest more short breaks, longer stays reflect traditional holiday markets, helping to guide product development.
[5] These are perception driven based on visitor feedback from the Annual Visitor Survey.

4. **Business Community Engagement Indicators**

- Local business participation: Measure the percentage of local businesses engaged in tourism initiatives and partnerships, aiming for increased participation over time. [6]
- Recognising the economic value of events to Torbay, aim to identify, scope, and assess a range of potential events that can be agreed by the VEC and taken forward from Year 2 of the Plan.

5. **Infrastructure and Accessibility Indicators**

- The VEC to publish an annual review of the progress that Torbay is making to deliver improvement to the destination and drive growth in its visitor economy.
- Increase the satisfaction of quality of public transport services to reach 4.5

6. **Cultural and Heritage Engagement Indicators**

- From year 2, ensure that all major events[7] are tracked in terms of participation and economic impact. Encourage the strategically important visitor attractions to track visitor numbers, act collectively to drive up service quality and add further value to the overall offer.

7. **Economic Impact Indicators**

- Calculate the current value of Business Tourism to Torbay and aim to grow it above the Devon trend growth rate during the Plan period.

8. **Strategic Alignment Indicators**

- Measure the number of stakeholders involved in DMP initiatives and aim for a year-on-year increase in participation over the Plan period.

9. **Training and Workforce Development Indicators**

- Track the number of tourism and hospitality businesses involved in workforce development activity, including careers events, work experience, apprenticeships, training and skills programmes, with the aim of increasing participation and supporting more sustainable, skilled and rewarding employment pathways across the sector over the Plan period.

[6] To be agreed by the VEC and priority groups.
[7] List to be agreed by the VEC.

Appendix 1: Evidence Base and Context

This appendix and accompanying Torbay Destination Management Plan Review Evidence Base, provides the supporting evidence base for the DMP. It brings together local visitor economy data, place-based insight, stakeholder engagement, and wider national and regional trends that inform the priorities and approach set out in the main document.

It is intended to support the framework and should be read alongside the main document, rather than as part of the core policy text.

National value of Tourism

Across the UK, tourism continues to make a significant contribution to economic activity and employment with a GDP contribution in 2024 of £147 billion (5% of the national economy). The tourism industry supported over 2.4 million jobs in the UK in 2024, making it one of the largest employment sectors.[8]

In 2024, 4.6 million visitors came to the UK from abroad, spending £32.5 billion in local economies. In comparison, there were 1.2 billion domestic visits, comprised of 108 million overnight stays and 1-billion-day trips, spending £89 billion in the UK economy.[8] Domestic Tourism (domestic overnight stays and day trips) is responsible for over half of total tourism spending in the UK. However, domestic overnight spend has been falling in recent years.

Since 2022, domestic overnight spending has fallen 9% in real terms (after inflation) to reach £33 billion in 2024. This decline reflects a weakening in demand for overnight travel within the UK, potentially driven by cost-of-living pressures, and increased competition from international destinations. Despite this drop, overnight stays still represent 20% of total tourism expenditure in the UK. [8]

Value of Tourism for the South West

Tourism GDP for the South West region totalled £11.1bn in 2024. The number of jobs supported by tourism in the South West was 194,000, 8% of the UK's tourism jobs.[8]

The South West received 2.4 million international visits in 2024 (5.5% of UK share), generating £1.5 billion in spend.[9] In terms of domestic tourism, the South West recorded 15.4 million

[8] VisitBritain/VisitEngland (2026) Economic Value of Tourism in the United Kingdom, Published 20 January 2026
[9] Office for National Statistics (2024) International Passenger Survey

overnight trips (13% of the UK share), spending £4.5 million. Three quarters of all overnight tourism spend in the South West came from domestic visitors in 2024, compared to one quarter for London. Over 90-million-day visits were recorded in the South West, representing 10% UK share of day visits and 9% of spend.[10]

Key Visitor Economy Facts for Devon (2024)

- £2.6 billion annual visitor spend
- Supporting over 47,138 jobs (35,661 FTEs), 8% of total employment
- 21.3 million staying visitor nights (international and domestic)
- 22.5-million-day visits annually, generating £1.1 billion in spend.[11]

The Devon and Partners Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) is set to provide strong leadership and influence, amplifying the voice of the visitor economy at national, regional, and local levels. By collaborating closely with its partners, the LVEP aims to drive policy change, unlock funding opportunities, and make a compelling case for the growth and further development of the visitor economy within the county.

[10] VisitBritain/VisitEngland (2024) Great Britain Tourism Survey (GB Day Visitor Annual Report 2024)
[11] The Economic Impact of the Torbay Visitor Economy 2024. Produced on behalf of the English Riviera BID Company by The South West Research Company Ltd, October 2025

Appendix 2: Trends in the Evolving Landscape of Tourism

The tourism landscape in England is undergoing significant change, underscoring the importance of adaptability and sustainability in responding to the evolving preferences of visitors. Visitors are increasingly seeking authentic local experiences, outdoor and wellness activities, and value-driven holidays, while also showing greater awareness of environmental impact. Coastal destinations like Torbay are well-positioned to capitalise on these trends by offering unique, experience-rich stays that cater to both domestic and international visitors.[12]

- **Authentic and Local Experiences:** Visitors increasingly want to experience 'places like a local,' seeking connection with local culture, people and everyday life, not just iconic sites; a trend that can help destinations like Torbay showcase local food, fishing heritage, coastal walks, and small-town life. Younger visitors especially prioritise travel and unique experiences over material spending, which supports investment in curated experiences, local culture, and adventure activities.

- **Health and Well-being Tourism**: Day visits that incorporate wellness experiences have shown a continuous upward trend from 2022 to 2024. In fact, these visits reported the highest average spend per person, reaching £124 in 2024 compared to £52 for a typical day visit. This correlation illustrates the growing interest in experiences that promote physical and mental well-being, further influencing travel choices. The short-stay rental market is also closely tied to this trend, offering accommodation that cater to those seeking relaxation and rejuvenation during their travels.

- **Active and Outdoor Travel:** Following a boost (Covid-19 legacy), walking, cycling, and nature-based holidays remain popular. Interest in camping, caravanning and especially glamping remains high as a budget-friendly and 'close-to-nature' holiday style.

- **Cost-Conscious Travel**: Many UK visitors are planning to spend less on holidays and look for value offerings (e.g., package deals, combined accommodation, and activities) due to inflation and continued cost-of-living pressures, an issue which is increasing rather than diminishing.

[12] Sources for Trends section: VisitBritain; Mintel

- **Sustainability**: Eco-conscious planning (e.g. choosing lower impact activities and transport) and scepticism about green washing means destinations with genuine sustainable practices (e.g., electric charging, conservation) will resonate with a growing segment of visitors.
- **Artificial Intelligence:** AI and digital tools for travel planning is increasingly popular, particularly among younger visitors aged 25-34 who are highly engaged with AI-based recommendations. There is a growing demand for customised itineraries and flexible booking options, allowing visitors to tailor their experiences to their preferences.
- **Seasonal Travel Shifts**: There's emphasis on promoting travel outside peak summer months when crowds are thinner and prices softer, useful for coastal destinations with shoulder-season appeal.
- **Domestic Demand and Staycations:** UK residents continue to take domestic holidays, partly due to cost pressures, convenience, and global impacts. Coastal and countryside areas benefit strongly from this trend.
- **Inbound Market Growth**: International visits and spending in the UK are forecast to grow. Growth among key markets (especially the US and parts of Europe) suggests opportunity for coastal destinations appealing to long-haul and regional visitors.

The National Challenge

Recent global economic and political uncertainty continues to affect visitor confidence and spending. Changes to international travel regulations, visa requirements and trade agreements, alongside ongoing currency fluctuations, risk increasing costs for overseas visitors. At the same time, rising inflation and the cost-of-living crisis have reduced domestic disposable income, contributing to shorter stays, increased price sensitivity and fluctuating visitor spend across the year.

National policy changes are placing additional pressure on tourism businesses. Increases to employer National Insurance Contributions and the National Minimum Wage from April 2025 have had a disproportionate impact on sectors such as hotels, restaurants, and bars, which rely heavily on entry-level and seasonal staff. Common mitigation measures include reducing investment, limiting staffing levels or increasing prices to customers, all of which can affect service quality and business viability.

Pressures linked to seasonality, particularly during school holidays and major events mean effective visitor flow management, promotion of off-peak travel and dispersal to lesser-visited areas are increasingly important to protect the visitor experience and resident wellbeing.

Environmental sustainability remains a critical consideration. Climate change is already affecting seasonality, with warmer temperatures potentially extending the traditional summer season, while also increasing the risk of extreme weather events that disrupt outdoor activities and coastal environments. Continued collaboration between stakeholders is therefore essential to minimise impacts on natural assets, marine environment, and local communities, while supporting a transition to more sustainable tourism practices.

Finally, as technology evolves, the tourism sector must continue to embrace digital transformation. Improving online booking and information systems, using data analytics to better understand visitor behaviour, and expanding contactless and digital services will help businesses remain competitive, enhance the visitor experience and support more targeted, sustainable destination management.

Appendix 3: Strategic Alignment

This framework supports the Council's wider place-shaping role by aligning the visitor economy with broader priorities for economic growth, regeneration, culture, transport, climate response, community wellbeing and future local government arrangements. It recognises the visitor economy not as a standalone sector, but as a key driver of place, supporting investment, skills, town centres, and quality of life.

The DMP will need to remain adaptable to wider changes, including adapting to any Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), engaging and aligning with Devon and Partners LVEP and VisitEngland priorities. LGR will change local authority council structures across Devon from April 2028, Torbay Council will cease and a new Torbay and South Devon Council will be established. The impact therefore on tourism, the visitor economy and this DMP will need to be reviewed at the appropriate time.

The Devon and Partners Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) will be important to regional collaboration. To avoid duplication, the DMP references the LVEP at a high level and priorities have been aligned including leadership, funding, data and insight, partnership working, destination profile, skills and sustainable tourism.

Across national, regional, and local strategies, there is a consistent emphasis on the importance of a strong and coordinated visitor economy. These strategies highlight the need for sustainable and inclusive growth, improved infrastructure, high-quality visitor experiences, and stronger collaboration between partners. There is also a clear focus on maximising the value of heritage, culture, and natural assets, alongside developing a coherent place narrative that strengthens Torbay's identity and appeal.

The DMP aligns with a range of key strategies and policy frameworks that together provide a joined-up approach to place and destination management:

- **Community and Corporate Plan (2023–2043):** Supports place quality, inclusive growth, stronger communities, and long-term resilience.
- **Economic Growth Strategy (2022–2030):** Positions the visitor economy as a key driver of prosperity, investment, skills, and business growth.
- **Torbay Story:** Provides a unified place narrative and identity to support marketing, engagement, and investment.

- **English Riviera Destination Management Plan (2022–2030):** Establishes foundations for higher-value, year-round tourism and informs the refreshed approach.
- **ERBID Business Plan (2022–2027):** Supports destination marketing, product development and partnership working across the visitor economy.
- **Torbay Inclusion Strategy (2025-30):** Embeds equality, diversity, and inclusion across Council activity, supporting accessible places, services, and opportunities for all residents and visitors.

The DMP also aligns with a range of thematic strategies which strengthen the visitor offer and support wider place outcomes:

- **Culture, heritage, and events strategies:** Enhance the cultural offer, heritage assets and year-round events, supporting visitor experience and local identity.
- **Torbay Food Strategy (2025–2030):** Strengthens the local food offer as a key part of the visitor experience and local economy.
- **Geopark Management Plan (2023–2033):** Protects and promotes Torbay's natural assets and global status as a UNESCO Global Geopark.
- **Outdoor Events Strategy (2021–2027):** Supports the development of a high-quality events programme to extend the visitor season.

In addition, the framework aligns with key spatial and environmental policies:

- **Local Plan:** Provides the statutory framework for land use, supporting tourism development, regeneration, and investment, including Core Tourism Investment Areas.
- **Climate and environmental strategies:** Support sustainable tourism, carbon reduction, and the protection of natural assets, including through initiatives such as *A Greener Way for Our Bay*.
- **Transport and accessibility priorities:** Support improved connectivity, active travel, and access to enhance both visitor and resident experience.

Collectively, these strategies emphasise the need for strong partnership working and shared ownership, investment in infrastructure, public realm, and destination quality with a focus on sustainability, resilience, and climate responsibility. They highlight the need for improved data,

insight and performance monitoring with a clear and consistent place narrative that unites the destination and the sector.

Overall, this alignment ensures that the Destination Management Plan is fully integrated with wider Council priorities and partner activity. It provides a coordinated framework to maximise the contribution of the visitor economy to Torbay's long-term economic, social, and environmental ambitions, supporting its position as the UK's premier coastal destination.

Appendix 4: Delivery, Governance and Monitoring Framework

The Destination Management Plan (DMP) is supported by a delivery and governance approach that will help translate the strategic framework into coordinated action over time. The DMP is not a fixed action plan; it provides the direction, priorities and partnership structure from which more detailed actions, roles, sequencing and resources can be developed.

A live action plan will sit beneath the framework and will be developed and updated through partnership working. It will identify practical actions, potential partners, indicative timescales, dependencies and resource considerations as they become clearer. This agile approach recognises that not all organisations, funding routes or delivery responsibilities can be confirmed at this stage, and that priorities and involvement may need to evolve as businesses, residents, communities and partners help shape what matters most over the lifetime of the Plan.

These priorities focus on strengthening leadership and collaboration, developing a clear and consistent place narrative, improving the use of data and insight, enhancing visitor experience and product development, embedding sustainability, supporting workforce development, and improving infrastructure and accessibility. Example actions have been developed through stakeholder engagement and will be refined through partnership working as part of the delivery process.

Delivery of the DMP will be based on a shared ownership model. While Torbay Council will provide strategic leadership and act as a facilitator and enabler, delivery will be led collectively by businesses, partners and stakeholders working within their own roles and areas of influence. This approach reflects the need for a more coordinated and collaborative model, ensuring that responsibilities are clear and that activity across the destination is aligned.

A key part of this approach is the establishment of the Visitor Economy Cluster (VEC), a business-led partnership bringing together representative stakeholders across the visitor economy. The ERBID will be part of the VEC, helping to connect destination marketing, business insight and delivery activity with the wider partnership approach. The VEC will support oversight of the DMP, coordinate activity, share insight and provide a stronger collective voice for the sector, while avoiding duplication with existing structures. Its membership and involvement routes will be able to develop over time as priorities, projects and opportunities emerge.

Priority action groups will sit underneath the VEC to help deliver actions linked to the DMP's priorities. They will be set up where there is a clear need, enough interest and the right partners

are available. These groups will bring together relevant businesses, stakeholders and delivery partners to help turn the DMP into practical action and identify what support, resources or funding may be needed. The exact membership, focus and timing of each group will remain flexible, with opportunities for people and organisations to join or contribute as delivery develops.

The DMP will begin its delivery phase with action planning activity involving key stakeholders and businesses to agree the first areas of focus. This will help identify where collective effort is most needed, what can be progressed in the short term, and where further development, partner input or funding exploration is required before actions can move forward. It will also allow participation to broaden over time as the VEC, action groups and delivery activity develop.

Performance monitoring will be an integral part of the framework. Progress will be measured through a set of proportionate indicators linked to the DMP's objectives, including visitor activity and value, destination quality, business engagement, sustainability, and workforce development. These measures will be reviewed through the delivery plan and updated as required to reflect changing priorities.

Regular monitoring and reporting will support oversight and accountability. Action groups will meet to review progress, address challenges and update delivery activity where they are established. Reporting arrangements will remain proportionate and will be developed through the delivery process, with an annual progress update summarising achievements, challenges and outcomes across priority areas. This will be reported through governance structures to the Torbay Place Leadership Board, to ensure transparency, alignment and continued strategic oversight.

Overall, this delivery, governance and monitoring framework provides a structured and collaborative approach to implementing the DMP. It ensures that the strategic ambitions of the Plan are supported by a flexible process for developing clear actions, strong partnerships and proportionate performance management, enabling Torbay to deliver a more coordinated, resilient and high-quality visitor economy.

Appendix 5: Engagement and Consultation Summary

Engagement with businesses, stakeholders and partners was carried out to inform the development of this policy framework. This included one-to-one discussions, workshops, and an online survey, alongside feedback gathered from businesses on visitor experiences.

This engagement provided valuable insight into how the visitor economy is experienced in practice and identified key themes relating to perception, delivery, and future priorities.

Overall, feedback reinforced the importance of the visitor economy to Torbay, particularly in supporting local businesses, jobs, and the wider identity of the area. Businesses and stakeholders highlighted strong levels of pride in Torbay's natural environment, cultural assets, and tourism offer. However, engagement also identified a clear gap between these strengths and how they are consistently experienced or perceived.

Visitor feedback gathered through businesses and surveys highlighted a number of recurring themes. Positive feedback consistently focused on Torbay's coastline, scenery, attractions, and welcoming hospitality, with many visitors valuing the range of activities, affordability, and overall environment.

However, feedback also identified challenges in relation to the quality and consistency of the visitor experience. Key issues raised included:

- The condition and appearance of town centres and public spaces
- Perceptions of cleanliness and maintenance
- Concerns around antisocial behaviour and safety
- Limitations in retail, dining and wider visitor offer
- A need for improved signage, information, and transport
- A lack of year-round and family-friendly activities

From a business and stakeholder perspective, engagement highlighted a number of structural and delivery challenges. These included:

- A perception of fragmented governance and unclear leadership

- Limited coordination across organisations and initiatives
- Duplication of activity across multiple groups and plans
- A lack of clarity on roles, responsibilities, and ownership
- Challenges in accessing support, funding, and resources

Stakeholders consistently identified that the main barrier to progress was not a lack of ideas or opportunity, but the need for a more coordinated and effective approach to delivery.

The engagement process also identified a strong appetite for change. Businesses and partners supported a more collaborative, business-led model, with clearer leadership, improved communication, and a stronger shared vision for the destination. There was particular support for:

- A more coordinated approach to events and marketing
- Greater investment in place quality and visitor experience
- Strengthened use of data and insight
- Improved support for skills and workforce development
- A clearer and more consistent destination narrative

These findings have directly informed the approach set out in the DMP, including the focus on partnership working, clearer governance structures, and a more proactive, delivery-led model.

Appendix 6: Glossary and Definitions

For the purpose of this framework, the following terms are used in a broad and practical way.

- **Visitor economy:** The wider economic and social activity linked to visitors, including tourism, hospitality, attractions, events, culture, leisure, transport, shops and public spaces.
- **Destination quality:** The overall quality of the place and visitor experience, including public spaces, services, accessibility, and perception of the area.
- **Year-round economy:** Activity that supports visitor demand across the whole year, reducing reliance on peak seasons.
- **Sustainable and inclusive growth:** Growth that protects assets, benefits communities and minimises negative environmental and social impacts.
- **Destination Management Plan (DMP):** A strategic framework setting out the vision, priorities, and delivery approach for Torbay as a destination and place.
- **Place-based approach:** A joined-up way of planning that looks at Torbay as a whole place. It considers the economy, communities, environment, culture, transport, public spaces and local identity together.
- **Visitor Economy Cluster (VEC):** A business-led partnership coordinating delivery and collaboration across the visitor economy.
- **Visitor experience:** The overall quality of a visitor's journey, including attractions, services, infrastructure, and customer service.
- **Public realm:** Publicly accessible spaces such as streets, seafronts and town centres that shape the visitor experience.
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** Measures used to track progress, including visitor satisfaction, value, and engagement.
- **Higher-value visits:** Visits that bring greater benefit to Torbay, such as longer stays, more local spend or visits outside the busiest summer months.
- **Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP):** A regional partnership that helps councils, tourism bodies and partners work together on visitor economy priorities, including funding, evidence, promotion, skills and sustainable tourism.

- **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR):** Possible changes to local council structures and responsibilities. The DMP should be reviewed if these changes affect tourism delivery or regional working.
- **Net Promoter Score (NPS):** A survey measure showing how likely visitors are to recommend Torbay to other people.
- **Full-time equivalent (FTE):** A way of showing how many full-time jobs are represented when full-time and part-time hours are combined.
- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** The overall value of goods and services produced in the economy.
- **Real terms:** A way of comparing money over time after inflation has been taken into account.
- **Business tourism:** Work-related visits, including conferences, meetings, training events and professional gatherings.

tomorrow's TOURISM

Torbay Destination Management Plan Review

BASELINE REPORT

Evidence Base

5th February 2026

TORBAY COUNCIL

Contents

Introduction & Approach..... 3

Summary and Key Findings 4

1.Visitor Economy Performance & Market Context

1.1 Visitor Volumes, Value & Impact – Domestic 6

1.2 Visitor Volumes, Value & Impact – Visitor Origin 8

1.3 Visitor Volumes, Value & Impact – International / Inbound..... 9

1.4 Market Segments 11

1.5 Seasonal Profile of Domestic Visitors to Devon 12

1.6 Market Trends 13

1.7 Employment 14

2.Strategic Alignment

2.1 Devon & Torbay Strategic Policy Framework 16

2.2 Current Governance Model 18

3. Destination Supply Side – The English Riviera Today

3.1 Tourism Economy Accommodation – 2019 Audit..... 20

3.2 Accommodation Supply & Distribution 21

3.3 Accommodation Supply – Sharing Economy 22

3.4 Visitor Attractions..... 23

3.5 Strategically Important Visitor Attractions 24

3.6 Visitor Experience & Service Quality 25

3.7. Habitats Regulations Assessment 26

3.8 Torbay Local Plan and Core Tourism Investment Areas 27

4. Review of the Existing DMP..... 28

Annexes

I. Employment in the Visitor Economy 30

II. Policy Maps & Detailed Evidence 31

III. Review Of The Existing DMP 34

IV. Index of Figures, Maps and Tables 41

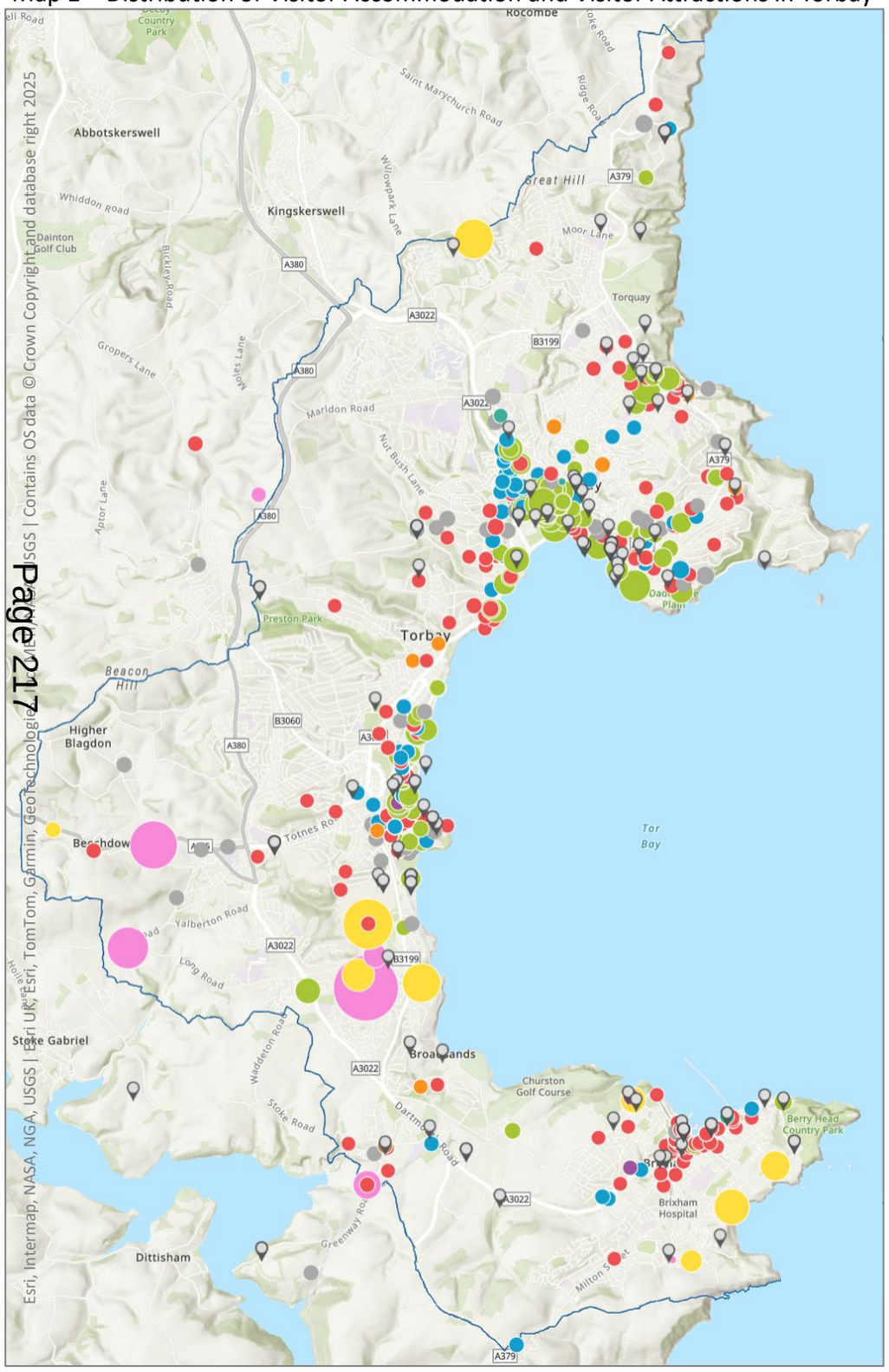
Notes:

1. Study Area – Torbay Unitary Authority
2. Data Sources: The data underpinning this review has been gathered from a range of sources and where secondary, those sources are given.
3. Image Sources: Maps and figures are Tomorrow's Tourism Ltd, with sources referenced where applicable. Images are licenced from Shutterstock
4. This document is best viewed on a high resolution 27" monitor. When printed the document is A3 in size and is printed on Cocoon recycled paper. The polypropylene front cover is recyclable.
5. This document is an interim report prepared on behalf of Torbay Council. Tomorrow's Tourism Ltd. will not be liable for any indirect or consequential loss or damage as a result of reliance on any of the insight set out in this document.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

Introduction & Approach

Map 1 – Distribution of Visitor Accommodation and Visitor Attractions in Torbay



Visitor Accommodation

- Self Catering
- Guest House
- Hotel
- B&B
- Holiday Park
- Camping and Caravaning
- Inn
- Group accommodation
- Hostel
- Other

Bedrooms_or_Units

- > 450
- 350
- 200
- 100
- < 1

Visitor Attractions

1. This Baseline Report sets out the current state of play for the visitor economy in Torbay, drawing on a wide range of different sources and datasets to provide a snapshot of current performance and future potential.

2. The Report is part of the Discovery Stage relating to the development of a new Destination Management Plan for Torbay. Related work also includes an online survey for businesses and stakeholders, workshops and a number of in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. The development of the new Destination Management Plan will draw views from a wide range of partners and stakeholders to reflect a broad consensus and both elements of work can provide a firm foundations to build on for a successful future.

3. A variety of implications / findings are added in boxes in each Section and these key messages they are repeated as a Summary on the next page.

Outlook for 2026

4. Macroeconomic forecasts see a lack of UK private sector growth, with businesses weighed down by relatively high taxation, higher than average staff costs, high energy costs and a cautious visitor who typically has much less disposable income. Consumer confidence lags long-term norms with the GKF Index at -17 in November 2025, tracking at around this level over the two years since January 2024 and likely to continue throughout 2026 at this level. The unemployment rate is also likely to drift higher over the next year.

5. Inflation is likely to reduce slowly, but will remain above the 2% Bank of England target throughout 2026. Two or three reductions in interest rates are likely to see base rate falls to 3% by the end of 2026. This may help to unlock inward investment for those priority projects set out in the Torbay Story.

6. Running a business in the tourism economy in Torbay is likely to become less profitable in 2026 with increases in business rates for many from April, higher employment costs through the National Minimum Wage increases along with the decreased NICs threshold which has had a proportionately more severe effect on businesses that have lower paid or part-time staff. Funding for necessary investment by the public sector, such as on skills and training, may also be difficult to find given other statutory priorities.

7. Meanwhile, consumers will continue to watch their expenditure, which could mean shorter length of stay; replacing staying visits with day visits; or reducing expenditure while on holiday, for example by having fewer meals out, or opting for self-catering instead of serviced accommodation.

Implications for Torbay

- The challenging economic context will colour the first two years of any new Plan and should be taken account in the actions initially prioritised.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

Summary and Key Findings

1. The visitor economy is likely to be subject to wider macro-economic headwinds and a low growth environment over the next two to three years. Increasing the quality of Torbay's overall offer, developing and working with strategically important visitor attractions as well as continuing to reshape and revitalise the accommodation offer, give Torbay a route to greater long-term profitability.

2. Measures that focus on converting current day visitors to become longer staying and repeat visitors can help transform the economic fortunes of Torbay. A focus on attracting more visitors from overseas can also reap dividends as is reported in Section 1.3 below.

3. The leisure market presents opportunities but it may be helpful to focus on no more than three specific markets over the next three years. It will be helpful to weigh the opportunity costs of focusing on inbound tourism against domestic markets.

4. The opportunity cost of prioritising business tourism should also be examined. Some potential exists for growth in meetings and conferences for Devon, but has Torbay got the right product or location to realise the potential?

5. Torbay should consider diversifying beyond peak-season leisure demand, capitalising on strong volumes relating to *Visting Friends & Relatives* for year-round demand. The growing 65+ demographic offers opportunities for traditional activities, while fewer visitors with children may weaken school-holiday demand. Long stays from study travel may boost shoulder and off-season demand; there is an unmet demand for dog-friendly accommodation.

6. When considering the accommodation offer, the long-term decline in accommodation stock seen across this century may now have reached its baseline. While there is still likely to be some accommodation that is not aligned to market needs, there is an opportunity to continue to reshape the offer through planning policy and to prioritise public resources to facilitate and encourage new hotel investment.

7. The current DMP is being delivered successfully but the actions have not moved the dial in the way that will promote change and growth. Part of this is the unhelpful economic context, some of it is likely to be about inadequate resources, another issue may be the way in which the partners should best organise themselves to drive change and progress a complex and multi-layered policy area.

8. Given some slippage over recent years, improving visitor satisfaction and quality, particularly regarding cleanliness, safety, public realm, and legal compliance, should be raised up the agenda.

9. Developing in-house expertise in tourism statistics can help to turn data from the Data Hub into useful insight. Current statistics may underrepresent the situation; the DMP can also acknowledge the scale of the Sharing Economy and involve these operators in future planning and development.

10. Preparing for upcoming policy changes, in particular the Statutory Registration Scheme and potential visitor levies via the Devon & Torbay Combined County Authority, can both be strategic game-changers for Torbay.

11. The Destination Management Group (DMG) should consider the prioritisation of product development activity over the next 2 to 3 years. Successful events, like the Bay of Lights, highlight the importance of extending the tourism season; a study to identify two or three new events is recommended.

12. Enhancing the range and quality of visitor experiences could be a growth option, as offerings are less developed compared to other destinations. Consider working with the strategically important visitor attractions to develop the Geopark-related offer.

13. Diversify and support the accommodation sector by promoting high-quality standards, sustainable practices and off-season usage. Continue converting older stock to residential use; consider increasing bedspace reduction targets to better manage accommodation supply. A targeted programme to support high-aspiration accommodation providers could drive growth and quality.

14. Extending the tourist season will help create year-round jobs and strong collaborations with educational institutions will be central to address workforce challenges.

15. The DMG might consider assigning visitor economy actions to specific groups, such as those focused on resort quality or sustainability. Establishing a new system of governance will help drive the delivery of specific initiatives that link product development with targeted marketing campaigns to maximise benefits. Focussing on a few actions is likely to be more effective than spreading efforts too thinly.



Shutterstock (2025) Agatha Christie Statue, The Strand, Torquay, #2643825401

1. Visitor Economy Performance & Market Context

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

1.1 Visitor Volumes, Value & Impact – Domestic

2006-2019

Figure 1. Volume - Overnight Trips (000)

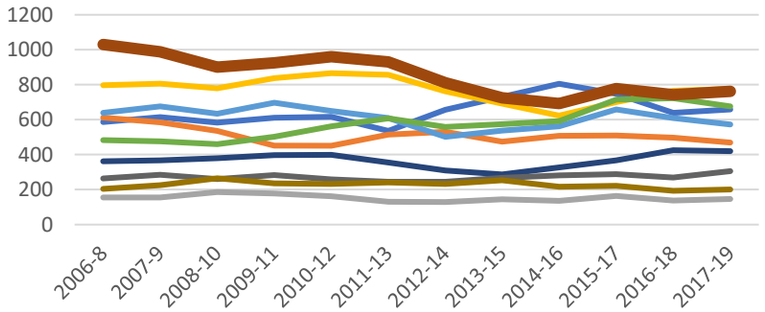


Figure 2. Nights (m)

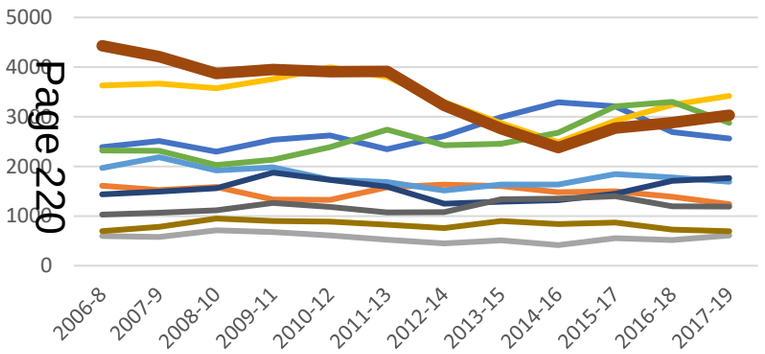
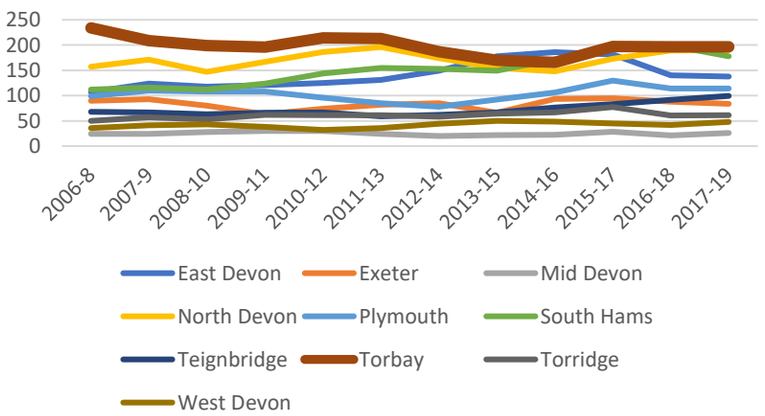


Figure 3. Overnight Spend (£m)



2021-2023 Annual Average

Figure 4. Volume (m)

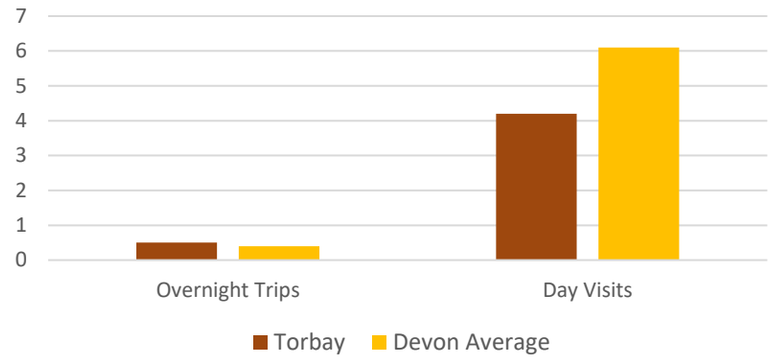


Figure 5. Nights (m)

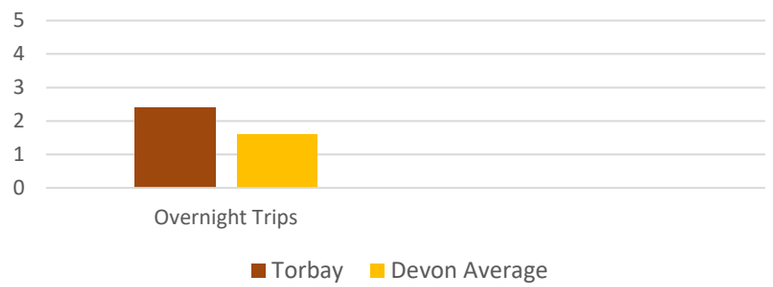
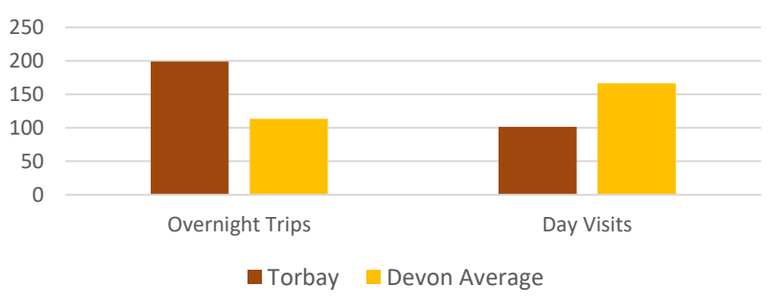


Figure 6. Spend (£m)



1. Torbay plays a major role in Devon's domestic tourism economy, outperforming the average of the other Devon districts ("Devon Average") across all core indicators of trips, nights and spend. While overnight visitors continue to deliver higher economic impact overall, day visits remain a vital component of Torbay's total visitor spend and footfall.

Pre-pandemic trends (2006–2019)

2. Torbay consistently recorded significantly higher visitor volumes, nights and spend than the Devon average. Over this period, trips gradually declined from just over 1 million in 2006 to around 0.75–0.8 million by 2019, with similar patterns observed in nights and spend. Despite this, Torbay maintained a clear lead over the Devon average throughout.[1,2]

Post-pandemic performance (2021–2023)

3. Torbay attracted around 1 million domestic trips between April 2021 and March 2023, compared with a Devon district average of 0.7 million. 4.8 million visitor nights were recorded in Torbay, well above the Devon district average of 3.1 million, highlighting Torbay's continued strength as a longer-stay destination.[3]

4. Domestic overnight spend totalled £398 million over the 24-month period, significantly higher than the Devon district average of £277 million.

Day Visits

5. Torbay recorded 8.3 million day visits, which is below the Devon district average of 12.3 million, reflecting the county's larger rural catchment and wider dispersal of trips. However, day visitors to Torbay generated a substantial £203 million in spend, underlining the importance of the day visitor market to the local economy, even though this remains lower than the Devon average of £333 million. [3]

1. Source: Visit England, GBTS 2006-2019.
2. Source: Visit England, GBTS 2021-2023. Due to small sample sizes and a shorter data collection period following COVID-19, this dataset was displayed as 24 months worth of data (Apr 2021 - Mar 2023). The charts are displayed as annual averages to provide easier read-across from the pre-COVID charts.
3. Notes on data: Due to changes in the data processing approach, the 2021-23 data is not directly comparable to previous data. Please note that all 2014-2016 averages have been calculated from original data and no re-weighting has taken place. Spend graph is not in real terms so inflation has gradually pushed up amounts. It is important to note that figures up to 2019 are not directly comparable with those from 2021 onwards due to changes in survey methodology and a lack of data for 2020–2021. The two periods should therefore be interpreted as separate time series.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

1.1 Visitor Volumes, Value & Impact – Domestic

Torbay vs other Devon Districts

1. With an average spend per trip of £384 and £83 per night, Torbay ranks among Devon's stronger performing districts. The average length of stay of 4.6 nights is above the county average and notably higher than more urban destinations such as Exeter and Plymouth.

2. Spend per day visit (£24.42) sits below the Devon average (£27.15) and ranks seventh out of the eight districts listed in Table 1. This indicates that while successful in attracting visitors, Torbay is not currently maximising the economic return from each trip.

3. The data highlights a strategic imperative to shift focus from purely driving visitor numbers towards increasing the value of each visit.

Table 1. Domestic Overnight and Day Visits by District 2021-2023[1]

District	Spend per Night	Spend per Trip	Average Nights	Spend per Day Visit
East Devon	£64	£282	4.4	£24.11
Exeter	£54	£162	3.0	£31.68
Mid Devon	£77	£251	3.3	-
North Devon	£56	£314	5.6	£26.12
Plymouth	£86	£255	3.0	£27.97
South Hams	£76	£302	4.0	£35.53
Teignbridge	£56	£217	3.8	£19.24
Torbay	**£83**	**£384**	**4.6**	**£24.42**
West Devon	£83	£383	4.6	£34.04

Devon

1. Overnight trips generated 3.8m visits, delivering £1.19bn and 12.5m bed nights, highlighting their central role in overall visitor value. [5]

2. Holiday trips dominate the overnight market, accounting for nearly half of trips (1.8m) but over half of spend (£639.7m) and bed nights (7.1m), underlining their higher economic yield and longer stays.

3. Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) represents a significant secondary segment (1.2m trips; £242.2m), contributing meaningful volume but lower spend per trip than holidays.

4. Business tourism is minimal at 2% of trips and 1% of value (0.1m trips; £14.7m), confirming Devon's limited reliance on corporate tourism. Domestic stays as part of outbound travel and miscellaneous trips are smaller but together add over £296m, indicating some diversification beyond core leisure demand.

5. Day visits are high volume (21.3m) and deliver substantial value (£1.09bn), almost matching overnight spend. This underlines the importance of short-stay and local/regional visitors to Devon's economy, though with lower spend per visit compared to overnight stays.

6. The data reinforces Devon's strong dependence on leisure-led tourism, particularly holidays and day visits, with clear opportunities to focus on extending stays, converting day visits into overnight trips, and increasing spend within the VFR market.

Implications for Torbay

- The opportunity cost of activity relating to Business Tourism should be considered as the market is relatively small and the Torbay product may not be as competitive as other Devon destinations
- The leisure market is broad based and extensive and more work to understand and prioritise key growth segments is likely to be important for future success.

Figure 7. Volume (m) of Visits to Devon 2024

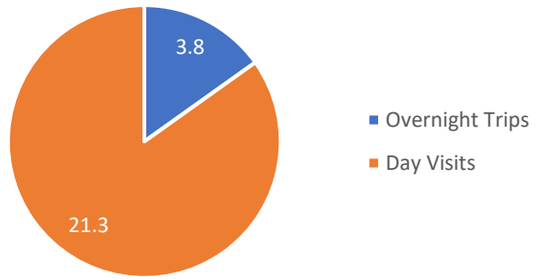


Figure 8. Value (£m) of Visits to Devon 2024

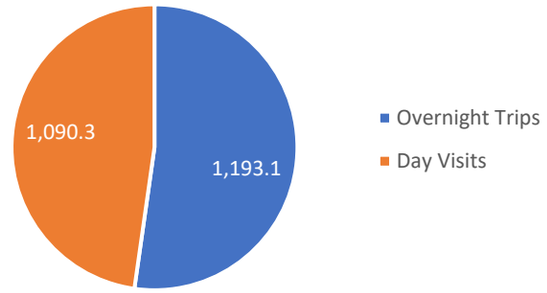
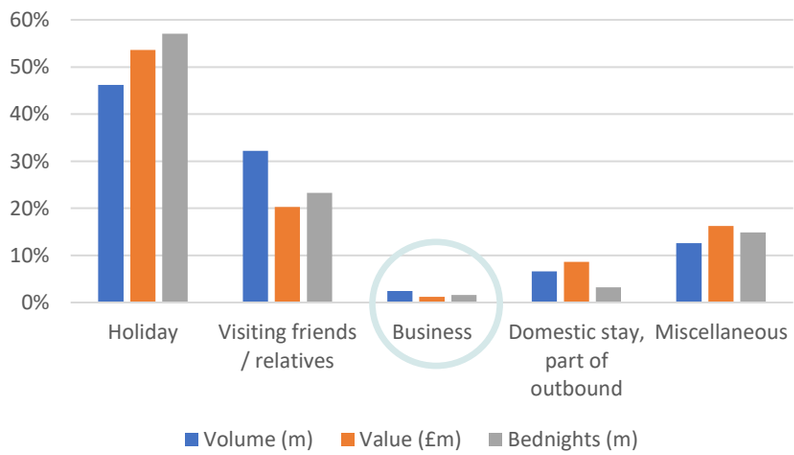


Figure 9. Domestic Overnight Trips by Purpose to Devon 2024



1. Source: Visit England, GBTS.
2. Note from VE: Due to small base sizes by local authority, the tables include 24 months worth of data (Apr 2021 - Mar 2023).
3. Source: GBDVS 3HR+' (3 hour+ Leisure Day Visits, the broadest definition of leisure day visits)
4. Torridge has been omitted from the table due to insufficient base size. Mid Devon Day visit data has been omitted for the same reason.
5. Source: GBTS 2024, https://www.visitbritain.org/research-insights/domestic-tourism-latest-results#view-and-analyse-data

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

1.2 Visitor Volumes, Value & Impact – Visitor Origin

South West Visitor Economy Hub

1. The South West Visitor Economy Hub report for Q3 2025 highlights the West Midlands as the largest share of visitors to the English Riviera outside the South West region at 25%. The South East and East Midlands also provide a significant source of visitors. These markets are stable compared with the same period in 2024 [1]

2. Within the South West, Plymouth, Somerset and Cornwall are notable source markets.

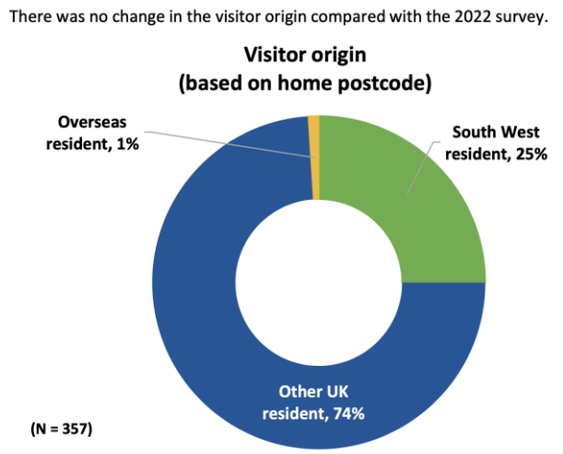
ERBID Visitor Survey 2025

3. The English Riviera Visitor Survey shows a stable pattern of visitor origin, with no significant change compared to the 2022 survey, although the respondent base does differ significantly from the Data Hub in terms of origin.

4. The vast majority of survey respondents come from within the UK, accounting for 99% of all respondents (N=357), while overseas visitors represent just 1%. UK visitors from outside the South West dominate the profile, making up nearly three-quarters of all respondents (74%). A further 25% originate from within the South West region.

5. In terms of specific origins, Bristol and Birmingham are the single largest postcode areas, each contributing 6% of visitors. This is followed by Sheffield and Exeter (4% each), with a wide spread of other urban centres such as Plymouth, Dudley, Nottingham, Leicester and Gloucester each contributing around 3%. [2]

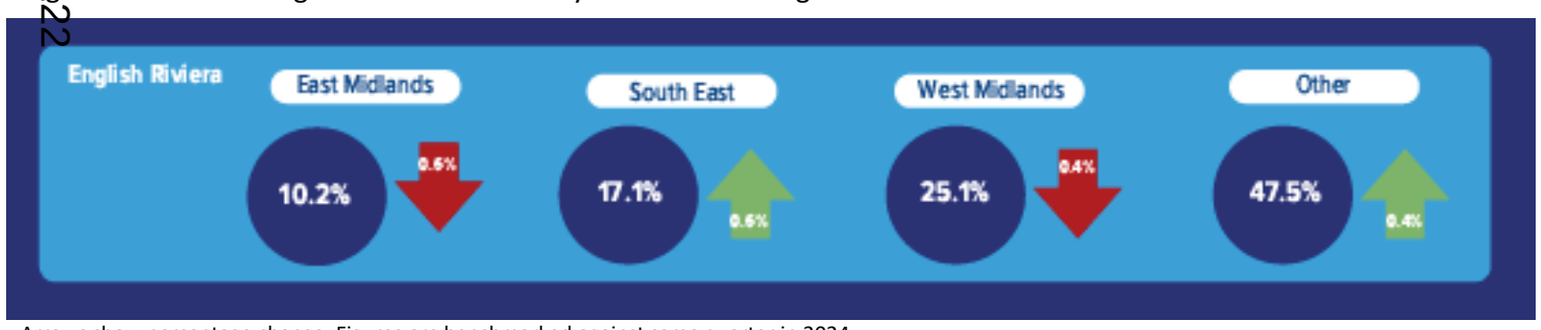
Figure 12. Visitor Origin from 2024 Visitor Survey [2]



Postal area origin		% of 2024 visitors	Postal area origin		% of 2024 visitors
BS	Bristol	6%	ST	Stoke-On-Trent	3%
B	Birmingham	6%	CF	Cardiff	2%
S	Sheffield	4%	WR	Worcester	2%
EX	Exeter	4%	CV	Coventry	2%
PL	Plymouth	3%	OX	Oxford	2%
DY	Dudley	3%	RG	Reading	2%
NG	Nottingham	3%	BB	Blackburn	2%
LE	Leicester	3%	NN	Northampton	2%
GL	Gloucester	3%	SN	Swindon	2%
NP	Newport	3%			

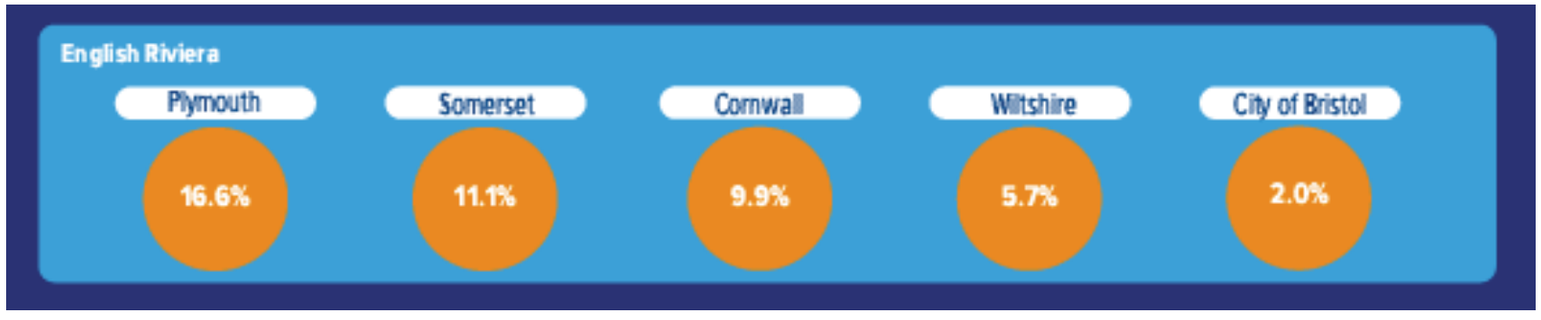
24

Figure 10. Footfall Origin of Visitors to Torbay Q3 2025 - UK Regions [1]



Arrows show percentage change. Figures are benchmarked against same quarter in 2024

Figure 11. Footfall Origin of Visitors to Torbay Q3 2025 – South West



Implications for Torbay

- Developing Inhouse resource and expertise in tourism statistics and insight would be beneficial to ensure regular reports are more consistent and well connected.
- Such a resource will then better interrogate and utilise existing datasets provided by the Datahub and other source and identify new research requirements.
- The accuracy of origin data presented on this page can be questioned on the basis of sample sizes – a fuller analysis of the BT mobile phone data held on the Datahub is advised.

1. Source: Visitor Economy Report for English Riviera QUARTER 3 2025 Devon July - September 2025
2. Source: The English Riviera Visitor Survey 2024 Final Report Produced for and on behalf of The English Riviera BID Company by The South West Research Company Ltd. March 2025

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

1.3 Visitor Volumes, Value & Impact – International / Inbound

Figure 13. Inbound Visits (000)

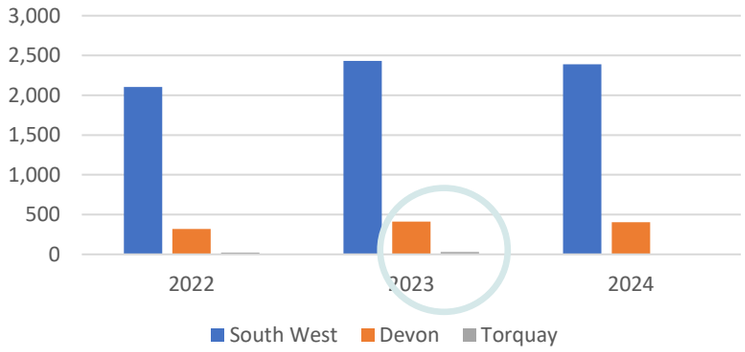


Figure 14. Inbound Nights (000)

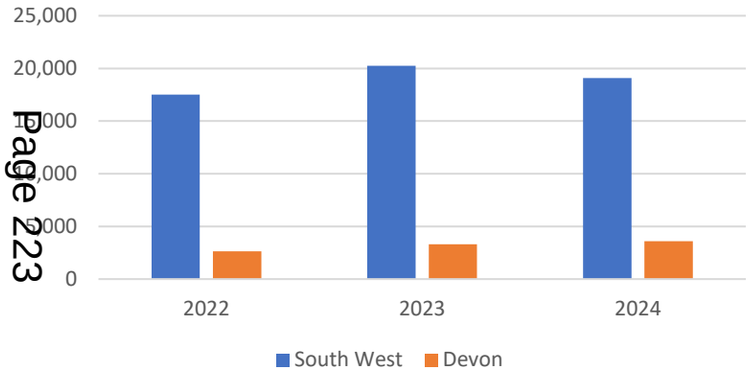
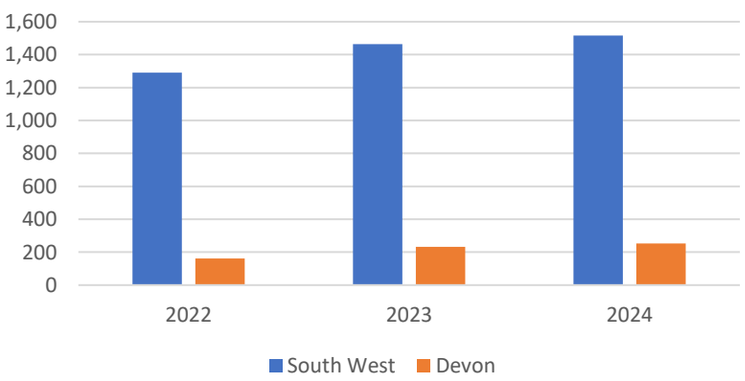


Figure 15. Inbound Spend (£m)



1. Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS)

1. Demand in the South West softened slightly in 2024 after a strong 2023, with visits down marginally but nominal spend continuing to grow, indicating higher value per trip.

2. Devon broadly followed this pattern for visits (slight dip vs 2023) but outperformed the wider region on nights and spend. Nights in Devon continued to rise in 2024, contrasting with a decline across the South West, suggesting longer stays. Spend growth in Devon was also strong, increasing again in 2024 and at a faster rate than visits, pointing to higher daily expenditure but note this is not adjusted for inflation.

3. Devon accounts for 17% of South West visits, underlining its importance to the regional visitor economy. Torquay represents 7.3% of Devon's inbound visitor market, a small but still significant contribution within the county.

Purpose of Visit

4. Holidays are important for Devon but account for a smaller share of visits, nights and spend than in the wider South West, indicating a more diversified visitor economy.

5. Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) is the largest market, providing consistent, year-round demand and supporting overall visit and night volumes.

6. Business and study trips generate a disproportionately high share of nights and spend, highlighting their importance for higher value, longer stays and reduced seasonality.

Implications for Torbay – Inbound Visitors

- Inbound visits to Torbay are marginal in numbers terms (see Figure 13 and the opportunity cost of inbound activity needs to be considered against a focus on domestic markets.
- Holiday trips form a smaller share of the Devon market, so Torbay should not depend solely on peak-season leisure demand.
- Strong VFR volumes support year-round demand, but typically generate lower (accommodation) spend, requiring a stronger offer and experiences to increase value.
- Higher business spend in Devon, when compared with the SW, suggests scope to grow meetings, conferences and corporate but the base is low and a focus on leisure is likely to drive profitability.
- Study travel delivers long stays and high spend in Devon, offering Torbay opportunities to support shoulder-season and off-season demand.

Figure 16. Purpose of Inbound Visits 2024
% of Visits

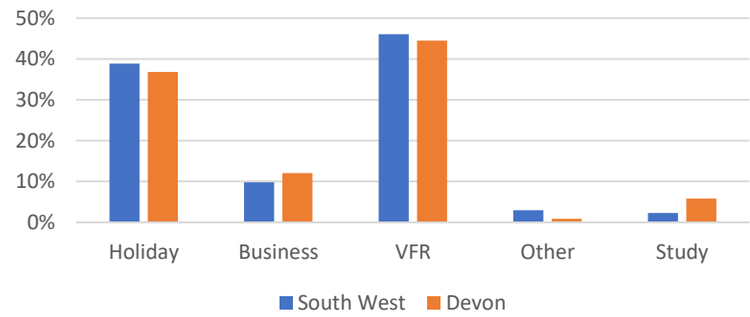


Figure 17. Purpose of Inbound Visits 2024
% of Nights

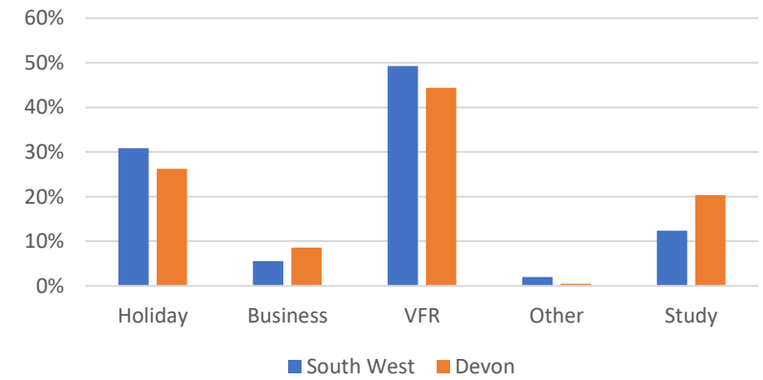
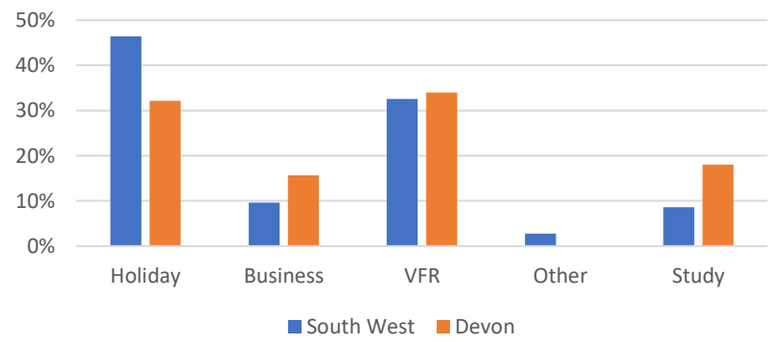


Figure 18. Purpose of Inbound Visits 2024
% of Spend



© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

1.3 Visitor Volumes, Value & Impact – International / Inbound

Torbay Markets for Short-term Lets

1. The ONS short-term lets dataset (Table 2) provides a valuable insight into the nationalities of international visitors choosing commercial self-catered accommodation (through Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group) in Torbay. Analysing the top 25 inbound markets reveals a clear picture of Torbay's core overseas demand.

2. The data indicates a strong dependence on principal European markets. Germany is the dominant source country, accounting for 28% of all sampled international visitors in this accommodation segment. This is followed by the Netherlands (11%), forming a significant bloc of North European demand.

3. Together with France, Switzerland/Liechtenstein, Denmark, Belgium and Austria, EU nations constitute the overwhelming majority of inbound visitors staying in short-term lets.

4. Beyond Europe, Torbay attracts meaningful visitation from key English-speaking long-haul markets, namely Australia (7%), the United States (7%), and Canada (2%). There is also emerging but smaller-scale demand from other global regions, including "Asia other" (5%), and individual countries like Brazil, China, and South Africa. This demonstrates a diversified, albeit Europe-centric, international appeal.

Devon Markets

5. The data in Table 3 shows that Devon's top international markets in 2022 were dominated by European visitors, although the USA stands out as the highest-spending market despite only being the second-largest by visit numbers.

6. Germany generated the most visits overall (41,000) and a substantial 247,000 nights, reflecting strong interest and relatively long stays. The USA contributed a similar number of visits (40,000) but far more nights (358,000), resulting in by far the highest total spend (£31m), indicating higher-value, longer-haul travel.

7. The Netherlands and France followed as reliable mid-sized markets, each providing steady volumes of visits and spend. Australia, though only sixth in visit numbers, produced 169,000 nights in Devon —one of the highest averages— suggesting very long stays typical of long-haul travellers.

8. Poland and Canada generated modest spend relative to visit volume, while Spain produced a surprisingly high number of nights (226,000) despite ranking ninth in visits.

Table 3. Top Ten Inbound Markets to Devon 2022[2]

Market	Visits (000)	Nights (000)	Spend (£m)
1. Germany	41	247	18
2. USA	40	358	31
3. Netherlands	36	180	11
4. France	24	156	10
5. Ireland	18	80	7
6. Australia	17	169	12
7. Poland	13	67	2
8. Canada	15	119	5
9. Spain	14	226	6
10. Switzerland	11	79	6

Implications for Torbay - Inbound Visitors

- Given that the top source markets in table 2 (Germany, Netherlands, Australia, France, USA, Ireland, and Switzerland / Liechtenstein) account for two thirds of inbound demand, targeted marketing efforts towards a small number of these key markets is likely to yield higher returns than a less-selective approach.
- Collaboration through the South West Group and VisitBritain would provide a cost-effective channel for this targeted promotion, leveraging regional and national tourism networks to reinforce Torbay's appeal to these proven audiences.
- It could be more productive to focus on a maximum of three inbound leisure markets over a three-year programme period with significant budgets that leverage other partnership income.

Table 2. Top 25 Inbound Visitors to Torbay 2024[1]

Country	%
Germany	28%
Netherlands	11%
Australia	7%
France	7%
United States	7%
Switzerland and Liechtenstein	7%
Asia other	5%
Denmark	3%
Ireland	3%
Canada	2%
Belgium	2%
Spain	2%
Norway	2%
Austria	1%
Oceania other	1%
Czechia	1%
Poland	1%
Italy	1%
Europe other	1%
Sweden	1%
Missing	1%
South Africa	1%
Brazil	1%
Central and South America other	1%
China	1%

1. Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey 2024 https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/shorttermletsthroughonlinecollaborativeeconomyplatformsuk/januarytodecember2024
2. Source: Office for National , International Passenger Survey, Subregion Trend by Purpose 2009-2022. Data at County level is only available up to 2022. IPS data for 2024 and 2025 is under review https://www.visitbritain.org/research-insights/inbound-visits-and-spend-quarterly-uk

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

1.4 Market Segments

1. Torbay's visitor base is ageing, potentially at a faster rate than the wider population. Torbay currently lacks a sufficient offer to attract younger visitors; even with new development, competition from alternative destinations may limit impact without a distinct and compelling proposition and greater level of focus on investment in the place.

2. The most recent data from the South West Visitor Economy Hub indicates that visitors to the English Riviera in Q3 2025 were predominantly aged 35–64, accounting for the largest share of all visitors. The 65+ age group (22%) was the only demographic to record growth, increasing by 1.4% during the period.[1] Demographic trends will ensure this growth continues – and this is likely to include / attract active early retired independent travellers with cultural and sporting interests. Further work to fully understand this market and its potential is likely to be important as part of the new DMP.

3. All age groups under 55 years experienced a decline in visitor share, with particularly low representation from 18 to 24-year-olds (3%).

4. Over 11% of visitors to the English Riviera reported an accessibility requirement, a higher proportion than in either Exeter and Plymouth. There is a growth opportunity for Torbay to take greater advantage of the 'Purple Pound', given that nationally 20.8m overnight trips were taken by those with an impairment in 2024, and this segment spend more and stay longer. A focus on inclusion of many different visitor types can help Torbay continue to be a welcoming place for all visitors.

5. Visitors travelling with children represented 17% of the market, below levels seen in Exeter and Plymouth. The majority of visitors (74%) travelled without children, in line with other Devon destinations.

6. 16.% of visitors brought a dog on an overnight stay to the English Riviera. A further 5% indicated they would have travelled with a dog if suitable accommodation had been available. Demand for dog-friendly accommodation is lower than in North and South Devon but represents an opportunity for growth.

Table 4. Assessment of Current Target Markets

Current Target Market	Source	Fit with 2025 Visitor Trends	Comments / Implications
Families (Fun by the Sea)	DMP, MS	Weak	Only 17.1% of visitors have dependent children—lower than Devon average. Family-focused attractions may need extra promotion or adaptation to maintain this segment.
Young Actives	DMP, MS	Weak	Decline in 18–34 visitors suggests reduced engagement. Torbay may need refreshed experiences or targeted campaigns to attract younger adults.
Cultural Explorers (incl. empty nesters)	DMP, MS	Strong	The growing 65+ and accessibility-focused visitors align well with this market. Traditional seaside, heritage, and cultural attractions fit these preferences. A growth market.
Business Tourism	DMP, MS	Weak	Current volume and value of business tourism is too small to be a priority market. Defined as longer-term priority in DMP.
Solo Travellers	MS	Moderate	Older adults and flexible travellers may include solo visitors; potential to develop solo-friendly packages or experiences. Marginal in terms of volume.
Groups – UK, international, educational	MS	Neutral	Data doesn't directly reflect group trends, but dog-friendly and accessible experiences could appeal to certain UK group segments.
Independent International Travellers	MS	Neutral	Current market is very modest – marketing may be at disproportionate cost to revenues.
Cruise Ships	MS	Neutral	Data not currently captured, but older demographics may support shore excursions and day visits. Marginal impact with potential issues of visitor management depending on timings.

DMP = Destination Management Plan; MS = Marketing Strategy 2024

1. Table 4 right assesses the target market segments in the current DMP and in the 2024 Marketing Strategy (MS) against the market data and trends. [2]

Implications for Torbay – Market Segments

- The growing 65+ market strengthens demand for traditional seaside, cultural, heritage and low-impact activities. Older visitors are more flexible, supporting off-peak and shoulder-season growth if targeted appropriately.
- Despite the 11% of share, the accessible market still represents an unrealised opportunity given that it makes up around a fifth of all visits.
- Fewer visitors with dependent children reduces pressure on family-centric attractions but risks weaker school-holiday demand unless actively addressed.
- Unmet demand for dog-friendly accommodation presents a relatively quick win for extending stays and boosting spend.
- Promotion should increasingly emphasise comfort, ease, wellbeing, scenery and value, while selectively developing offers to rebalance younger and family segments if desired.
- Current origin analysis adds limited insight; access to raw BT data reported by the Datahub is needed to understand travel patterns beyond the expected proximity effect.

1. Source: South West Visitor Economy Hub, 2025, Visitor Economy Report for English Riviera – Quarter 3 2025, July - September 2025
2. Sources: English Riviera Destination Management Plan 2022-2030; English Riviera BID Destination Marketing Strategy 2024

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

1.5 Seasonal Profile of Domestic Visits to Devon

1. Domestic tourism activity in 2024 shows a clear seasonal pattern across both overnight trips and day visits to Devon. [1]

2. Overnight trips increased steadily from Q1 to Q3 before declining in Q4. Trip volume rose from 0.9 million in Q1 to a peak of 1.1 million in Q3, reflecting stronger summer demand. This trend is mirrored in visitor spending, which increased substantially from £186.2m in Q1 to £396.7m in Q3, alongside a rise in bed nights from 2.3 million to 4.5 million. The Q4 slowdown saw volume fall to 0.8 million and spend reduce to £326.5m, indicating the impact of seasonality despite relatively strong end-of-year value.

3. Day visits followed a similar seasonal trajectory, with volumes climbing from 4.8 million in Q1 to 6.3 million in Q3, before dropping to 4.4 million in Q4. However, spending patterns differed: Q1 recorded the highest day-visit value (£421.7m), suggesting higher spend per visit early in the year. Spend then fell sharply in Q2 (£177.5m) before partially recovering in Q3 (£252.2m) and Q4 (£238.9m).

4. The data highlights Q3 as the peak period for domestic tourism activity, particularly for overnight trips, while spend per visit varies significantly by quarter, especially for day visitors. These trends reinforce the importance of seasonality in shaping both visitor volumes and economic impact.

Implications for Torbay

- Stand-out events that extend the season are already making a difference - such as the Bay of Lights. It would be helpful to undertake feasibility to assess options that can attract new audiences with a view to developing one or two further events of national importance during the next DMP period.
- A season extension plan could identify accommodation types, such as high-quality self-catering and boutique hotels, that are less susceptible to seasonal trends.

Figure 19. Overnight Volume 2024 (m)

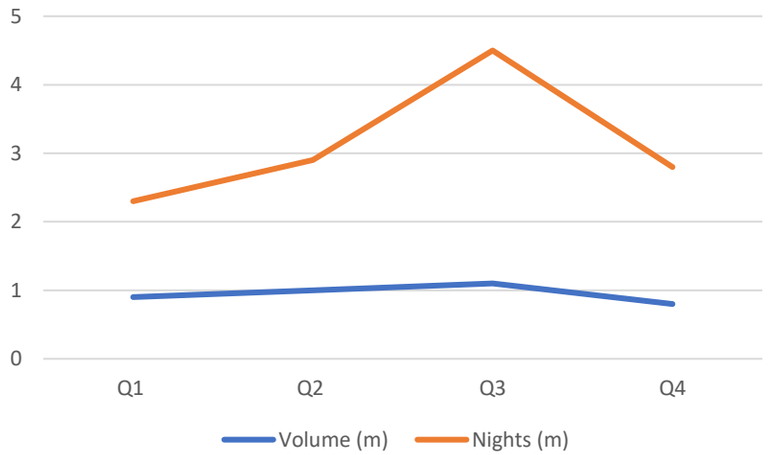


Figure 20. Overnight Value 2024 (£m)

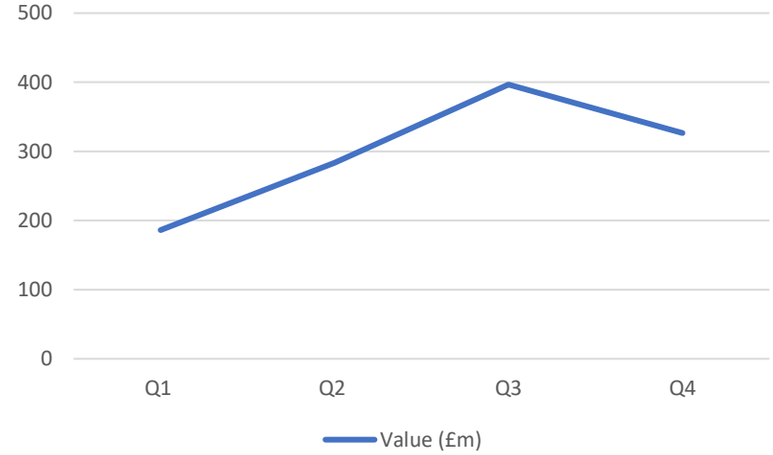


Figure 21. Day Visit Volume 2024 (m)

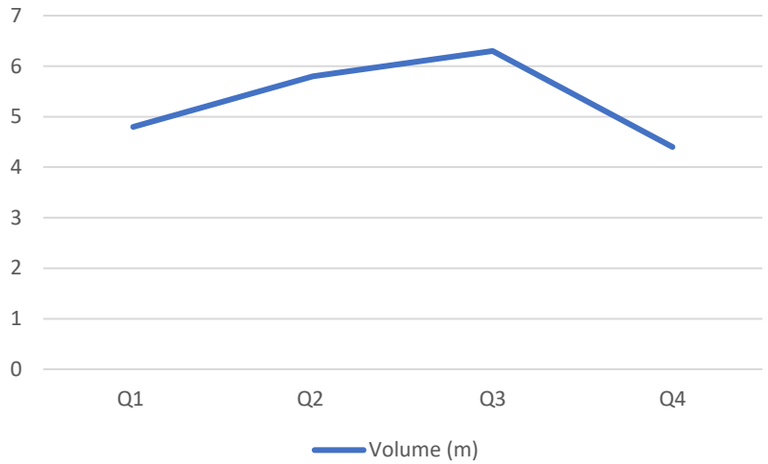


Figure 22. Day Visit Value 2024 (£m)

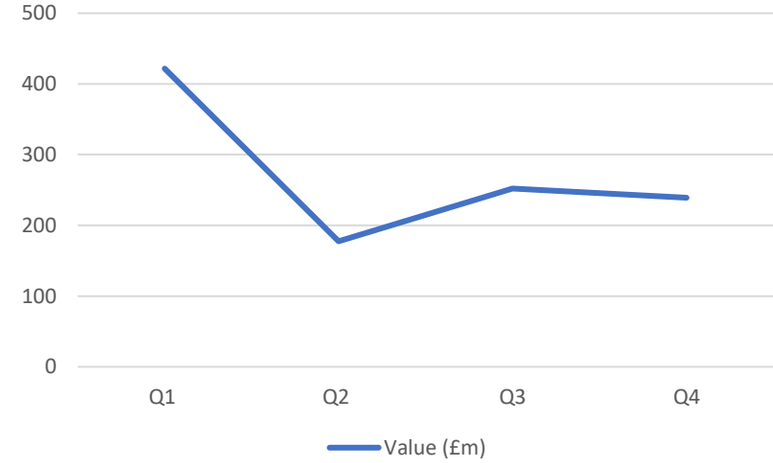
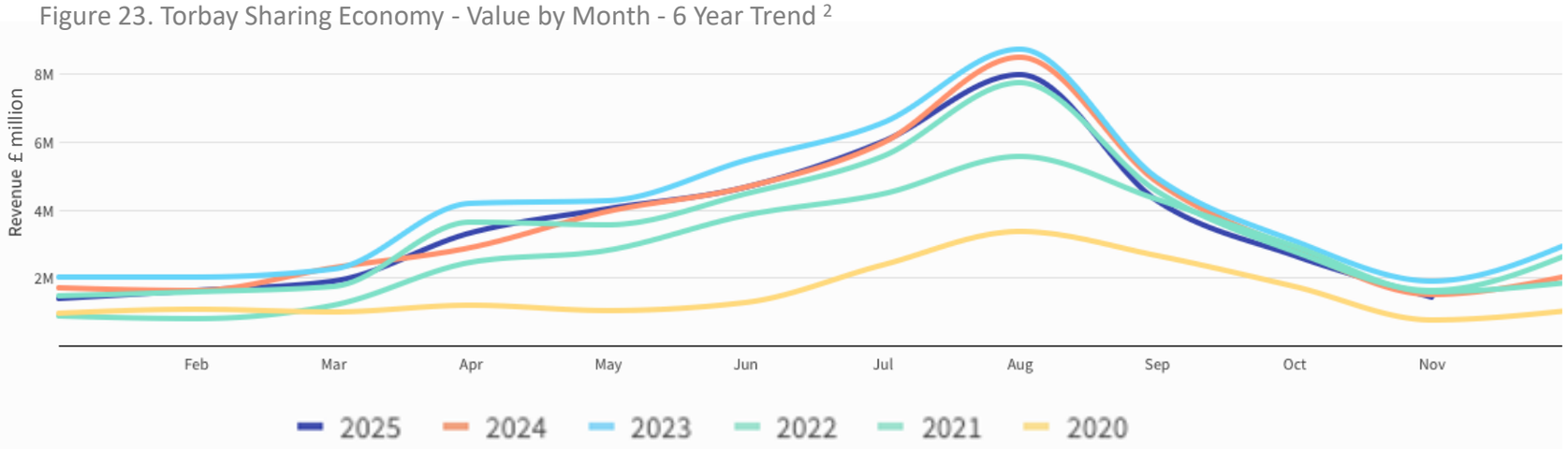


Figure 23. Torbay Sharing Economy - Value by Month - 6 Year Trend [2]



1. Source: VisitEngland https://www.visitbritain.org/research-insights/domestic-tourism-latest-results#view-and-analyse-data. Note: data only available for 2024.
2. Source AirDNA – short term lets revenues by month : includes international visitors - see slides 20 – 23 for details.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

1.6 Market Trends

Consumer Confidence

1. UK consumer confidence showed a modest improvement in October 2025, rising for the first time since May, according to YouGov. The increase was mainly driven by stronger perceptions of household finances, both looking back over the previous month and ahead to the coming year.[1]

2. This suggests that, while many households remain under pressure from the cost of living, there are some early signs that financial anxiety may be easing slightly. However, broader economic confidence remains fragile, with continued uncertainty around house prices and business activity.[2]

3. This cautiously improving sentiment has important implications for domestic travel. When people feel more secure about their finances, they are generally more willing to spend on discretionary items such as holidays and short breaks.

4. In the current climate, UK-based trips continue to be viewed as a more affordable and lower-risk option compared with overseas travel. Even during periods of weaker confidence, many households have continued to prioritise short domestic breaks, suggesting that staycations remain a resilient part of consumer spending.

5. That said, rising everyday costs still limit how much many people can spend on leisure. As a result, the uplift in confidence is likely to translate more into demand for shorter, lower-cost domestic trips rather than expensive or longer holidays. Overall, the recent improvement in consumer confidence points to steady but cautious growth in domestic travel, rather than a rapid rebound.

6. Torbay is well placed to benefit from domestic staycations and short breaks. Late booking, flexible cancellation, and self-catering will continue to dominate booking behaviour. Peak summer seasons should remain strong, but shoulder and off-season demand will require active stimulation. E.g. through events and promotions but also making it easier to buy and change domestic trips.

2026: The year of holidaying at home? [4]

Four in ten intend to reduce their global travel plans or refocus on domestic trips in 2026. If it's too expensive to go to classic destinations like Italy or France, holidaymakers may turn to other kinds of holidays such as domestic city breaks.

Accommodation Trends

7. Domestic tourism remains price-sensitive, with strong growth in holiday rentals driven by affordability, privacy, and self-catering.

8. Hotels face ongoing pressure from short-term lets and cost-of-living impacts, with demand focused on quality, flexibility, and online booking.

9. Interest is growing in glamping, camping, wellness breaks, and off-peak stays, particularly among families and younger visitors.

10. The over-65 market is growing but underused, with accessibility and service levels key barriers. [3]

11. Torbay's visitor economy is likely to remain increasingly driven by self-catering and experience-led stays, with proximity to attractions a critical factor in choice. There is strong potential for diversification, shoulder-season growth, and managing the impact of short-term lets to sustain competitiveness.

Domestic Tourism Trends

12. The volume of domestic overnight trips in England showed a minor decline from 2024 to 2025.

13. In terms of destination type, 'large towns or cities' increased their share of overnight trips in Q3 2025 vs the previous three years, while "seaside" declined.

14. Regionally, the South West's share of overnight trips shows a declining trend for Q3 over the past 4 years (20% in 2022 and 2023, 18% in 2024, 16% in 2025). [5]

15. Despite economic headwinds, travel demand remains resilient with consumers prioritising expenditure on travel over other goods and services. Consumers however will likely need to prioritise the number of trips but the 40% identified by the You Gov survey that may shift trips to domestic destinations is an opportunity for Torbay.

16. Value for money remains highly important with 92% of consumers looking for better value, more discounts and special offers in Q3 2025 up from 83% in Q3 2024. New experiences are also being prioritised, over iconic and affordable destinations across all generations. [6]

Implications for Torbay

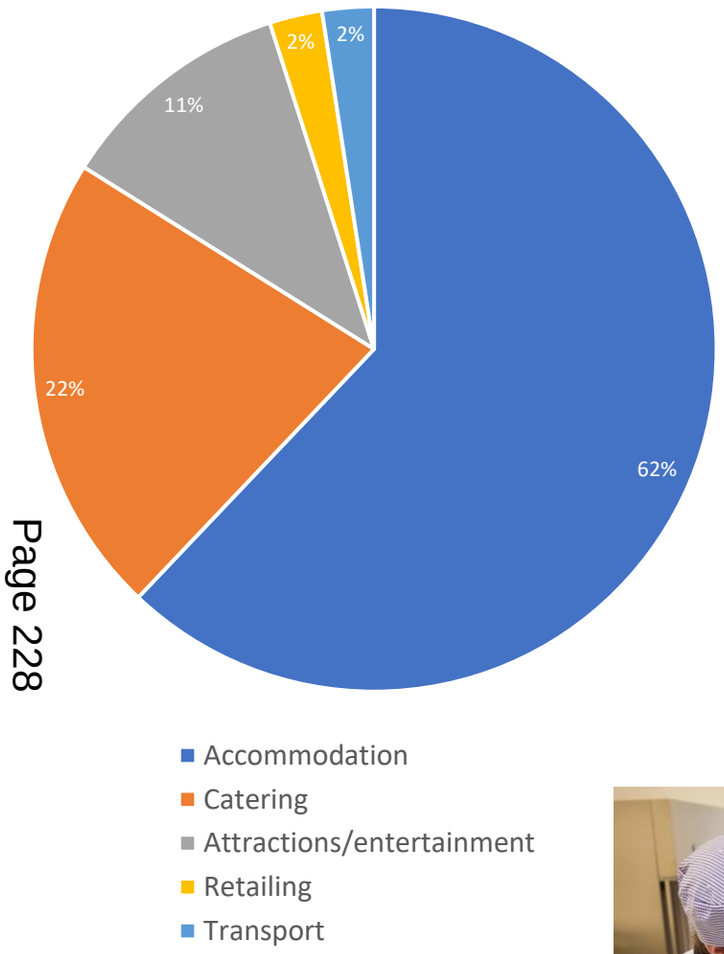
- Market trends and the wider economic context over the next two years means that value for money will become more important. Both the accommodation and attractions offer needs to have value at its core as well as being of high quality. This represents an opportunity for Torbay and a business support programme to encourage value-led offers would help cement a revitalised proposition.
- The product is likely to need upgrading and to move with the times – whether that is via private sector-led enterprise and investment or underpinning improvements from the public sector. It could be helpful to use what is likely to be a difficult trading period over the next 2 to 3 years to identify and develop key elements of the product that can be ready for growth when it comes.
- This could include the development of further specific 'visitable' Geopark assets, within the UNESCO designation which covers all of Torbay together with Agatha Christie experiences, Paignton Zoo and those other strategically important visitor attractions identified on Page 25.

1. Source: YouGov, October 2025: Consumer confidence rises for the first time since May (published 24 November 2025) link
2. Source: UK Parliament, House of Commons Library, Research Briefing - Business and consumer confidence: Economic indicators (Published 21 November 2025) link
3. Mintel, 2024, Hotels UK; Mintel, 2023, Holiday Rentals UK
4. Source: YouGov, 2025, Great Britain international traveller outlook 2026
5. VisitEngland, Domestic tourism: Q3 2025
6. Tourism Economics (2025) Global Travel: Key Themes for 2026 Dave Goodger and Helen McDermott December 2025

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

1.7 Employment

Figure 24. Torbay Direct Visitor Economy Employment 2024



1. Annex I shows total direct employment in the tourism economy as defined by the ONS. This does not include employment in the sharing economy as shown on page 22 (e.g. often non-serviced accommodation) so understates the overall impact.

2. Jobs are heavily concentrated in accommodation (62%) and catering (22%), with attractions, retail, and transport making up smaller shares. This indicates a visitor economy skewed towards hospitality services rather than a broad-based experience economy.

3. The broader Visitor Economy which is drawn from the ONS defined SIC codes as shown in Annex I shows some 9,445 jobs are sustained by spending in these service-related businesses.

4. From this estimate we calculate the direct jobs that are likely to be underpinned solely by the expenditure of visitors to Torbay. On this basis an estimated 4,623 jobs are sustained directly by the tourism economy, resulting in 2,126 FTE jobs.

5. The 4,623 direct jobs equate to an estimated 2,126 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs, highlighting the prevalence of part-time, seasonal, or casual employment in the sector.

6. Annex 1 estimates do not include indirect or induced jobs typically reported by the Cambridge model, such as South West Research Company's Economic Impact of the Torbay Visitor Economy. There are advantages to reporting a number of employment measures with direct jobs derived from SIC codes often favoured by the ONS and the Treasury.



Shutterstock (2025) Young trainee chefs_119348407

Implications for Torbay

- It will be important to support and diversify the accommodation sector (e.g., building resilience, promoting high quality standards, sustainable practices and off-season use). Over-dependence makes the economy vulnerable to shocks in the accommodation market (e.g., changes to tax rates and regulations, cost pressures).

- The aim should be to diversify the visitor offer to stimulate growth in under-represented sectors like attractions, entertainment, and retail. This could involve developing new experiences, events, and retail offerings that encourage visitor spending beyond bed and board, thereby creating a more resilient economy and spreading employment benefits.

- The figures understate the overall impact as they exclude the sharing economy and indirect / induced jobs. The DMP should acknowledge this hidden impact and consider strategies to engage with or formalise parts of the sharing economy, to improve quality control and ensure a fair business environment.

- Extending the season and creating more year-round, high-quality jobs. is the next step. This needs a fully fledged partnership with universities and colleges to ensure a pipeline of motivated talent and address potential workforce vulnerabilities. Strong links with education and training providers is likely to be a critical part of the new DMP.

1. ONS 2024, Business Register and Employment Survey (see Annex I for full list)

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

2. Strategic Alignment

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

2.1 Devon & Torbay Strategic Policy Framework

Key Strategy Documents

(More detail of the following documents is given in Annex II)

1. ERBID Consultation Document (2027-2031)

Objective: Position the visitor economy at the core of Torbay's future.

- Commit to strategic investment in destination marketing and product development.
- Enhance partnership working to drive sustainable tourism.

2. Destination Management Plan (DMP) Support

Objective: Re-establish the English Riviera as a premier coastal destination.

- Drive higher-value, year-round tourism using data and market insights.
- Focus on sustainability, accessibility, collaboration, and innovation.

3. Economic Growth Strategy (2022-2030)

Objective: Recognise the visitor economy as essential for Torbay's prosperity.

- Improve infrastructure and town-centre aesthetics.
- Focus on skills development, business innovation, and place-brand enhancement.

4. Food Strategy (2025-2030)

Objective: Enhance Torbay's food culture as a visitor attraction.

- Improve product quality and sustainability in the food sector.
- Foster local supply chains and support food-led events.

5. Outdoor Events Strategy (2021-2027)

Objective: Use outdoor events to enhance visitor experience and economic growth.

- Prioritise high-quality, well-managed events.
- Extend the tourism season and attract diverse audiences.

6. Heritage Strategy (2021-2026, Part 2)

Objective: Leverage heritage assets to enhance visitor experience and economic growth.

- Focus on product development and collaboration across cultural and tourism sectors.
- Improve access and interpretation of heritage sites.

7. Geopark Management Plan (2023-2033, Part 2)

Objective: Position the UNESCO Global Geopark as a key asset.

- Protect and enhance natural heritage while providing educational experiences.
- Ensure responsible tourism practices and community engagement.

8. Community and Corporate Plan (2023-2043)

Objective: Create a resilient and high-quality visitor economy.

- Improve infrastructure and promote sustainable development.
- Strengthen partnerships and enhance community wellbeing.

9. Sustainability and Climate Resilience

Objective: Integrate sustainability and environmental stewardship into Torbay's long-term planning.

- Focus on carbon reduction, biodiversity conservation, and coastal protection.
- Improve access to green spaces to enhance the visitor experience and resilience.

10. Torbay Story

Objective: Strengthen the identity and market positioning of the English Riviera.

- Develop a unified narrative and visual language for branding.
- Support consistent promotion of Torbay's strengths and character.

Summary of Key Points

1. All strategies emphasise the importance of enhancing the visitor economy through targeted investments, innovative product development, and strong partnerships. These strategies collectively aim to transform Torbay into a vibrant, resilient, and attractive coastal destination that benefits both visitors and the local community.
2. A consistent theme across all strategies is the commitment to sustainability, environmental stewardship, and climate resilience to ensure a high-quality visitor experience.
3. Strategies stress the importance of community involvement, improving infrastructure, and fostering a sense of place to create a welcoming environment for both residents and visitors.
4. Leveraging Torbay's rich heritage and food culture is seen as vital for attracting diverse audiences and enhancing the overall visitor experience.
5. Many strategies highlight the need for collaboration among stakeholders to achieve shared goals and improve the competitiveness of Torbay as a tourist destination.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

2.1 Devon & Torbay Strategic Policy Framework

Devon-wide Strategies

1. Devon & Partners LVEP Growth Plan (2025-2026)

Objective: Strengthen coordination and enhance destination competitiveness.

- Improve data and insights to inform decision-making.
- Streamline governance structures for better collaboration.
- Develop high-quality visitor products to enhance the visitor experience.
- Boost regional marketing impact to attract more visitors.

Reinforces the DMP's vision of a resilient and distinctive English Riviera, benefiting both visitors and local communities.

2. Great South West Tourism Partnership Prospectus

Objective: Promote a strategic approach to strengthen the visitor economy in the South West.

- Encourage regional collaboration among stakeholders.
- Invest in skills development and infrastructure for sustainable tourism.
- Advocate for a unified voice for the South West to increase national recognition and funding.

Complements the DMP's goals, creating conditions for Torbay to thrive as a leading coastal destination.

3. Devon and Torbay Local Growth Plan

Objective: Recognise and enhance the visitor economy as a driver of local prosperity.

- Focus on improving infrastructure and business support.
- Promote skills development and sustainability initiatives.
- Foster place-making efforts to strengthen destination identity.

Aligns with DMP priorities to create a vibrant, well-managed coastal destination that supports long-term community and economic wellbeing.

Summary of Key Points

1. The strategic frameworks outlined aim to cultivate a more competitive, resilient, and sustainable visitor economy in the South West, with a strong emphasis on collaboration, data-driven planning, and community engagement. A key focus across all strategies is the necessity for improved coordination among local, regional, and national stakeholders to enhance the overall visitor economy.
2. Each strategy aligns with a broader vision of creating a well-managed and competitive visitor economy that supports sustainable growth and delivers community benefits. Encouraging innovation within the tourism sector is another critical component, as it not only boosts competitiveness but also enhances the overall visitor experience.
3. Sustainability and responsible tourism practices are consistently highlighted as essential for ensuring long-term viability. Investment in infrastructure and skills development is vital for fostering a thriving visitor economy that can meet evolving demands.

Implications for Torbay – Policy & Strategy

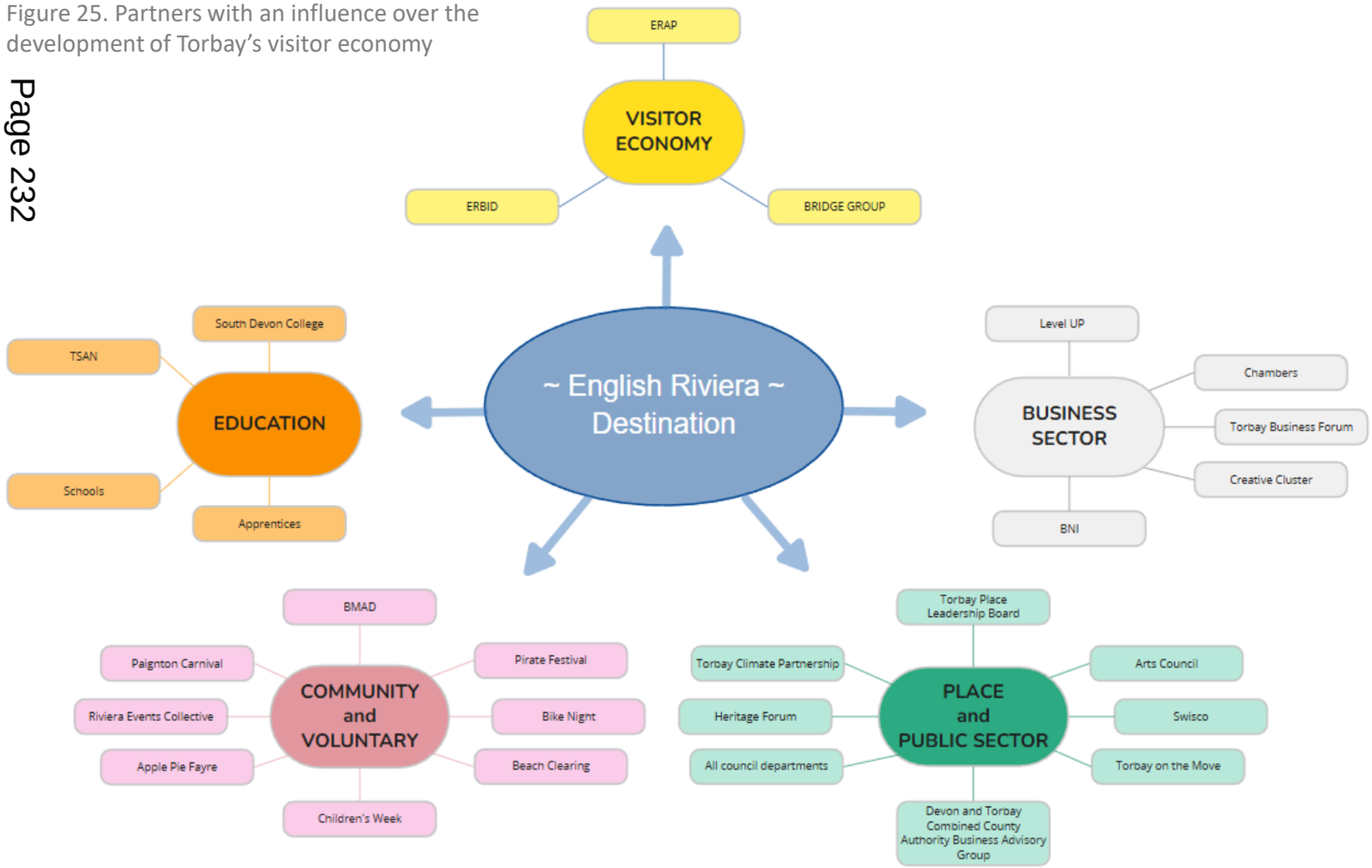
- The strategies provide important context for future growth. They typically include numerous priorities, are not always well resourced and delivery responsibilities are often not fully articulated. It will be important for the new DMP to clearly set out the delivery side as well as being firm on the core priorities.
- There are important policy changes coming down the track such as the Statutory Registration Scheme (which may reduce the supply of sharing economy properties) and the potential for a visitor levy via the Devon & Torbay Combined County Authority (currently in consultation). This may offer a route for Torbay to resource the future development and marketing of its visitor economy and warrants review and response. This is particularly important given that many other local authorities are likely to take the route and where tourism taxes on staying visitors are likely to be the norm in 15 years, rather than the exception that they are today.
- The ultimate goal is to establish economic conditions that benefit both visitors and the local community, contributing to a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient coastal destination. A focus on evidence-led planning and insights is crucial for informing product development and marketing strategies. Strengthening the unique identity of the English Riviera is also a priority, enhancing its appeal and market positioning to attract more visitors and showcase the strengths of Torbay, together with Devon and the wider South West.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

2.2 Current Governance Model

1. The governance of the English Riviera's Destination Management Plan is currently overseen by the Destination Management Group (DMG). This group has played a pivotal role in the implementation and delivery of the DMP, fostering collaboration among various organisations and tourism businesses to enhance Torbay's development, marketing and sustainable management.
2. The DMG brings together public and private sector partners, ensuring a balanced representation that leverages diverse expertise. The DMG is committed to making optimal use of existing resources while actively seeking additional investments to fulfil the DMP's objectives.
3. Recognising the demands placed on its members, the DMG acknowledges the need for a dedicated executive team to support the execution of the DMP's initiatives. This support is crucial for translating strategic plans into actionable tasks.
4. The DMP is designed to align with the Torbay Economic Growth Strategy 2022-2030, outlining specific interventions aimed at advancing the English Riviera as a premier visitor destination. The first draft of the Plan focused on targeted actions and priorities, with lead organisations specified to deliver on specific tasks. In summary, the DMG serves as the central body for the governance of the DMP, driving collaboration, resource management, and strategic alignment to enhance the tourism landscape of the English Riviera.
5. The development of a revised Destination Management Plan acknowledges that progress against the targets previously set out in the 2022 Plan has been slower to meet than required. While the existing Terms of Reference of the DMG set out sensible objectives together with details of collective and individual responsibilities, monitoring and outcomes and authority but it has no executive powers other than those which is likely to limit its .

Figure 25. Partners with an influence over the development of Torbay's visitor economy



Implications for Torbay - Governance Models

- The diverse array of business, community and stakeholder groups presents a significant opportunity for action for the new Destination Management Plan (DMP). By fostering coordinated action, the DMP can align strategic projects with the operational delivery creating a cohesive approach to growing the visitor economy.
- Central to this collaborative effort is likely to be the Place Board, which could serve as the focal point for assigning relevant actions to specific groups. To implement actions effectively, the creation of task and finish groups may prove to to be important. Such groups could be composed of key members from established organisations/groups who can act as catalysts for action, taking specific priorities forward and ensuring that progress is made.
- The establishment of accountable action planning and delivery groups is likely to be important for delivering actionable strategies and fostering collaboration. These groups can inspire the business community by clearly linking initiatives to tangible benefits.
- By harnessing the strengths of diverse stakeholders, a robust framework for action could be created that not only drives growth but also enhances the overall vitality of the visitor economy and ensures that Torbay is well-positioned to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

3. Destination Supply Side – The English Riviera Today

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

3.1 Tourism Economy Accommodation – 2019 Audit

Figure 26. Accommodation supply by Number and Type



Torbay 2019 Visitor Accommodation by Type

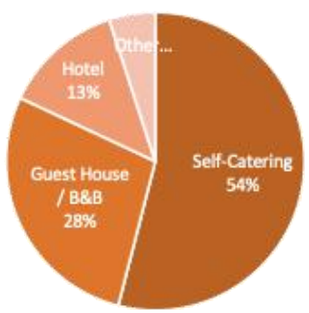
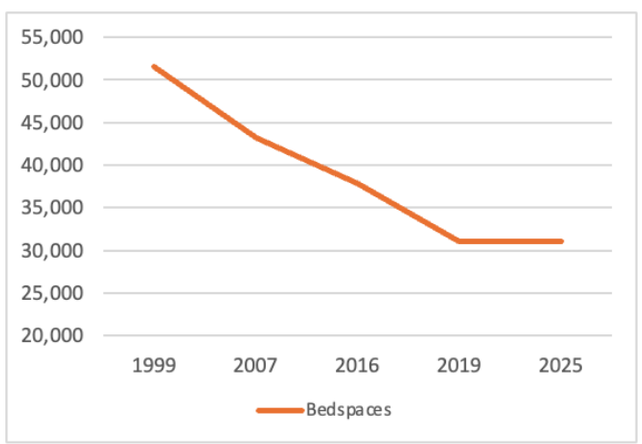


Figure 27. Accommodation Supply: 25-Year Trend



1. A 2019 audit of Torbay's visitor accommodation supply found 914 establishments, amounting to 11,001 rooms or units. Over half of the total establishments (54%) were self-catering. Serviced accommodation including B&Bs, guest houses and hotels made up 41%. [1]

2. The map overleaf on page 21 shows that visitor accommodation in Torbay is heavily concentrated in Torquay, which contains the largest share of establishments at 40%, reinforcing its position as the area's primary visitor centre. Paignton accounts for a further 29%, indicating a strong secondary accommodation base, while Brixham holds 24%, still a significant but more specialised tourism market. Babbacombe, with just 8% of establishments, has a much smaller and more localised accommodation offer compared with the main resorts.

3. The audit highlighted a lower supply of branded hotels in Torbay (9%), compared to the UK (47%) and to other coastal places such as Brighton (50%), Scarborough (25%) and Bournemouth (33%). [2,3]

4. There was a small increase noted in Torquay's serviced accommodation supply between 2014 and 2019, with only 3% (350 bed spaces) growth in the number of bed spaces. Comparatively, both Paignton and Brixham saw increases of 37% (1,080 bed spaces) and 35% (175 bed spaces) respectively.

5. The 2019 Accommodation Audit identified just two properties on Airbnb. In November 2025 there were 1,409 properties listed on Airbnb across Torbay which represents a decline of 6.1% over 2024. There were 1,740 listed in August 2025. Nationally, there has been a 28% increase in the number of short-term rental properties available since 2019.[4]

6. Peak season serviced accommodation occupancy remains below 80%, indicating an oversupply of stock.[5]

7. Figure 27 shows the 25-year trend of declining bedspaces which is not unusual amongst the majority of English resorts.

8. It is estimated that since the 2019 audit the number of bedspaces may have been maintained or increased marginally as a result of the growth in the Sharing Economy adding some 5,000 bedspaces across Torbay.

9. Ideally the 2019 audit should be updated as since it is likely that a proportion of smaller B&Bs will have transferred to self-catering operation with distribution through Airbnb, Booking.com or similar channels.

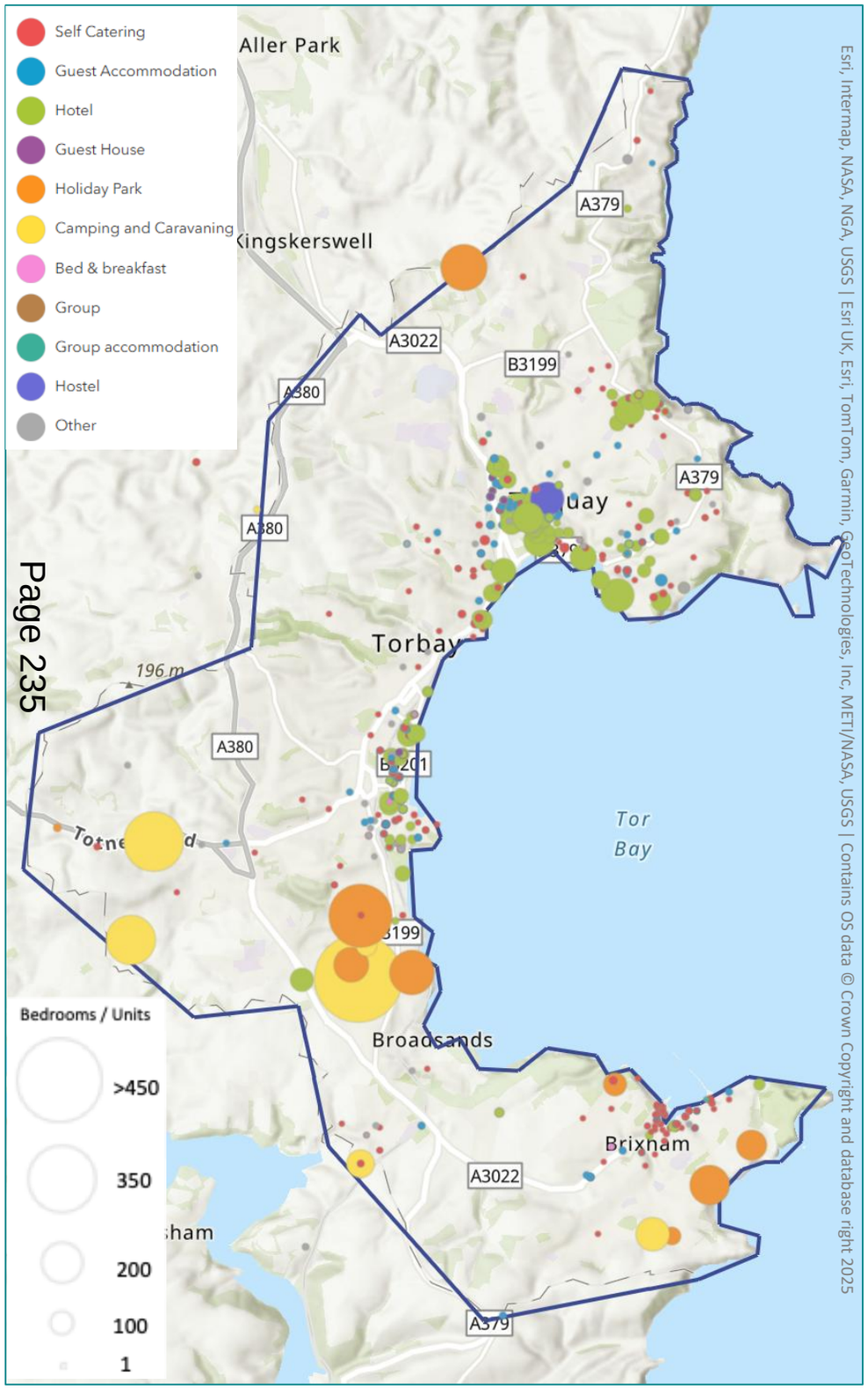
10. Any increase in supply since 2019 has clearly been affected by structural problems including COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. This has put substantial and continued pressure on all types of tourism businesses. This pressure is not about to let up given recent increases in employers NI upcoming business rates increases and continued downward pressure on the number of staying visitors and the new Plan needs to reflect this reality.

1. Source: Torbay Accommodation Audit database 2019
2. Institute of Hospitality (Spotlight on Hospitality 2019), from Summary Serviced Accommodation in Torbay 2019
3. AM:PM from Summary Serviced Accommodation in Torbay 2019
4. Source: VisitBritain https://www.visitbritain.org/research-insights/uk-short-term-rentals
5. Source: South West Visitor Economy Hub, 2025, Visitor Economy Report for English Riviera – Quarter 3 2025, July - September 2025

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

3.2 Accommodation Supply & Distribution

Map 2. Location of Tourism Economy Accommodation Establishments



1. This page splits visitor accommodation supply into two main clusters, the Tourism Economy and the Sharing Economy. Data is from 2019 and 2025 respectively.

   - *The Tourism Economy* reflects the professional sector, usually run by businesses registered at Companies House, that have a website, often employ staff, may pay VAT and are often be a member of a tourism body, typically a trade association or DMO. The majority of serviced accommodation is part of the tourism economy but it also includes many non-serviced holiday cottage businesses.

   - *The Sharing Economy* reflects the emergence of less formal operations that are usually promoted through one or more channels such as Airbnb and are often not businesses, but instead operated by individual property and home owners, usually on a non-serviced basis.

2. Typically, the Sharing Economy has more establishments but the Tourism Economy has the higher number of rooms, reflecting the larger scale nature of most professional operations.

3. While there are two broad clusters of accommodation types, there are also two main categories within the Tourism Economy: serviced and non-serviced accommodation. This recognises the very different experience provided by a serviced offer, which in general has declined in favour of non-serviced over the last decade.

4. Table 5 gives an indicative view of Torbay's current supply. Map 2 shows the prevalence of a high number of small businesses trading with under 3 rooms, clusters of hotels in Torquay and Paignton and a number of larger holiday parks and camp sites, particularly to the south of the area.

5. The Sharing Economy is reported in more detail overleaf.

Table 5 Accommodation supply: Tourism Economy & Sharing Economy

	Establishments	%	# Serviced Rooms	# Non-Serviced Rooms	Total Rooms	%
Babbacombe	70		946	72	1,018	
Brixham	216		287	844	1,131	
Paignton	264		1,717	2,215	3,932	
Torquay	364		4,102	818	4,920	
Tourism Economy	**914**	**39%**	**7,052**	**3,949**	**11,001**	**81%**
Sharing Economy	**1,447**	**61%**		**2,605**	**2,605**	**19%**
Total Stock	**2,361**		**7,052**	**6,554**	**13,606**	

NB - Indicative figures. Many 2019 properties now likely to be trading via Airbnb and offering a non-serviced offer Data for Tourism Economy sourced from ERBID/Torbay Council. Sharing Economy data derived from AirDNA 2025 Sharing economy stock taken as an average using August 2025 & November 2025 listings data

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

3.3 Accommodation Supply – Sharing Economy

Figure 28. Sharing Economy Revenue £m - 2025 Year to Date



Table 6. Torbay UA - Sharing Economy - YTD Summary

Sharing Economy Performance *Jan 2025 - Nov 2025*	Total	Against last year
Total Revenue	£29,400,000	-7.5%
# Available Listings	15,605	-7.9%
# Booked Listings	14,016	-3.9%
Room Nights Available	735,658	-6.6%
Room Nights Booked	393,268	-3.9%
Occupancy Rate	55%	3.5%
Average Day Rate	£144	-3.9%
RevPAR	£78.90	-0.5%
Jobs supported by Revenue *circa*	537	

Figure 29. SE Low & High Season Comparative Occupancy

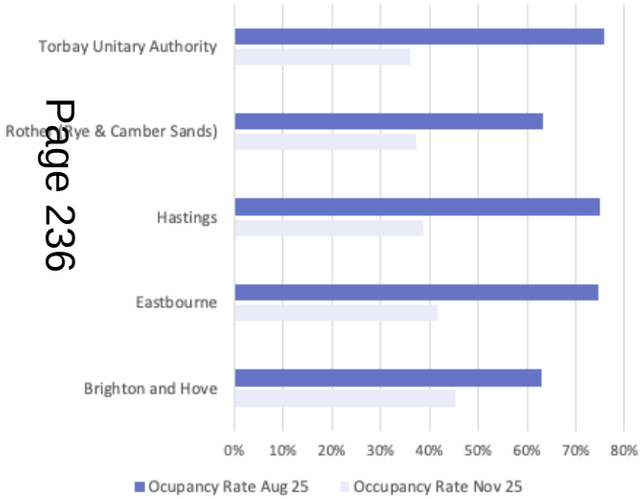


Figure 30. SE Relative Size and Three-Year Growth Trend
(Revenue in £m for September 2025 and the two previous years)

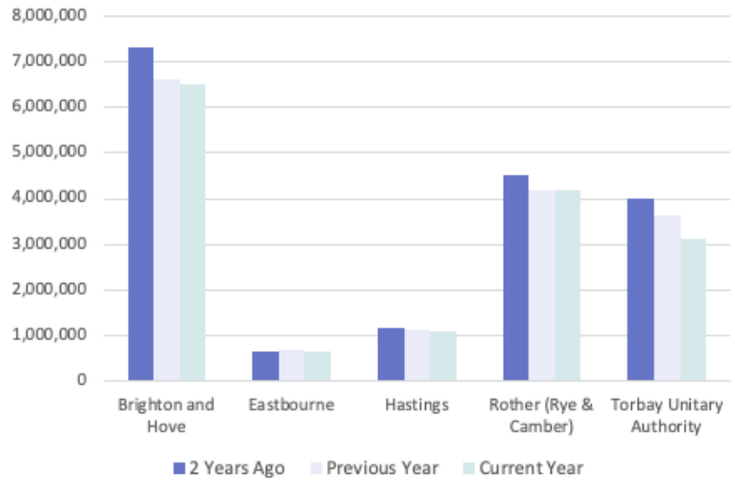
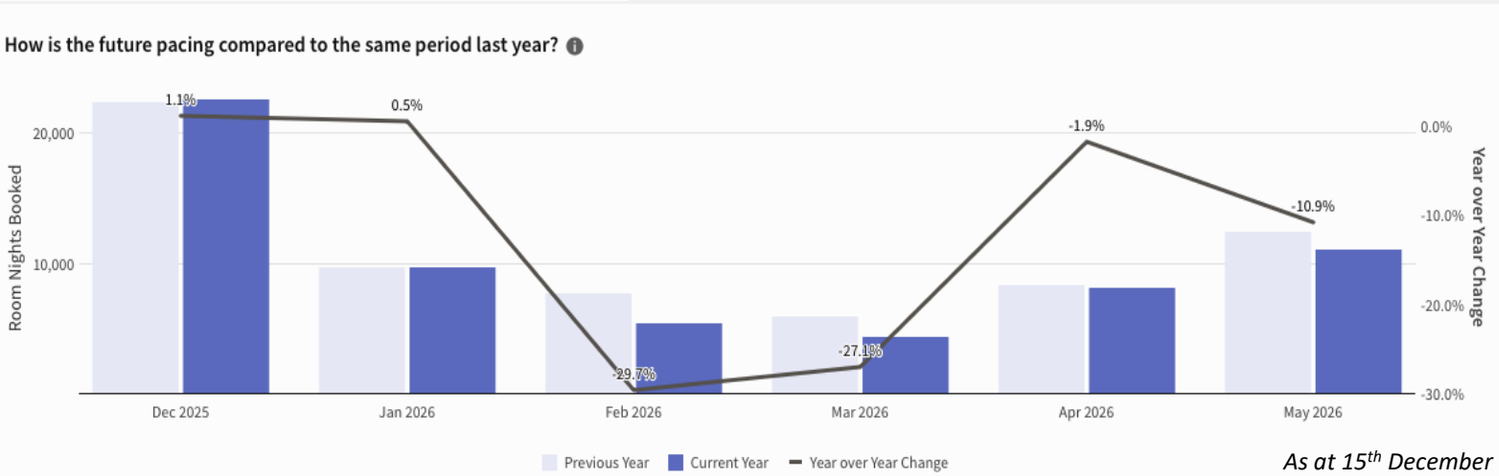


Figure 31. SE – Forward Bookings – to May 2026



1. Table 6 shows that total revenue from Sharing Economy businesses in the 11-month period to November 2025 was £29.4 millions trading from around 1,450 properties underpinning an estimated 537 jobs - which will be largely hidden from official statistics. [1]

2. The performance has suffered when looked at against the last two years but that trend is not confined to Torbay and is hitting other resorts in the same way due to cost-of-living pressures – see Figure 30.

3. An average occupancy rate of 55% across the period is reasonable and slightly higher than many inland and rural destinations, but somewhat lower than many towns. It has gone up as supply has contracted in 2025 when compared to 2024. Torbay compares well for high-season occupancy against the comparators shown in Figure 29.

4. However, occupancy in the winter (i.e. November 25 in the chart showing other comparator destinations) is lower in Torbay then in any of the other comparator destinations. This reflects in part the catchment and can be addressed with events and other action to draw people in, particularly during the Autumn shoulder.

5. Sharing economy properties represent 19% of all rooms in Torbay and are an important component, potentially attracting a younger audience than the more traditional stock. There would be benefits in developing this network, as at the moment many will be operating in isolation.

6. Figure 31 shows that Sharing economy forward bookings are softer in 2026 when compared against this year reflecting the fragility in current consumer confidence.

Implications for Torbay – Accommodation

- There is still a general oversupply of stock which depresses occupancy rates and reduces the viability of proposed / new accommodation developments
- Operators in the Sharing Economy should be supported and engaged in the DMP to maximise quality and create synergies across the wider visitor economy.

1. Job estimates calculated using Deloitte & Oxford Economics methodology set out in *Tourism Jobs & Growth* November 2013 commissioned by VisitBritain

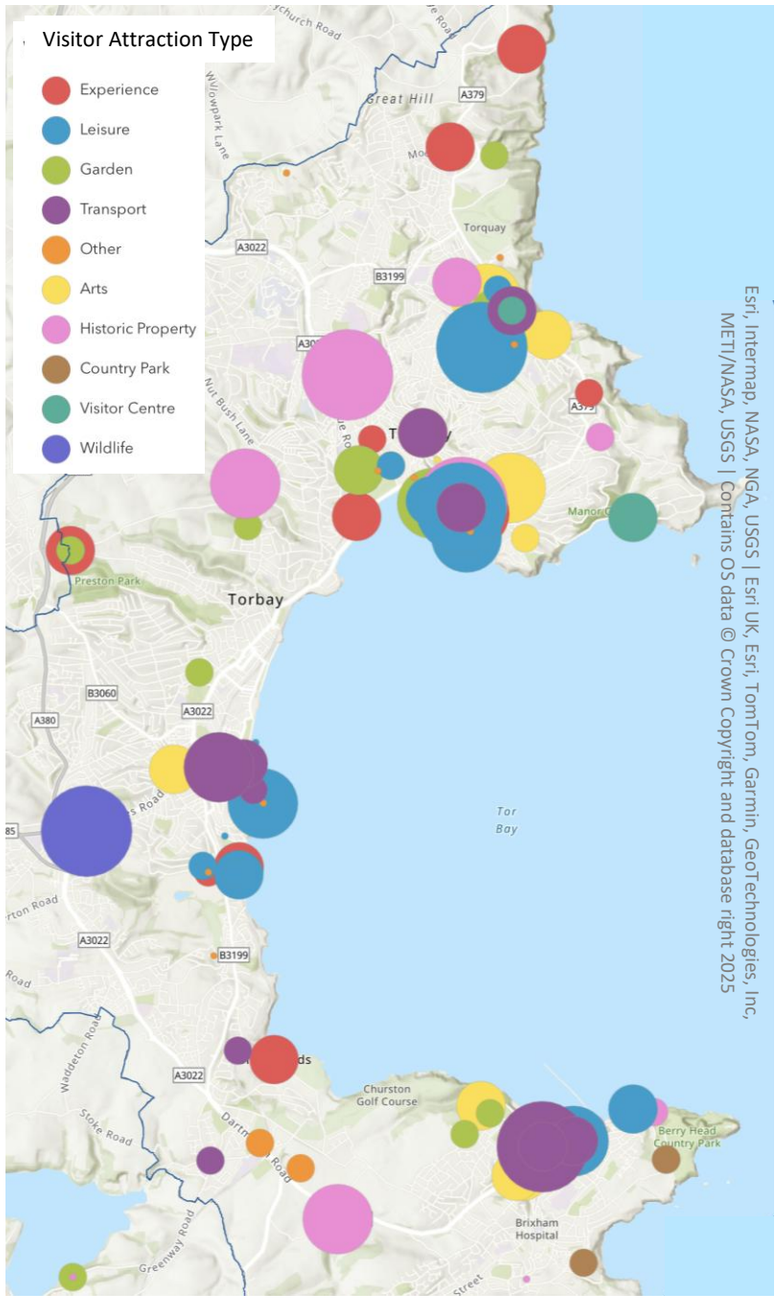
© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

3.4 Visitor Attractions

Table 7. Visitor Attractions in Torbay by Type

Main Category	Nos.	Category Detail	Nos.
Country Park	6	Playground	1
		Municipal Park	1
		Nature Reserve / Wetlands etc	3
		Sculpture Park	1
Experience	33	Cookery	0
		Cycling	2
		Guided Tour	9
		National Trail	1
		Outdoor	13
		Arts / Crafts	1
		Riding	0
		Walking Routes / Car Free Trails	6
		Other Experience	1
Garden	19	Formal / Park / Estate	11
		Arboretum / Caves / Forest	8
Historic Property	11	Abbey / Castle / Fort / Tower / Priory	1
		Historic House / & Garden / Palace	4
		Monument / Archaeological Site	3
		Place of Worship (still in use)	1
		Other Historic Property	2
Leisure	46	Beach	25
		Bowling / Casino / Cinema	3
		Public Space	5
		Model Village	1
		Gaming / Entertainment / Leisure Zones	3
		Theme Park / Adventure Park	6
		Lake / Reservoir / Recreation	3
Arts	12	Museum	6
		Art Gallery / Arts Centre / Theatre	6
		Venue - Music etc	0
Transport	19	Miniature / Model Railway	0
		Steam / Heritage Railway	2
		River Cruise / Boat Tours	14
		Transport - Other	3
Visitor Centre	3	Heritage / Visitor Centre	1
		Viewpoint	2
Wildlife	1	Farm / Rare Breeds / Farm Animals	0
		Safari Park / Zoo / Aquarium / Aviary	1
Workplace	0	Distillery / Vineyard / Brewery	0
		Industrial / Craft Workplace	0
Other	13	Specialist Retail	0
		Sports Venue - Spectator	1
		Sports Venue - Participant	12
	163		**163**

Map 3. Visitor Attractions - Distribution across Torbay



NB – Map shows all visitor attractions on the table apart from the area's 25 beaches. The size of the circle reflects the Attraction's strategic importance – see overleaf for further commentary.

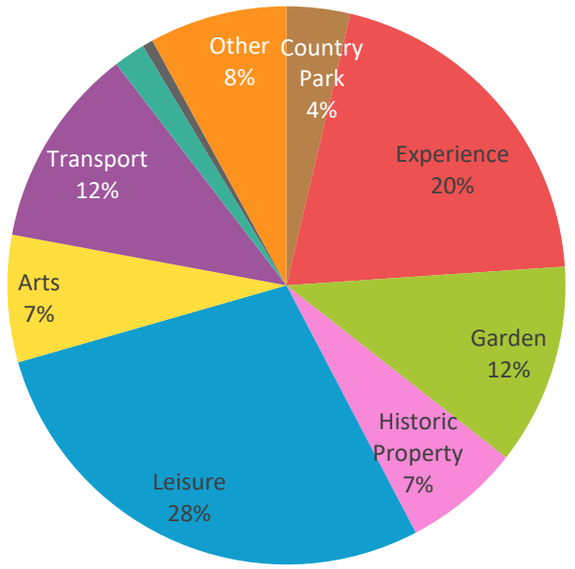
1. While there are 144 attractions and 61 activities listed on the English Riviera BID website some of these report multiple activities at the same site, or are generic or are only likely to be of interest to a local market.[1]

2. The analysis here reports 163 visitor attractions in or around Torbay that are likely to be important for visitors to varying extents.

3. As the map shows, the geographic spread of attractions in Torbay is clearly centred on Torquay, which accounts for the largest share at 45%, reflecting its role as the district's main tourism hub. Paignton follows with 25%, showing its strong contribution to the overall visitor offer, while Brixham provides 22%, likely linked to its harbour, maritime heritage, and wildlife experiences. Babbacombe has a much smaller share.

4. The leisure offer predominates backed up by a range of historic properties and gardens often combining which will be of interest particularly to the more senior market. Numerous experiences are listed and make up 20% of the offer but are less likely to be important from the perspective of driving visitors to Torbay. Some of the transport related visitor attractions are important whether that be by boat or steam train.

Figure 32 Visitor Attractions By Type



1. Source: https://www.englishriviera.co.uk/things-to-do/english-riviera-attractions

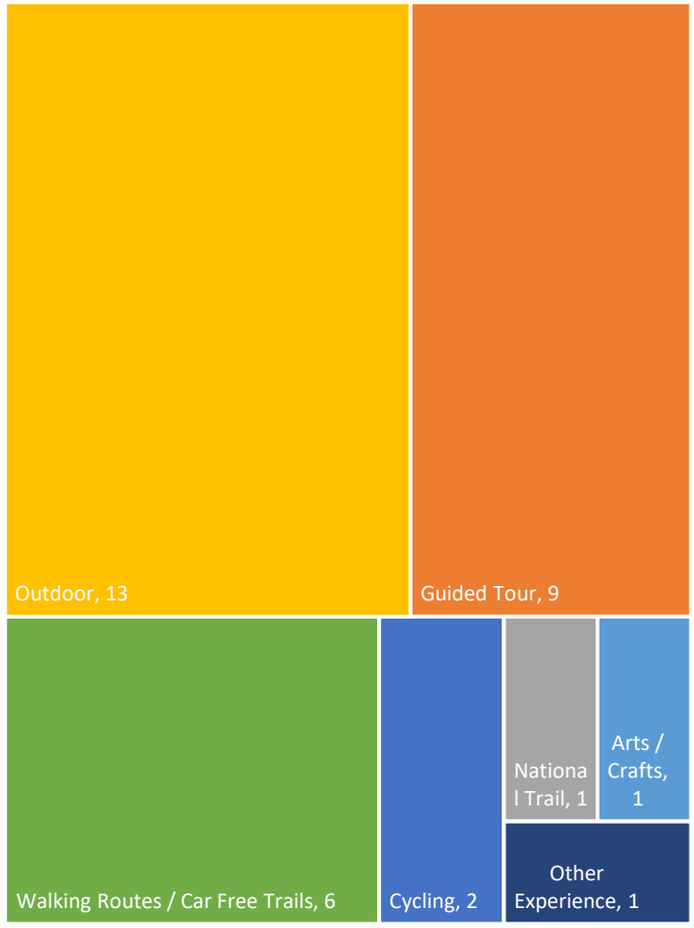
© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

3.5 Strategically Important Visitor Attractions

Table 8. Strategically Important Visitor Attractions

Name	TT Category Detail
National Trust - Greenway	Historic Property
Kents Cavern Prehistoric Caves	Historic Property
Torquay Harbour & Marina	Leisure
Torquay Marina	Leisure
Dartmouth Steam Railway and River Boat Co.	Transport
Paignton Zoo	Wildlife
Princess Theatre, Torquay	Arts
Bygones Torquay	Arts
Torquay Museum	Arts
Dame Agatha Christie CBE sculpture Torquay	Country Park
Agatha Christie's Extraordinary Life - ERBID Tour	Experience
South West Coast Path	Experience
Torquay's Dinosaur World	Experience
English Riviera Wheel	Experience
Torquay Watersports	Experience
Potent Plants Garden - Torre Abbey	Garden
Torre Abbey	Historic Property
Cockington Fishacre	Historic Property
Babbacombe Model Village	Leisure
Brixham Harbour & Marina	Leisure
Paignton Harbour	Leisure
Splashdown Quaywest	Leisure
Dartmouth Day Cruise	Transport
Babbacombe Cliff Railway	Transport

Figure 33. Experiences by Type



1. Of the 163 visitor attractions only a third or so are likely to be driving significant visits, either because they are previously known or because they are discovered as part of the trip planning process.

2. All visitor attractions have been categorised into their strategic importance with the Top 24 in Table 8 being seen to be the fundamental part of the offer.

3. There will be significant benefit in working with these attractions together with the 25 beaches which potentially could be classified and zoned with different sports and activities taking place as appropriate.

Table 9. Torbay's 25 Beaches

Ansteys Cove	Maidencombe
Babbacombe	Man Sands
Beacon Cove	Meadfoot
Breakwater	Oddicombe
Broadsands Paignton	Oyster Cove
Churston Cove	Paignton Sands
Corbyn Sands/ Head	Preston Sands Paignton
Elberry Cove	Saltern Cove Paignton
Fairy Cove	Shoalstone
Fishcombe Cove	St Mary's Bay
Goodrington Sands	Torre Abbey Sands
Hollicombe Beach	Watcombe
Livermead	

Table 11. Visitor Attractions Distribution by Place

	#	%
Brixham	36	22%
Paignton	41	25%
Torquay	73	45%
Other	13	8%

Table 12 . # Experiences Developed

Torbay	20.2%
Essex	33.5%
Peak District	35.6%

Table 10. Assessment Criteria

	Importance	Definition	#	%
1	Not at all important in strategic terms	This attraction is not going to influence visits to Torbay but may be interesting for some niche groups to stumble across	19	12%
2	Of below average importance in strategic terms	This attraction is not going to influence visits to Torbay but may be interesting for a broad set of visitors to find and enjoy	49	30%
3	Of average importance in strategic terms	Lkely to have been known about in advance and may have been a consideration at the booking stage or during pre-trip research or as part of a repeat visit.	45	28%
4	Of high importance in strategic terms	An important driver for Torbay leisure visits and /or will likely to have been part of the destination choice decision and pre-trip planning.	44	27%
5	Very important in strategic terms	This attraction drives huge numbers of leisure visitors to Torbay and can be considered a key attribute of the place	6	4%

Implications for Torbay – Visitor Attractions

- Table 12 shows that Experiences are not as developed as some other areas such as Derbyshire & The Peak District and Essex which both show appreciably more Experiences as a proportion of the total number of visitor attractions / activities. This may represent an opportunity area.

- As well as Experiences, there is a case for considering new visitor attractions that are intrinsic to the destination and can might be developed to attract new audiences and encourage repeat visits, for example attractions based on the Geopark designation or culture / the arts.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

3.6 Visitor Experience & Service Quality

Table 13. Visitor Satisfaction Survey Results

SATISFACTION INDICATOR	2021	2022	2024	Trend	Potential Focus
Cleanliness of the streets	4.01	3.96	3.72	-0.29	AREAS FOR ACTION
Shopping - range	3.60	3.51	3.32	-0.28	
Upkeep of the parks & open spaces	4.39	4.34	4.22	-0.17	
Places to visit/attractions - value for money	3.91	3.82	3.77	-0.14	
Shopping - quality of service	3.97	3.88	3.85	-0.12	
Quality of the beaches	4.41	4.39	4.29	-0.12	
Parking - quality of service	3.44	3.40	3.32	-0.12	
Nightlife/evening entertainment - quality of service	3.90	3.88	3.79	-0.11	
Pedestrian signs	4.05	3.97	3.94	-0.11	
Places to visit/attractions - quality of service	4.17	4.14	4.06	-0.11	
Shopping - value for money	3.68	3.60	3.57	-0.11	WATCH OUT AREAS
Parking - ease of parking	3.40	3.32	3.31	-0.09	
Overall impression of the English Riviera in terms of feeling of welcome	4.42	4.36	4.33	-0.09	
Places to eat & drink - value for money	3.86	3.78	3.78	-0.08	
Overall impression of the English Riviera in terms of general atmosphere	4.44	4.42	4.37	-0.07	
Parking - value for money	3.03	3.03	2.96	-0.07	
Places to eat & drink - quality of service	4.14	4.09	4.07	-0.07	
Public transport - quality of service	4.33	4.16	4.27	-0.06	
Nightlife/evening entertainment – range	3.79	3.84	3.73	-0.06	
Places to eat & drink – range	4.16	4.16	4.11	-0.05	
Road signs	4.19	4.11	4.15	-0.04	STATIC / IMPROVING AREAS
Overall enjoyment of your visit	4.63	4.60	4.59	-0.04	
Places to visit/attractions – range	4.28	4.33	4.26	-0.02	
Display maps & information boards	3.92	3.89	3.90	-0.02	
Nightlife/evening entertainment - value for money	3.71	3.66	3.69	-0.02	
Public transport - value for money	4.18	4.06	4.17	-0.01	
Accommodation - value for money	4.24	4.23	4.28	0.04	
Accommodation - quality of service	4.55	4.52	4.63	0.08	

Source – Table re-presented from The English Riviera Visitor Survey 2024 by the South West Research Company published March 2025, pg. 71 – Visitor Satisfaction categories and scores 2021, 2022 & 2024.

Implications for Torbay - Visitor Experience & Service Quality

- The decline in visitor satisfaction needs to be addressed firmly and as a priority. Partners should consider prioritising and resourcing place-related actions that upgrade the quality of key elements of the product, particularly the clean, safe and legal elements.
- Putting in place common branding /upgrading of shopfronts across the three town centres should also be considered to improve ambiance and quality.
- While investment is improving key areas, a focus that looks again at the visitor journey and public realm management and operational priorities will help lift what is one of the UK's foremost leisure destinations.

1. Table 13 shows the changes to visitor satisfaction between 2021 to 2024, derived from the visitor survey scores using a Likert scale of between 1 and 5 where visitors scored various satisfaction indicators. Small movements using such a scale accurately reflect longer term trends and in Torbay's case reflect a reduction in visitor satisfaction over time. Worryingly most trends are downwards with concerns raised about key elements of the current product and experience.

3. The relative change (the 'Trend' column) is showing decline in key elements of the service offer, and despite the score being relatively high for some elements, their relative decline is a watch out. Areas like the decline in the range of the retail offer is not a surprise given wider trends but the reduction in cleanliness is within partners' ability to address. Of the ten *Areas for Action,* half need to be progressed by the public sector. Of key importance are:
   - the cleanliness of the streets;
   - the upkeep of parks and open spaces; and
   - The quality of the beaches.

4. These areas have shown decline in satisfaction / quality over the three-year period. Areas like parking will normally be marked lower but there is watch out here too with the related quality of service measure. A combined and gradual decline may have influenced the overall impressions of atmosphere and enjoyment showed by the rows shaded yellow. This survey result is backed up by early responses to the current survey of businesses – see the word cloud - Figure 34.

6. Accommodation showed a net increase over 2021 in terms of both value for money and quality which is a credit to the sector across Torbay and something to be celebrated and built on.

Figure 34 – Interim Results – Business Survey 18.12.25

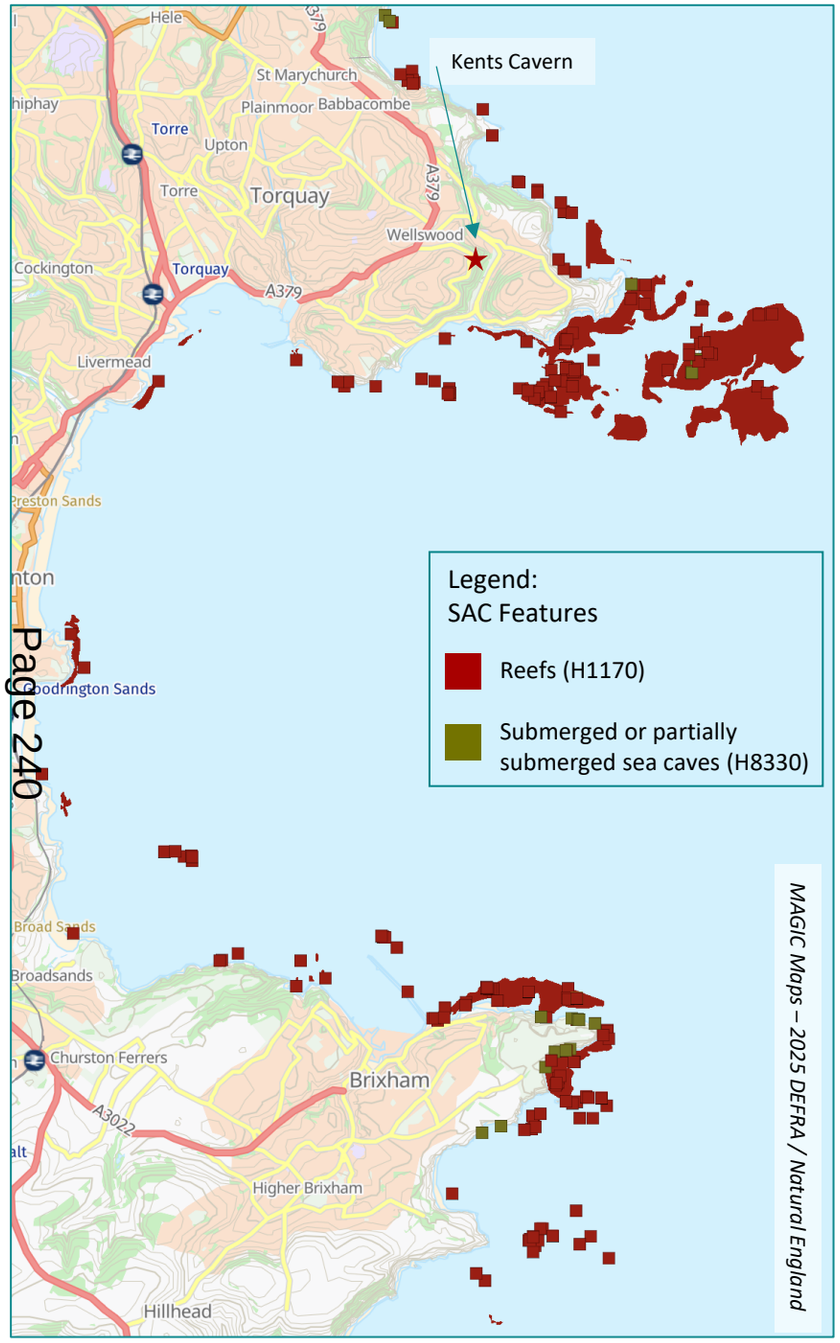


Which aspects of Torbay's visitor experience do your customers most commonly identify as needing improvement? n=38

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

3.7 Habitats Regulations Assessment

Map 4. Torbay Special Areas of Conservation



Thie slide reflects a client request
References: Gov.UK (2021) https://www.gov.uk/guidance/habitats-regulations-assessments-protecting-a-european-site
Natural England (2018): https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/Marine/MarineFeatureConditionDirect.aspx?SiteCode=UK0030372&SiteName=Torbay&SiteNameDisplay=Lyme%20Bay%20and%20Torbay%20SAC&countyCode=11&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=&NumMarineSeasonality=

1. Habitats Regulations protect key habitats and species and are usually designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas or Ramsar sites. There is a general duty to protect conserve and restore such sites. Torbay has one Special Area of Conservation shown on the map which is marine based. It was designated in September 2017 as an inshore site and also includes a large area in Lyme Bay to the east. The area in Torbay is also protected under the UNESCO Global Geopark designation.

2. The SAC is composed of reef and cave habitat with the reef exhibiting geological variety supporting a number of reef features. The caves lie at various levels above and below the high-water mark and occur in several different rock types. The main threat to the site is seen to be from fishing activity. While this is one site, the general principle for many areas is that nature needs greater focus to turn around current decline and recovery will be via a systemic change in approach, strong local partnerships and increased investment.

3. Reflecting the importance of the destination's geology, Kents Cavern is one of the most important sites in the English Riviera Geopark and is graded by TripAdvisor as #1 visitor attraction in the area with 94% visitors seeing it as either Excellent or Very Good. It is notable both for its archaeological and geological features. The cave system has been a geological Site of Special Scientific Interest since 1952 and a Scheduled Ancient Monument since 1957. Kent's Cavern is one of the most strategically important visitor attractions as identified earlier in this document.

4. Water-based activities such as stand-up paddle boarding, scuba diving and snorkelling are growing in popularity and can be promoted as part of the wider geopark and encouraged within the SAC subject to the activities being managed in a way that reduces any negative impacts.

5. A Habitats Regulations Assessment is needed to test if a plan or project proposal could significantly harm the designated features of a SAC. The onus is on the 'competent authority' to undertake such an assessment, in this case Torbay Council.

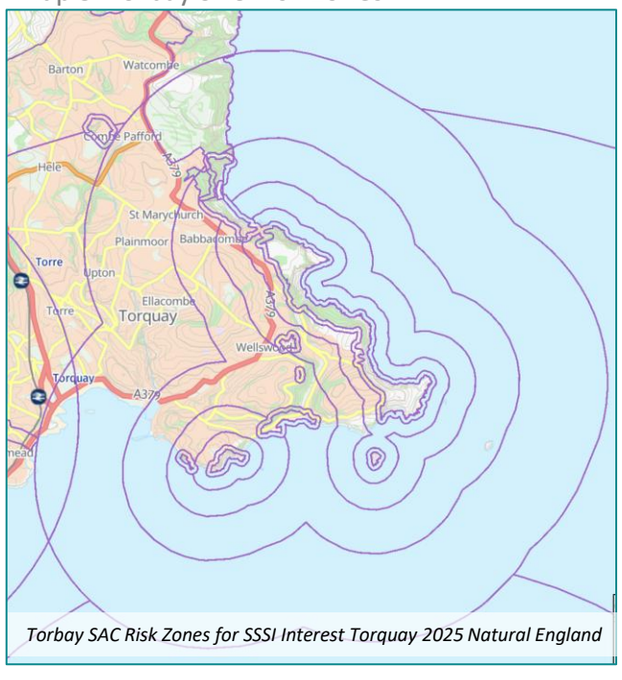
Does the new Destination Management Plan need an HRA?

6. The Destination Management Plan will set out ways in which Torbay's visitor economy can be grown over the next decade. While it is not a statutory plan it is likely to have impacts, particularly in terms of built development proposals, but these will also be subject to the planning process that considers wider issues such as environmental impact assessment. Typically, site-specific proposals may be subject to HRAs based on their likely impact on air, water or noise pollution as seen in the Risk Zones highlighted for Torquay in the map below.

7. The Destination Management Plan however will not contain site-specific development proposals and is not a statutory requirement in itself, so may not fall within the definition of a Plan or a Project as defined by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is advised to discuss this further with Natural England in the first instance and to potentially undertake a preliminary screening process to inform those discussions.

Implications for Torbay
Develop a comprehensive overview of all Geopark assets in Torbay in order to be able to both protect this unique heritage and develop the leisure and tourism opportunities inherent within the destinations.

Map 5. Torbay SAC Risk Zones



Torbay SAC Risk Zones for SSSI Interest Torquay 2025 Natural England

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

3.8 Torbay Local Plan Update: Core Tourism Investment Areas (CTIA)

Key points from the Local Plan update on CTIA's, Jan 2025

1. The previous Plan recommended a 2% reduction in serviced accommodation: about 300 bedspaces. Since then, there have been the following new developments: Hampton and Premier Inn in Torquay; Mercure (161 rooms) and Ibis (121 rooms), hotel Indigo in Paignton. Plus, the refurbishment of the Redcliff Hotel.

2. Change of use from holiday accommodation is not strictly prevented but require a "reasonable prospect test." Historical environment and market viability are crucial factors. Hotels are often costly to convert for non-tourism uses, making it financially attractive to let rooms to non-tourists.

3. Requirements for Change of Use: When change of use from tourism is permitted, there will be a requirement to restore or enhance buildings or land.

4. There has been discussion on potentially reducing CTIA areas or focusing solely on waterfronts. Proposal for a more flexible approach to residential use in key areas, subject to proper conversions. Relaxation of "reasonable prospect test" to emphasise positive regeneration.

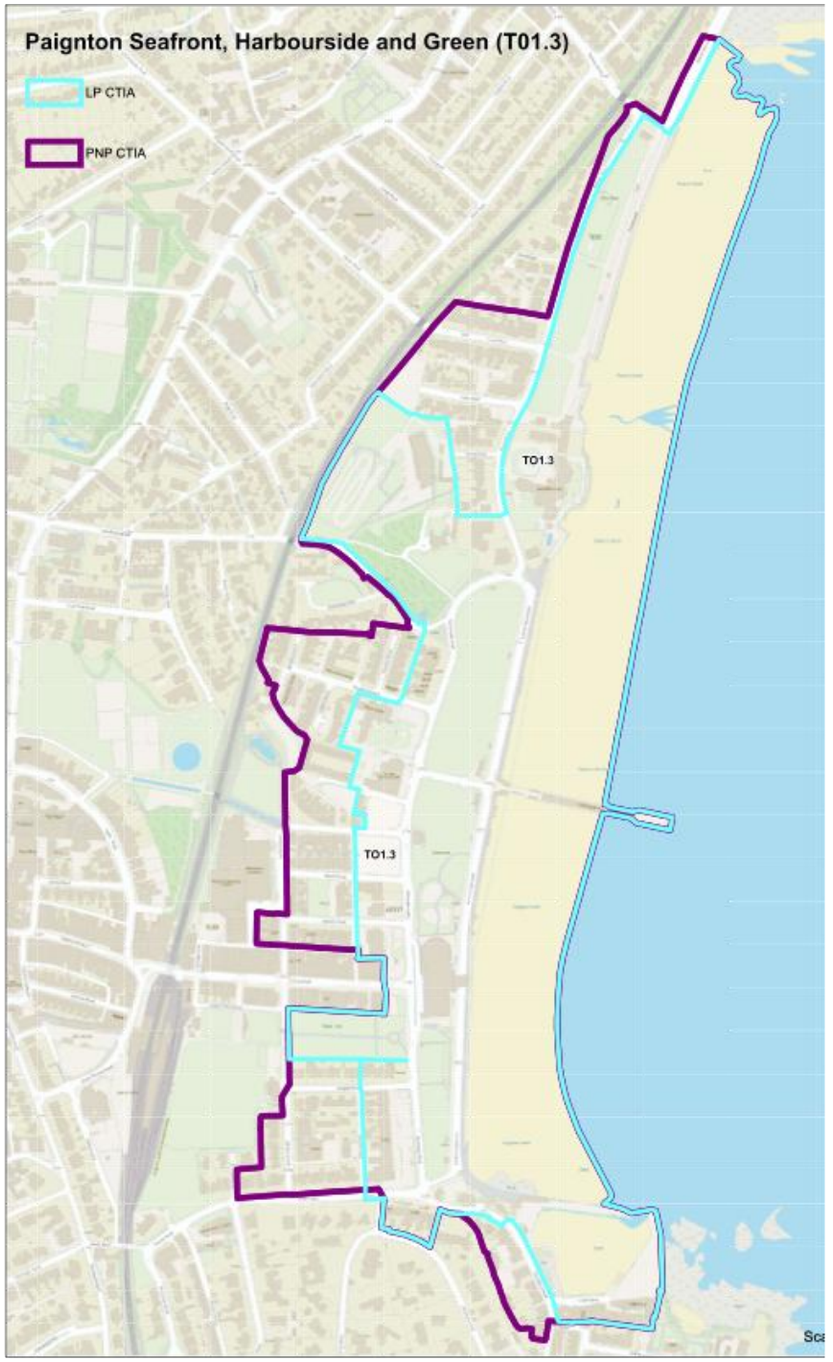
5. Tourism Regeneration Areas: Designation of specific areas for focused tourism investment with relaxed controls. Addressing "Agent of Change" issues to promote harmonious coexistence between residents and tourists.

6. In Core Tourism Investment Areas (CTIAs), retention and enhancement of tourism supply is prioritised. Change of use to non-holiday purposes is allowed if facilities lack improvement potential or if it contributes positively to regeneration. Non-tourism developments must align with the tourism character of the area.

7. Outside CTIAs, change of use from holiday accommodation is permitted if the holiday character and range of facilities are not undermined. The site has limited significance regarding holiday settings, views, or relationships with tourism facilities. The redevelopment or change of use provides regeneration benefits that outweigh the loss of holiday accommodations.

8. Inside and outside CTIAs, proposals for small apartments, hostels, and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) will not be allowed if they conflict with the tourism character of the Bay. Any increase in deprivation or incompatible uses will also be rejected.

Map 6
Paignton Seafront, Harbourside and Green Coastal Park CTIA



Source: Torbay Council, Torbay Local Plan Update: Core Tourism Investment Areas January 2025

1. There is a clear policy in place with new branded hotels revitalising the offer and adding vital improvement to current stock. Continuation of this strategy is recommended.

2. At the same time there will be a range of typical guest house and B&B accommodation where owners will be seeking to retire which should be facilitated – possibly by increasing the bedspace reduction target over the next 5 years, which reflects the increase in supply brought in by properties using the Sharing Economy as well as general growth.

3. Figures 1 to 6 on page 6 show the pressure on staying visitor demand over the period 2006 – 19 and also later between 2021 – 23. These figures are not comparable. While Torbay still gets greater volume than other parts of Devon there is a a much more competitive market in place which demands continued new and significant investment from both public and private sectors. Staying visitors should be the priority in the new DMP.

4. The domestic tourism landscape is likely to be difficult for the next two to three years necessitating a very targeted marketing strategy to stay in the same place in terms of visitor numbers. From 2028, growth is likely to return with some key drivers, such as climate change, that can help Torbay to grow its core markets, such as older visitors, who will be increasingly less likely to visit southern Europe.

5. There are clearly some very good accommodation providers across Torbay who would welcome support to grow their business further through productivity gains via digitalisation, improvements to service quality, sustainability, accessibility and other drivers that can increase profitability.

Implications for Torbay

- Continue to facilitate the change of use of older stock to residential use. Consult on increasing the bedspace reduction target from 2% to include ranges of 2.5%, 5%, and 7.5%.
- Consider a dedicated and highly selective programme of Business Support for high growth accommodation providers in the Tourism Economy to digitalise and improve productivity and profitability.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

4. Review of the Existing DMP

What the DMP Set Out to Achieve

"The Destination Management Plan sets out the priority actions and delivery tasks that can help the destination succeed"[1]

Objectives for the life of the plan were:

- **Recover** – return to 2019 spend and visitor levels by 2024
- **Grow** – achieve an additional £75m of tourism spend and 1,500 new FTE jobs by 2030
- **Re-balance** – more sustainable visits, with 40% of visits from October – March

Delivery Performance & KPIs Achieved

See Annex III for more detail.

1. Strong delivery where KPIs were clear and owned (e.g. Seafood Feast, marketing activity, surveys, events, Meet English Riviera).
2. Events, food & drink, on/in the water activity and Geopark discovery experiences largely delivered or exceeded targets, often with good partner engagement.
3. Marketing activity aligned well to DMP themes, with regular delivery despite some gaps in formal research and brand review.
4. KPIs weakest where actions were exploratory, long-term or policy-led (e.g. town centre regeneration, planning policy, brand strategy review).
5. Heavy reliance on narrative rather than quantitative data across many actions limits performance assessment.

What Worked, What Didn't

What Worked

- ✓ Clear, SMART KPIs (e.g. events, surveys, footfall, bookings).Partner-led delivery models (ERBIDCo, ERUGGp, Meet English Riviera).Existing market momentum (water sports growth, food reputation, UNESCO designation).
- ✓ Flexible adaptation of actions where the market was already responding (e.g. water sports hub).
- ✓ Clear outcomes and evaluation with positive honest feedback regarding the future data and progress being made.

What Didn't

- × Actions without defined baselines or numeric targets. Baseline data is missing for some indicators, making it difficult to understand the degree of change achieved.
- × Duplication across themes (food & drink, sustainability, Geopark storytelling), reducing clarity of purpose.
- × Resource constraints limited new research, brand development and ambassador programmes.Evidence was not available for all actions, making it challenging to accurately assess performance against several KPIs.
- × Monitoring challenges where responsibility was diffuse or data was not routinely captured.
- × Some KPIs appear insufficiently ambitious, reducing their effectiveness as drivers of meaningful progress.

Implications for Torbay

Continue

- Signature events (Seafood Feast, major water sports events).
- Annual surveys and performance reviews
- Partner-led delivery through DMG, ERBIDCo and ERUGGp.
- Integration of sustainability and Geopark narratives into experiences.

Adapt

- KPIs: move from narrative to fewer, clearer, measurable indicators and allocate required investment
- Geopark actions: align explicitly to the Geopark Management Plan to avoid duplication.
- Marketing KPIs: balance storytelling with headline metrics (reach, conversion, spend).

Stop

- Actions that duplicate existing programmes without adding value.
- KPIs that cannot realistically be monitored or attributed.
- Standalone actions that would work better as combined e.g. sustainability or skills strands.

Start

- Rationalising actions into fewer, outcome-focused priorities.
- Developing clearer baselines data for skills, sustainability and business engagement.

1. Source: https://www.torbay.gov.uk/council/policies/economic-regeneration/dmp/dmp-vision/

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

Annexes

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

I. Employment in the Visitor Economy

ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 5 December 2025] - Employment Estimates within the Formal Visitor Economy 2024 Open access Industry Code	Unmodulated	Visitor Weighting Factor %	Direct Jobs TT Estimate
55100 : Hotels and similar accommodation	2,250	100%	**2,250**
55201 : Holiday centres and villages	150	100%	**150**
55202 : Youth hostels	0	100%	**0**
55209 : Other holiday and other short-stay accommodation	50	100%	**50**
55300 : Camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks	400	100%	**400**
55900 : Other accommodation	20	100%	**20**
56101 : Licensed restaurants	1,500	20%	**300**
56102 : Unlicensed restaurants and cafes	800	20%	**160**
56103 : Take away food shops and mobile food stands	800	20%	**160**
56210 : Event catering activities	45	20%	**9**
56290 : Other food service activities	400	20%	**80**
56301 : Licensed clubs	250	20%	**50**
56302 : Public houses and bars	1,250	20%	**250**
49100 : Passenger rail transport, interurban	10	50%	**5**
49311 : Urban, suburban or metropolitan area passenger railway transportation by underground, metro and similar systems	0	20%	**0**
49319 : Urban, suburban or metropolitan area passenger land transport other than railway transportation by underground, metro and similar systems	200	20%	**40**
49320 : Taxi operation	100	50%	**50**
49390 : Other passenger land transport nec	50	20%	**10**
50100 : Sea and coastal passenger water transport	15	50%	**8**
50300 : Inland passenger water transport	0	50%	**0**
51101 : Scheduled passenger air transport	0	50%	**0**
51102 : Non-scheduled passenger air transport	0	50%	**0**
77110 : Renting and leasing of cars and light motor vehicles	50	50%	**25**
77210 : Renting and leasing of recreational and sports goods	0	50%	**0**
77341 : Renting and leasing of passenger water transport equipment	0	50%	**0**
77351 : Renting and leasing of passenger air transport equipment	0	50%	**0**
79110 : Travel agency activities	50	100%	**50**
79120 : Tour operator activities	0	100%	**0**
79901 : Activities of tourist guides	0	100%	**0**
79909 : Other reservation service activities (not including activities of tourist guides)	40	100%	**40**
68202 : Letting and operating of conference and exhibition centres	0	100%	**0**
82301 : Activities of exhibition and fair organizers	30	100%	**30**
82302 : Activities of conference organizers	0	100%	**0**
90010 : Performing arts	100	20%	**20**
90020 : Support activities to performing arts	5	20%	**1**
90030 : Artistic creation	15	20%	**3**
90040 : Operation of arts facilities	0	20%	**0**
91020 : Museum activities	10	100%	**10**
91030 : Operation of historical sites and buildings and similar visitor attractions	10	100%	**10**
91040 : Botanical and zoological gardens and nature reserve activities	250	100%	**250**
93210 : Activities of amusement parks and theme parks	35	100%	**35**
93290 : Other amusement and recreation activities	150	50%	**75**
92000 : Gambling and betting activities	150	20%	**30**
93110 : Operation of sports facilities	250	20%	**50**
93199 : Other sports activities (not including activities of racehorse owners)	10	20%	**2**
Column Total	9,445		**4,623**
		FTE Total	**2,126**

1. The table shows the SIC codes relating to the visitor economy, together with a weighting, that derive the direct jobs figures presented on Page 14.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

II. Policy Maps and Detailed Evidence

Torbay / English Riviera Documents			
Date Created / Published	**Title**	**Alignment**	**URL**
Policy & Strategy Documents			
Tourism or Visitor Economy Strategies or Plans			
2025	**ERBID Consultation Document 2027-2031**	• Places the visitor economy at the heart of Torbay's future and committing to sustained, strategic investment in destination marketing, product development and partnership working. • It supports the DMP's ambition to re-establish the English Riviera as a leading coastal destination by driving higher-value, year-round tourism, strengthening the brand, and ensuring activity is informed by data and market insight. Both frameworks emphasise sustainability, accessibility, collaboration and innovation, with the DMP setting the long-term strategic direction and the ERBID providing the practical funding and delivery mechanism needed to achieve a more competitive, resilient and well-managed visitor economy.	PDF ONLY
Other economic development-related plans			
2022	**Torbay Economic Growth Strategy 2022-2030**	• Recognises the visitor economy as a core pillar of Torbay's prosperity and creating the wider conditions needed for its success. It supports the DMP through commitments to infrastructure and town-centre improvements, skills development, business innovation, sustainability and place-brand enhancement. • The Economic Growth Strategy offers a broad economic framework—ensuring investment, planning and regeneration activity reinforce and enable a more competitive, resilient and high-value visitor economy for the English Riviera.	https://www.torbay.gov.uk/council/policies/economic-regeneration/economic-growth-strategy/
Leisure, recreation and/or tourism-led regeneration projects			
2025	**Torbay Food Strategy 2025-2030**	• Enhances one of the destination's most influential visitor touchpoints—its food culture. It supports the DMP's goals by improving product quality, strengthening sustainability, promoting community wellbeing, reinforcing place identity and elevating the visitor experience. • By fostering resilient local supply chains, supporting hospitality businesses and encouraging food-led events and experiences, the Food Strategy contributes directly to a more competitive, sustainable and vibrant visitor economy that mirrors the DMP's long-term vision for the English Riviera.	https://www.torbay.gov.uk/council/policies/health/torbay-food-strategy-202530/
2021	**English Riviera (Outdoor) Events Strategy 2021-2027**	• Uses high-quality, well-managed outdoor events to strengthen the visitor experience, animate the destination, and drive sustainable economic growth. Both strategies prioritise enhancing Torbay's distinctiveness, improving product development, and creating a vibrant year-round offer that boosts demand and supports local businesses. • The Events Strategy directly supports the DMP's ambitions for resilience, inclusivity, accessibility and sustainability by encouraging collaborative delivery, activating public spaces, extending the season, and attracting diverse audiences. Together, they reinforce the English Riviera's positioning as a dynamic, competitive coastal destination and contribute to a stronger, more resilient visitor economy.	https://www.torbay.gov.uk/democraticservices/documents/s112183/Events%20Strategy%20Appendix.pdf
2020	**Torbay Heritage Strategy 2021-2026, Part 1 - Adopted**	• Positions Torbay's rich heritage assets as key drivers of a distinctive, high-quality visitor experience and engines of sustainable economic growth. Emphasises the importance of enhancing the destination's unique identity, developing compelling products, and improving the overall sense of place to attract diverse audiences and strengthen Torbay's competitive edge. • Supports the DMP's focus on resilience, inclusivity and community benefit by promoting conservation, interpretation, and greater public engagement with heritage, while encouraging collaboration across cultural, tourism and community partners. By elevating heritage as a cornerstone of the English Riviera's offer, the strategy directly contributes to a vibrant, sustainable visitor economy and reinforces the long-term vision set out in the DMP.	https://www.torbay.gov.uk/council/policies/planning-policies/local-plan/torbay-heritage-strategy/
2020	**Torbay Heritage Strategy 2021-2026, Part 2 - Adopted**	• Translates Torbay's heritage ambitions into practical actions that strengthen the visitor experience, enrich the destination's identity, and support sustainable economic growth. • While the DMP emphasises product development, distinctiveness, partnership working and wise growth, Part 2 of the Heritage Strategy delivers these through targeted projects that improve access, interpretation and the quality of heritage sites; foster collaboration across cultural and tourism partners; and activate heritage as a year-round asset that attracts diverse audiences. • By enhancing the authenticity, vibrancy and resilience of Torbay's cultural offer, the strategy reinforces the DMP's goals of creating a compelling, high-quality coastal destination that benefits both visitors and local communities, bolstering the wider visitor economy.	https://www.torbay.gov.uk/council/policies/planning-policies/local-plan/torbay-heritage-strategy/

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

Other relevant documents			
2023	**Geopark Management Plan 2023-2033 Part 1**	• Positions the UNESCO Global Geopark as a cornerstone of the English Riviera's distinctiveness, sustainability and long-term visitor appeal. • The plan prioritises the visitor economy by protecting and enhancing Torbay's internationally significant natural heritage, improving interpretation, access and educational value, and fostering high-quality, low-impact experiences that resonate with modern traveller expectations—directly supporting the DMP's focus on sustainability, resilience, inclusivity and product development. • Through strong partnership working, community engagement and an emphasis on responsible stewardship, the Geopark plan reinforces the DMP's ambition to create a vibrant, well-managed coastal destination where natural heritage, visitor experiences and local benefit are balanced and mutually reinforcing, ultimately strengthening the area's competitiveness and the wider visitor economy.	https://www.englishrivieraageopark.org.uk/documents/Geopark_ManPlan_2023_Pt1_FINAL_LowRes_23_03_13.pdf
2023	**Geopark Management Plan 2023-2033 Part 2**	• Interprets the Geopark's strategic ambitions into practical actions that enhance Torbay's natural heritage offer, enrich visitor understanding, and support sustainable growth of the visitor economy. • Through targeted projects focused on interpretation, conservation, access improvements, education, community engagement and responsible tourism, Part 2 strengthens the quality and distinctiveness of the visitor experience—key priorities of the DMP. Its emphasis on sustainability, inclusivity and partnership mirrors the DMP's commitment to wise growth, collaborative delivery and resilience, ensuring the UNESCO Global Geopark remains both a protected landscape and a vibrant, year-round asset that underpins Torbay's identity and competitiveness as a leading coastal destination.	https://www.englishrivieraageopark.org.uk/documents/Geopark_ManPlan_2023_Pt2_FINAL_LowRes_23_03_13.pdf
2023	**Community and Corporate Plan 2023-2043**	• Sets the long-term conditions that enable a thriving, resilient and high-quality visitor economy. Provides a broad framework for creating a prosperous, welcoming and well-managed Torbay. Its priorities—such as improving infrastructure, fostering community wellbeing, promoting sustainable development, strengthening partnerships and building economic resilience—directly support the DMP's ambitions for wise growth, inclusivity, accessibility and a vibrant place to live, work and visit. • By prioritising a cleaner, safer, more connected and more confident Torbay, the plan underpins the DMP's vision for a competitive coastal destination with a strong visitor economy that delivers long-term benefits for residents, businesses and communities.	https://www.torbay.gov.uk/council/policies/corporate/corporate-plan/
2020	**Greener Way for Our Bay**	• Places sustainability, environmental stewardship and climate resilience at the heart of Torbay's long-term prosperity—principles that directly support a high-quality, future-proofed visitor economy. • By focusing on carbon reduction, biodiversity, coastal protection and improved access to green spaces, it supports the DMP's goals of wise growth, high-quality visitor experiences and responsible destination management. It ensures Torbay's natural assets are protected, attractive and resilient, helping secure a competitive, sustainable and appealing coastal destination for both visitors and residents.	https://www.torbay.gov.uk/council/greener-way-for-our-bay/
Best Practice Examples			
2025	**Torbay Story Toolkit (BEST PRACTICE)**	• Strengthens the English Riviera's identity, narrative and market positioning—core elements of a competitive visitor economy. • By providing a unified story, visual language and messaging framework for partners, the Toolkit enhances destination branding, supports consistent promotion and helps showcase Torbay's strengths, character and ambition. This directly reinforces the DMP's priorities around improving marketing impact, celebrating distinctiveness, inspiring collaboration and attracting diverse audiences. Together, they ensure Torbay presents a compelling, cohesive and confident identity that elevates the visitor experience and supports sustainable growth across the wider destination.	https://torbaystory.co.uk/toolkit

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

South West Focus Documents			
Date Created / Published	**Title**	**Alignment**	**URL**
Policy & Strategy Documents			
Tourism or Visitor Economy Strategies or Plans			
2025	**Devon & Partners LVEP Growth Plan (2025-2026) Core Early Priorities Identified in the Destination Management Framework (DMF)**	• Focuses on priorities that strengthen coordination, enhance destination competitiveness and support sustainable growth across the region's visitor economy. • • Its emphasis on improving data and insights, streamlining governance, developing high-quality visitor products, and boosting regional marketing impact directly reflects the DMP's priorities around evidence-led planning, collaboration, product development and wise growth. • • By promoting accessibility, sustainability and stronger partnerships between local, regional and national bodies, the LVEP Growth Plan reinforces the DMP's vision of a well-managed, resilient and distinctive English Riviera that benefits both visitors and the wider community.	https://www.visitdevon.co.uk/devon-and-partners-lvep/devon-and-partners-lvep-growth-plan/growth-plan-2025-2028/
2024	**Towards 2030 Working Together to build a stronger visitor economy in the South West - The Great South West Tourism Partnership Prospectus**	• Champions a coordinated, strategic approach to strengthening the region's visitor economy—directly supporting the DMP's ambition for a more competitive, resilient and sustainable English Riviera. • • The Prospectus prioritises regional collaboration, investment in skills, infrastructure and sustainable tourism, and a stronger, more unified voice for the South West—actions that complement the DMP's focus on data-driven decision-making, product development, accessibility, partnership working and wise growth. By advocating for shared priorities and increased national recognition and funding, the Prospectus reinforces the DMP's goals and helps create the wider conditions needed for Torbay to thrive as a leading coastal destination.	PDF ONLY
Other relevant documents			
2025	**Devon and Torbay Local Growth Plan**	• Recognises the visitor economy as a key driver of local prosperity and sets out the broader economic conditions needed for a thriving, competitive English Riviera. • Its focus on improving infrastructure, skills, business support, sustainability, and place-making, directly complements the DMP's priorities around enhancing the visitor experience, strengthening destination identity, fostering wise growth, and ensuring coordinated delivery across partners. • By supporting investment, promoting innovation and enabling resilient, inclusive economic development, the Local Growth Plan reinforces the DMP's ambition to create a vibrant, well-managed coastal destination where tourism contributes meaningfully to long-term community and economic wellbeing.	https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/s51923/Devon%20and%20Torbay%20LGP%20-%20Appendix%201%20-%20Draft%20-%20FINAL%201.pdf

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

III. Review of Existing DMP

Destination Development – Growth Priority Theme 1: Food and Drink						
High Level Action	**Detailed Actions**	**KPIs**	**Lead Partner**	**Supporting Partners**	**Comments on Actions**	**Comments on KPIs**
1. Sustainable Food and Drink Destination	Revive the ERBID food and drink focus group, explore options to work with the Devon Food Partnership and Sustainable Food Place award.	Food & drink focus group revived & 1 meeting held	ERBIDCo	Private Sector ERUGGp Torbay Council	Torbay has achieved the Sustainable Food Place award as part of a wider piece of work led by LocalMotion Torbay.	KPIs with this action are mostly aligned with the Seafood FEAST leading to duplication. Actions have been achieved, but changes with organisations presents a challenge with capturing data on sustainable practices in Torbay. Could be an opportunity to develop this with more focus to increase these opportunities.
	Focus on initiatives to promote local producers/ businesses to 'taste the English Riviera and UNESCO Global Geopark, reduce food waste, sustainability and improve local supply chains. Develop appropriate support tools for businesses.	1 initiative			Aligned with the Seafood Feast	Also aligned with the Torbay Sustainable Food Places Award. Data is mostly narrative and is likely not to be provided moving forward.
	Increase food and drink experiences, including pop ups, try me, making, tasting and cookery experiences	10 new food experiences introduced			Aligned to the Seafood Feast Some overlap with previous and next actions	Also aligned with the Torbay Sustainable Food Places Award. Data is mostly narrative and is likely not to be provided moving forward.
2. Relaunch Seafood Feast as a signature event	The September food event should become a signature event in the destination calendar. Increase annual visitor footfall, overnight stays and spend.	1 event 10 new food experiences 20 venues taking part	ERBIDCo	Private Sector Torbay Council	Event continues to be popular and promotes food and drink within the area.	KPIs exceeded. The KPI is SMART, and data is supplied through ERBID. The question is whether this action is located in the right space or whether it should be associated with Culture and Events?
3. Inspiring Dining	Enable inspiring dining spaces through mixed use town centre regeneration projects to create special and unique places to eat and drink with a focus on quality and local.	Linked to Town's Fund	Torbay Council	Private Sector	Activity not started.	This KPI is challenging to monitor as activity has yet to take place and so no KPI has been associated with it. Data supplied is around the progress of the activity taking place and ensuring that consideration is taken place with regards to the visitor economy.

DMP Review Process:

1. Initial review conducted by Tomorrow's Tourism.
2. Review comments provided to Elizabeth Devonport, Torbay Council.
3. Additional comments submitted by ED.
4. Final review incorporates ED comments, alongside relevant feedback from Tomorrow's Tourism shown in shaded columns entitled 'Comments on Actions' and 'Comments on KPIs'

Each Action has been given a status update by Torbay Council to understand the progress of the activity, using the following descriptions:

- **Green –** On Target (in play and achieving targets)
- **Amber –** Behind Target, but Still Achievable (may not achieve this quarters targets but should achieve annual targets)
- **Red –** Behind Target and At Risk (unlikely or unable to achieve targets)
- **Grey –** Not Applicable (Activity has not started yet / Will not start this year)

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

Destination Development – Growth Priority Theme 2: On and In the Water						
High Level Action	**Detailed Actions**	**KPIs**	**Lead Partner**	**Supporting Partners**	**Comments on Actions**	**Comments on KPIs**
4. Water sports Hub Development	Ensure new facilities and sports events are sustainable with a low carbon impact and interpret the Geopark and align to the Torbay Story messaging.	Action plan for delivery (to be scoped).	Torbay Council	Tor Bay Harbour Authority, TDA, ERUGGp	The original action was reviewed - the market has responded to the water sport activity opportunities in Torbay sufficiently (organisations are already looking to develop a water sports hub). Focus was shifted to provide support and encourage and promote the offer available. It is proposed to remove this action.	Action shifted to supporting businesses as a main point of enquiry especially with the SUPHub work. Other activity occurring across the Council with regards to the Blue Economy so it would be good to review this in relation to Torbay on the Move and future work to support alignment.
5. Business Development	Enable on and in the water/water sports development by supporting businesses to establish themselves and grow. Alignment to Carbon Neutral Torbay and UNESCO Global Geopark.	No. businesses supported (to be scoped)	Torbay Council	Private Sector	Business support available to all businesses. An innovation event supported the start of the SUPHUB group combining businesses with local organisations and people to make Torbay the SUP capital of the UK. Action reviewed by chair of DMG and Torbay Council– suggestion to change this action to "Encourage and promote a wide offer of water sports activity in Torbay"	Activity has taken place despite no KPIs being identified. Data is being supplied, similar to one above (may wish to combine?).
6. Packaging On/In the Water Experiences	Develop 'On and in the Water' experiences for distribution through new and established channels.	3 new experiences introduced	ERBIDCo	Private Sector, Meet English Riviera	Torbay has hosted the ER SUP Championships and will be hosting the 2026 World Cup. On and In the water experiences have been included on the ER website.	This has been achieved and is easy to monitor through partner engagement, however, there is a question of whether we need new experience or to grow these events so they support businesses as there is lots of activity already taking place. Could be something to work with organisations and groups to capture more information on events and grow.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

Destination Development – Growth Priority Theme 3: UNESCO Global Geopark						
High Level Action	**Detailed Actions**	**KPIs**	**Lead Partner**	**Supporting Partners**	**Comments on Actions**	**Comments on KPIs**
7. Geopark Interpretation	Aligning to the Torbay Heritage Strategy & Heritage Interpretation Framework.	Review of Strategies	ERUGGp	Torbay Council, ERBIDCo, Private Sector	Ongoing and aligned as per the Geopark 10-year Management Plan	More of an awareness piece which is continuously ongoing and already taking place. Partner provides updates so achievable with regards to data, but may not be needed as this is something they have ongoing responsibility for.
	Integrate UNESCO Global Geopark into more products, experiences, visitor information and support businesses with creative storytelling and visual branding.	Action plan for delivery No new products & experiences			Ongoing activity - ERUGGp discovery experiences have been created with businesses	Clearly lots of work being done, but unclear if there is a specific action plan for this (aligns well with the action plan in The Geopark Management Plan 2023-33 - Part 2). Activity has and is taking place with new experiences and products developed. No number was identified and this does align with a different action. Data supplied is proved from partners.
	Explore options to further engage with businesses to develop ideas, such as simple toolkits and workshops.	No businesses engaged			Something that is being developed through the terafirma project	KPI could evolve to also look at the number of toolkits/workshops created/undertaken. Baseline number of businesses to provide target/monitoring.
	Explore developing Geopark Ambassadors to help tell the story of the Geopark while supporting the visitor welcome.	2 business ambassadors			Something which is being explored as part of the terafirma project. Latest update: Ambassadors scheme for community volunteers currently on hold without resources to manage it	This action has taken place with businesses engaging and becoming partners/associate partners over the last couple of years. Questions could be raised on the KPI to be higher or look at what these businesses are doing to support the Geopark. This could be fed back by Partner if agreed.
8. Digital Geopark Trails	Develop options and implement digital trails for use on mobile devices with integrated interpretation.	1 project plan created	ERUGGp	ERBIDCo	Developed as part of the ERUGGp Discovery Experiences	Project has been undertaken with a couple of digital trails available online as well as a series of other discovery experiences. The launch of the Geopark Discovery Trails replaced plans for the original digital trails. Data is available on the number of the discovery experiences, but if we could collect more data on the information, that would be beneficial.
9. Designated Landscape Partnerships	Explore opportunities to work with other designated landscapes across the South West to promote the collection of unique landscapes and monuments.	Partnership established	ERUGGp		This activity is continuing to take place with ERUGGp being active within the Local to Global NLHF project and as part of the SW UNESCO group.	Activity is currently taking place with funding acquired to promote the South West designated landscapes. Partnership has been established, but the KPI doesn't demonstrate the development of the group - could be an opportunity here.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

Destination Development – Growth Priority Theme 4: Culture and Events						
High Level Action	**Detailed Actions**	**KPIs**	**Lead Partner**	**Supporting Partners**	**Comments on Actions**	**Comments on KPIs**
10. Thematic Interventions	Undertake a critical appraisal of current programming against the aims of this DMP and the thematic framework to identify signature events across the three towns to strengthen the cultural offer to attract new visitors.	1 Critical appraisal completed	Torbay Council	ERBIDCo, Torbay Culture	A review of Torbay events takes place, with several key events established.	A review/critical appraisal of the activity each year is important (potentially change for annual review). Data is provided, but there could be opportunity to develop this further for the different events (topline numbers/figures/data captured for the different events or activities).

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

Destination Development – Marketing Task 1: Markets, Positioning and Branding

High Level Action	Detailed Actions	KPIs	Lead Partner	Supporting Partners	Comments on Actions	Comments on KPIs
1. Market Research	Primary research among leisure visitor and non-visitors to explore current brand perceptions and associations, names, places, and straplines.	Market research completed	ERBIDCo	DMG	Marketing is aligned with the DMP target audiences and growth themes.	Some research has taken place, but wasn't something planned for the current year. KPI may need to expand/change with the idea that this can be developed.
2. Brand Strategy Review	Informed by the findings of the market research, engage stakeholders, review and update branding strategy and marketing assets.	Brand strategy review completed	ERBIDCo		Activity has yet to take place but current branding is available. Brand Strategy Review not yet undertaken due to lack of funding.	Some research has taken place, but wasn't something planned for the current year. KPI may need to expand/change with the idea that this can be developed.
	Consider producing brand toolkits for businesses to adopt. Reconfigure marketing collateral and channels accordingly.	Action plan for delivery			Toolkits have been developed and continue to be shared with businesses and through various channels.	
3. Marketing Strategy Review	Review the marketing strategy and update accordingly to the themes and target segments in the DMP. Review and refine messaging/activity where appropriate.	Market strategy review completed Action plan for delivery	ERBIDCo		Marketing is aligned to DMP themes and target audiences. Marketing Strategies produced 2023, 2024, new Marketing Agency appointed end 2024	Connects ERBID's marketing schemes with the DMP and helps with monitoring the ongoing progress. Data is supplied by partner. Narrative based rather than numbers.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

Destination Development – Marketing Task 2: Destination Management

Priority Task	Detailed Actions	KPIs	Lead Partner	Supporting Partners	Comments on Actions	Comments on KPIs
4. Policy Review	Review the Local Plan and prepare supplementary planning documents to assist in transition of redundant accommodation.	Review stock of serviced accommodation and update local plan including supplementary planning documents	Torbay Council		This hasn't taken place yet.	Useful KPI to understand business stock and other planning activity. Usable data is being supplied, but it would be beneficial to improve this.
5. Joint Response to Visitor Surveys	Undertake a review exercise across delivery teams to plan actions that address the findings of visitor surveys.	Review annual survey and create action plan	ERBIDCo	DMG, Torbay Council	Annual survey is reviewed and discussed at DMG. Feedback creates actions which are taken forward by the relevant partner.	The review of the annual survey is really beneficial, but there needs to be a movement to the use of the next steps. Data is being supplied through the DMG, but updates of next step should be included.
6. Public Realm Improvement	Further develop public realm improvement plans for visitor areas. Focus on Brixham Harbourside and Torquay Inner Harbour to complement and enhance improvements around the Strand.	No. public realm improvements delivering (review annually)	Torbay Council	Tor Bay Harbour Authority	Narrative is provided rather than number, but provides more information about the projects.	Beneficial with a series of public realm improvements currently developed and planned for the future. Data is being supplied - could be more quantifiable rather than qualitative.
7. Bus Network Improvement	Explore options to name the visitor routes and align to the Geopark story e.g. 'The English Riviera Route.'	Options appraisal completed. Action Plan for delivery.	Torbay Council	ERBIDCo, Transport Providers, ERUGGp	Updates provided from operational lead on the activity which is taking place	Aligns with other work around bus network improvements as well as branding alignment. Data is being supplied, KPI could be changed to be more aligned with the activity taken place. Also broadened to include transport networks as a whole (not just buses, but also trains etc.)
8. Cruise Development	Develop shore excursions and tailor-made experiences for cruise operators which relate to the development themes of this DMP.	No. new excursions	Tor Bay Harbour Authority	ERBIDCo	Narrative provided on this activity rather than no. new excursions focus has been on the number of cruises ships booked.	Data is being supplied, activity is taking place. Focus has been on the number of cruise ships coming in - could be that this is the KPI focus moving forward rather than excursions? Easier to track and monitor?
9. Green Tourism for business	Explore options and encourage businesses to achieve the Green Tourism Award (or other zero/carbon neutral programmes), aligning to Carbon Neutral Torbay, to showcase exemplars of good practice and supporting the overall reputation of the destination.	Options appraisal completed. Action plan for delivery created. No. Business engaged.	DMG	Torbay Council, Torbay Climate Partnership, ERUGGp, Private Sector, ERBIDCo, Torbay Place Leadership Board	This activity is taking place this year (25/26). Appraisal and action plan for delivery has been created.	Aligned with the following action - focus is on supporting businesses with becoming more sustainable and aligning with activity.
10. Carbon Neutral Torbay	Explore the options to align Carbon Neutral Torbay with the UNESCO Glasgow Declaration on Climate Change as a commitment to a more sustainable visitor economy.	To be scoped	DMG	Torbay Council, Torbay Climate Partnership, ERUGGp, Private Sector,	This activity aligns with the A Greener Way For Our Bay action plan. Aligned to action above with regards to delivery etc.	These actions could be combined to focus on one KPI with an underlying focus on sustainability moving forward. Data can be supplied, but not needed.

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

Destination Development – Marketing Task 2: Destination Management *(continued)*

Priority Task	Detailed Actions	KPIs	Lead Partner	Supporting Partners	Comments on Actions	Comments on KPIs
11. Education Business Plans for Tourism	Annual plan for business engagement in education supporting career pathways for young people.	No. business engaged & no. young people engaged in tourism related courses	SDC	Private Businesses	Often combined with the action below - numbers have been provided on the tourism courses.	Suggestion could be that these actions are combined into one or a series of skills actions. Data is being supplied with numbers and narrative. It would be good to evaluate these with skills providers and business needs to identify new KPIs which can be measured.
12. Workforce Skills	Annual plan to increase business engagement to improve the skills of the workforce (and the unemployed) through take up of programmes.	No. businesses engaged & no. people engaged in skills improvement programmes	SDC	Private Businesses, Torbay Council	Often combined with the action above - numbers have been provided.	See above
13. Annual Performance Review	Deliver a number of annual surveys to review destination performance.	Delivery of 2 surveys	ERBIDCo		Surveys are delivered on an annual basis and feedback is discussed by the DMG.	One survey for the annual review is beneficial and data is supplied, but it would be beneficial to look at how we use the survey.
14. Meet English Riviera	Develop activity to support conference sales and marketing activity over the life of the DMP.	£2M worth of Conference Bookings	Meet English Riviera		The value is over the life of the plan with currently value of enquiries around £5.8 million.	Focus could be on the value of enquiries rather than the amount of conference bookings (as this is easier to capture by partners). Other elements currently being captured is number of appointments, no. contracts made, estimated value overall and for Torbay.

Destination Development – Marketing Task 3: Delivery, Organisation and Resources

Priority Task	Detailed Actions	KPIs	Lead Partner	Supporting Partners	Comments on Actions	Comments on KPIs
15. DMG Terms of Reference and Annual Review	Includes terms of reference, membership, responsibilities for actions, progress monitoring via a data dashboard and resourcing plans.	ToR & Annual Review completed	Torbay Council	DMG	An annual report was created for the DMG to review alongside quarterly reports to review progress and update on activity. Discussion from the group usually shapes the focus of actions or the next quarter's discussion.	This KPI works as part of the governance, but should be reviewed with regards to future governance. The approach is simple and effective, but is there something more with regards to governance to ensure that delivery will be successful?

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

IV. Index of Figures, Maps and Tables

Ref	Figure	Page
Map 1	Visitor Accommodation and Attractions in Torbay	3
Figure 1	Volume - Overnight Trips (000) 2006-2019	6
Figure 2	Nights (m) 2006-2019	6
Figure 3	Overnight Spend (£m) 2006-2019	6
Figure 4	Volume (m) 2021-2023	6
Figure 5	Nights (m) 2021-2023	6
Figure 6	Spend (£m) 2021-2023	7
Figure 7	Volume (m) of Visits to Devon 2024	7
Figure 8	Value (£m) of Visits to Devon 2024	7
Figure 9	Domestic Overnight Trips by Purpose to Devon 2024	7
Table 1	Domestic Overnight and Day Visits by District 2021-2023	7
Figure 10	Footfall Origin of Visitors to Torbay Q3 2025 - UK Regions	8
Figure 11	Footfall Origin of Visitors to Torbay Q3 2025 – South West	8
Figure 12	Visitor Origin from 2024 Visitor Survey	8
Figure 13	Inbound Visits (000)	9
Figure 14	Inbound Nights (000)	9
Figure 15	Inbound Spend (£m)	9
Figure 16	Purpose of Inbound Visits 2024 % of Visits	9
Figure 17	Purpose of Inbound Visits 2024 % of Nights	9
Figure 18	Purpose of Inbound Visits 2024 % of Spend	9
Table 2	Top 25 Inbound Visitors to Torbay 2024	10
Table 3	Top Ten Inbound Markets to Devon 2022[2]	10
Table 4	Assessment of Current Target Markets	11
Figure 19	Overnight Volume 2024 (m)	12
Figure 20	Overnight Value 2024 (£m)	12
Figure 21	Day Visit Volume 2024 (m)	12
Figure 22	Day Visit Value 2024 (£m)	12
Figure 23	Torbay Sharing Economy - Value by Month - 6 Year Trend	12
Figure 24	Torbay Direct Visitor Economy Employment 2024	13
Figure 25	Partners with an influence over the development of Torbay's visitor economy	18
Figure 26	Accommodation supply by Number and Type	20
Figure 27	Accommodation Supply: 25-Year Trend	20
Map 2	Location of Tourism Economy Accommodation Establishments	21
Table 5	Accommodation supply: tourism Economy & Sharing Economy	21
Figure 28	Sharing Economy Revenue £m - 2025 Year to Date	22
Figure 29	SE Low & High Season Comparative Occupancy	22
Figure 30	SE Relative Size and Three-Year Growth Trend	22
Figure 31	SE – Forward Bookings – to May 2026	22
Table 6	Torbay UA - Sharing Economy - YTD Summary	22
Figure 32	Visitor Attractions By Type	23
Map 3	Visitor Attractions - Distribution across Torbay	23
Table 7	Visitor Attractions in Torbay by Type	23
Figure 33	Experiences by Type	24
Table 10	Assessment Criteria	24
Table 11	Visitor Attractions Distribution by Place	24
Table 12	# Experiences Developed	24
Table 8	Strategically Important Visitor Attractions	24
Table 9	Table 9. Torbay's 25 Beaches	24
Figure 34	Interim Results – Business Survey 18.12.25	25
Table 13	Visitor Satisfaction Survey Results	25
Map 4	Torbay Special Areas of Conservation	26
Map 5	Torbay SAC Risk Zones	26
Map 6	Paignton Seafront, Harbourside and Green Coastal Park CTIA	27

© 2026 Tomorrow's Tourism on behalf of Torbay Council

This page is intentionally left blank

TORBAY COUNCIL

Report title: Updated Torbay Heritage Strategy for adoption

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 20 October 2026

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor Chris Lewis,
Cabinet Member for Place Development and
Economic Growth and Deputy Leader of the Council

Email: chris.lewis@torbay.gov.uk

Lead Director: Alan Denby, Director of Pride in Place

Email: alan.denby@torbay.go.uk

Wards affected: All

1. Summary of Report:

1.1 The purpose of the strategy is to clarify Torbay Council's approach to heritage, and to enable the Council to confirm and develop plans for specific locations. The new documents set out statutory requirements (e.g. Listed Buildings, Conservation Area Appraisals, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and non-designated heritage assets). The aim is also to ensure accessibility to a wide readership.

1.2 The Torbay Heritage Strategy has been revised and updated to reflect the progress made since 2021 and to reaffirm our commitment to putting Torbay's fascinating history and rich heritage at the heart of the area's economic, cultural and social life.

2. Recommendations and Proposed Decision:

2.1 That, the Heritage Strategy (2026-2031), as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 to the submitted report, be adopted.

2.2 That delegated authority be given to the Director for Pride in Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth to approve any necessary minor amendments or typographical corrections to the documents.

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Proposed Decision:

3.1 This is an overarching document that focuses and co-ordinates a number of key recommendations including; a clear set of objectives for managing and protecting heritage assets, it is a tool to involve and inspire key partners and stakeholders, attract visitors and support our economy and respond to climate change whilst recognising our wide ranging internationally recognised heritage.

3.2 The recommendations contained in this report do not commit the Council financially, other than within existing budgets. Due consideration will be given to the financial impacts of each aspect of the Heritage Strategy as individual decisions are progressed.

3.3 The Strategy will underpin the delivery of Torbay Heritage Place programme for the whole period of the document. It provides the framework that enables the Council to identify, prioritise and develop projects which have a strong chance of securing external funding and contribute to achieving the Council's policy objectives.

4. Background and Context:

4.1 The existing Heritage Strategy was adopted in November 2020 and covered a period of 5 years from 2021 to 2026. Since 2021, the Strategy has contributed significantly to our ability to attract grant funding, develop positive relationships with key partners such as Historic England and support the local heritage sector. It’s now time to build on this foundation and set out our ambitions for the next five years.

4.2 In recent years, the profile of our distinctive built, cultural and natural heritage has continued to rise. In 2024, Torbay was given Heritage Place status by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, with Torbay Council as the local lead organisation. This gives the Council and our communities a golden opportunity to attract investment from the Heritage Fund that increases pride in place and connects residents and visitors with heritage.

4.3 We know that there are many competing priorities for limited resources, so this strategy considers how to prioritise heritage, including assets on Historic England’s Heritage at Risk Register. The heritage review was conducted by our Heritage and Design team with input from partners and stakeholders.

4.4 This strategy will sit alongside and complement a new five-year cultural strategy for Torbay that is currently in development following a cultural infrastructure review that took place in 2025. It is aligned with the existing Torbay Local Plan 2012-2030 and the draft Torbay Local Plan 2025-2045, the Torbay Community and Corporate Plan, the English Riviera Destination Management Plan, the Torbay Economic Strategy, and the UNESCO Global Geopark Management Plan 2023-2033.

4.5 Caring for our outstanding historic assets and sharing our stories will maximise the potential for heritage to bring social, cultural and economic benefits to all parts of the Bay. In line with the Local Plan, heritage will be key to driving the visitor economy as Torbay attracts new audiences seeking distinctive experiences.

4.6 We recognise that our built, natural and cultural heritage are essential to Torbay's sustainable growth. This approach does not prevent development or regeneration, but encourages a responsible approach, balancing heritage and local need for the benefit of all our communities, now and for future generations.

4.7 The Torbay Heritage Strategy sets out a clear and focussed agenda for elected Council members and officers at Torbay Council to follow until 2031. It is also a tool to involve and inspire developers, building owners, heritage organisations and voluntary groups.

4.8 There is enormous interest in local heritage among Torbay residents, and this strategy encourages opportunities for all our communities to understand, enjoy and share our history. It provides protection for the historic environment and highlights our museum and archive collections. It encourages new development that respects and finds inspiration in the distinct characters of our towns and countryside.

4.9 Attracting new and younger visitors and lengthening the tourist season are fundamentally important to Torbay's future economy. This strategy puts heritage at the centre of our visitor offer.

4.10 Torbay Council owns and manages a range of historic sites, and we support the wider heritage sector across the Bay. This strategy aims to strengthen the sector and explains our priorities for key locations.

4.11 The climate emergency affects every area of our work so this strategy considers both the risks to historic assets and how we can decarbonise the way we work at and visit heritage sites.

4.12 The international significance of our geology and the environment, heritage and culture associated with it is recognised in the English Riviera's designation as a UNESCO Global

Geopark. This strategy supports the Global Geopark as an overarching framework within which the social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of conserving our heritage are fully utilised to build a thriving future.

5. Alternative Options Considered:

5.1 An alternative option is to not update the existing Heritage Strategy; however, this would result in an outdated document which does not reflect the current situation and would put the Council at a disadvantage and without a clear and focussed agenda for elected Council members and officers at Torbay Council to follow until 2031 for the management of our local historic environment.

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

6.1 The proposals in this report help us to deliver the ambitions within our Community & Corporate Plan through:

- Thriving people; access to heritage and culture can contribute to improved health and wellbeing. The strategy will contribute to creating positive places.

- Thriving economy; there is significant change in the strategic funding context. The strategy will support key funding bids. Attracting new and younger visitors and lengthening the tourist season are fundamentally important to Torbay's future economy. This strategy puts heritage at the centre of our visitor offer.

- Tackling climate change; this strategy considers both the risks to historic assets and how we can decarbonise the way we work at and visit heritage sites.

- Council fit for the future; Torbay Council owns and manages a range of historic sites, and we support the wider heritage sector across the bay. This strategy aims to strengthen the sector and explains our priorities for key locations.

7. Consultation and Engagement:

7.1 This document updates the Torbay Heritage Strategy 2021-2026. It takes into account progress made and issues that have arisen since 2021 along with changes to the local and national policy framework. It will sit alongside and complement the new five-year cultural strategy that is in development.

7.2 Torbay Council commissioned an independent heritage consultancy, Heritage Arts and People (HAP), in January 2020 to produce the previous version of this document. The approach was to consult widely both internally and externally at the start of the process and to develop our Strategy in response.

7.3 There was an online residents' consultation that received 745 responses. It found that local people care deeply about special places and are enthusiastic about opportunities for greater engagement as visitors, volunteers and event attendees. The results showed an enormous interest in heritage among local residents. 99% of respondents said that experiencing the heritage around them was important to their quality of life, with 77% saying it was very important. Many respondents were keen to participate in more active care of heritage assets.

7.4 The huge public interest in the future of iconic buildings such as Oldway Mansion, Torquay Pavilion and Paignton Picture House shows that local people are passionate about protecting much-loved sites. Groups devoted to Torbay's heritage on social media attract thousands of followers and contributors. Our residents are eager to engage with local history and there is great potential to involve more people in collective efforts to care for and promote our heritage. This strategy was created in response to the priorities, concerns and ideas raised by this consultation.

7.5 There was also a stakeholders' gathering for heritage sector organisations, in addition to individual meetings, and many local heritage organisations kindly contributed their expertise and views. Stakeholders were also invited to contribute their views to the revision of the Strategy in 2026 which has informed this final draft.

8. Implications:

Financial Implications:

8.1 The proposal contained in this report do not commit the Council financially.

8.2 There is no direct budgetary implication with the preparation of the Strategy itself, however, it does set out a timetable and resource implications.

8.3 The Strategy can be used as a tool to unlock potential for external grant funding for heritage related projects which can have great benefits to local communities and businesses both directly and indirectly, especially through the Torbay Heritage Place Programme being delivered in partnership with the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This can be seen as a clear financial opportunity which can use the historic environment as a catalyst to enhance local areas and the local economy.

Legal Implications:

8.4 No legal implications.

Corporate Parenting/Children and Young People:

8.5 A principal objective within the Strategy is for “everyone in Torbay, including looked-after children, people with support needs and deprived communities, can access, experience and enjoy heritage” (Objective SEC01).

8.6 The Strategy encourages opportunities for learning, creativity and enjoyment through heritage at all stages of life, recognising that engaging with local heritage helps children and young people develop a stronger sense of place, identity and belonging, as well as providing access to rich educational resources outside of the classroom.

8.7 Research in 2025 as part of the development of Torbay Heritage Place identified potential to significantly grow the market for heritage-driven tourism, especially among younger audiences and through amplifying the connection between heritage and wellbeing. This Strategy directly supports the delivery of the Torbay Heritage Place Programme of which children and young people and their access to heritage is a clear strategic priority.

8.8 The Strategy underpins the delivery of the Torbay Heritage Place programme which prioritises projects that benefit children and young people.

Associated Risks, Risk Tolerance Level and Mitigations:

8.9 A summary of key risks associated with the recommendations in this report are:

1. Strategic reputational and operational risk if deliverable projects or programmes associated with the Strategy are not properly aligned with the established priorities of the Community and Corporate Plan– mitigated through the objectives of the Community and Corporate Plan being incorporated into all projects at planning stage and throughout delivery. Monitored by the relevant Project Manager for each project or programme.

8.10 The risks of not approving the recommendations include having an outdated document which does not reflect the current situation and would put the Council at a disadvantage and without a clear and focussed agenda for elected Council members and officers at Torbay Council to follow until 2031 for the management of our local historic environment.

Overall risk exposure is assessed as acceptable within the Council’s risk tolerance appetite.

Full risks are set out below:

Risk	Risk score before mitigations (likelihood x impact)	Mitigations	Risk Score after mitigations (likelihood x impact)	Risk tolerance
Projects or programmes associated with the Strategy not aligned with Community and Corporate Plan	8	Ensure that all projects and programmes make clear reference to the Community and Corporate Plan at the planning stage and throughout delivery	4	Acceptable

Contributions to tackling climate change or achieving carbon neutrality:

8.11 Climate change has been considered as part of the Strategy and is included in the vulnerabilities section. Climate change threatens Torbay's historic buildings, landscapes and archaeology in a number of ways:

- Coastal flooding as the sea level rises
- Increased coastal erosion from wave action
- Changes to habitable ranges of invasive vegetation, fungus and pests
- Damage from increased rainfall
- Soil instability and chemical changes
- Different planting necessary in parks, gardens and farmland

8.12 A key objective within the Strategy is to ensure heritage assets in Torbay are protected from the effects of climate change and carbon reduction is central to their management.

Social Value Considerations:

8.13 Heritage is at greatest risk of being lost if it is not experienced and valued by local people. A particular problem for areas that have long-established tourism industries is that residents can feel shut out of key sites that are focussed on attracting visitors. The Strategy seeks to address this by encouraging residents to understand, enjoy and share Torbay's unique history which strengthens local identity and civic pride and creates a shared sense of place and belonging.

8.14 It generates significant social value by strengthening community identity, supporting lifelong learning, improving wellbeing, increasing volunteering and cultural participation, promoting inclusive access to heritage, and safeguarding Torbay's historic environment for future generations. By connecting people with the Bay's unique cultural, natural and historic assets, the strategy helps build stronger, more resilient and more engaged communities. It recognises and seeks to enhance how the historic environment can be used to benefit everyone who live, work and visit Torbay.

Procurement Implications:

8.15 None

Other Implications:

8.16 There are no significant implications associated with the proposals. The objectives of the Strategy can be progressed using existing Council resources in partnership with local communities and relevant stakeholders. Where necessary, additional resource may be sought through existing relationships with external funders, specifically the National Lottery Heritage Fund through the Torbay Heritage Place Programme.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age	• 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. • 55% of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. • 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	There are potential barriers to the ability for some people to be able to access the document online for those who are unable or have difficulty accessing the internet.	The document is produced as a pdf and can printed off as a hard copy if required. The document has been written to be as jargon free and simple to use as possible. We are working with the graphic design team to ensure that a range of users can access the information using assistive	Heritage & Design Team with Graphics Design Team

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
			technology where necessary.	
Carers	• At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. • 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care.	There is no differential impact.	n/a	n/a
Care experienced	• As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	There is no differential impact.	n/a	n/a

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Disability	• In the 2021 Census, 23.9% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.	There are potential barriers to the ability for some people to be able to access the document online for those who are unable or have difficulty accessing the internet. There is also a need to consider how accessibility requirements can be sensitively achieved within the historic environment.	The document is produced as a pdf and can printed off as a hard copy if required. The document has been written to be as jargon free and simple to use as possible. We are working with the graphic design team to ensure that a range of users can access the information using assistive technology where necessary.	Heritage & Design Team with Graphics Design Team

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
			Officers need to be aware of the importance of reasonable adjustments and the needs of people with disabilities and learning disabilities. Accessibility requirements within the historic environment can be addressed through individual projects.	
Gender reassignment	• In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their	There is no differential impact.	n/a	n/a

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth.			
Marriage and civil partnership	• Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.	There is no differential impact.	n/a	n/a
Pregnancy and maternity	• Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and	There is no differential impact.	n/a	n/a

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	broadly in line with England (56.3). • For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0).			
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: • 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh • 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	Potential barriers for those who are unable to access the internet or engage with the document because English is not their first language.	The document is produced as a pdf and can printed off as a hard copy if required. The document has been written to be as jargon free and simple to use as possible. We are working with the graphic design	Heritage & Design Team with Graphics Design Team

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	• 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups • 96.1% as White • 0.4% described their ethnicity another way. • Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.		team to ensure that a range of users can access the information using assistive technology where necessary	
Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay	There is no differential impact.	n/a	n/a

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	identify their religion and/or belief as the following; • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddhist • 0.2% are Hindu • 0.6% are Muslim • Less than 0.1% are Sikh • 0.1% are Jewish • 0.7% have another religion • 43.2% have no religion • 6.3% did not answer			
Sex	• 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.	There is no differential impact.	n/a	n/a

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows; • 89% as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian • 1.1% as Bisexual • 0.1% as Pansexual • 0.1% described their sexuality another way • 7.4% of people didn't answer the question	There is no differential impact.	n/a	n/a
Armed Forces Community	• In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces.	There is no differential impact.	n/a	n/a

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	• In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.			
Additional considerations:				
Socio-economic impacts (including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	• Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	There is no differential impact.	n/a	n/a
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	• For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between males who live in	There are proven beneficial links with engagement with the historic environment on mental health and wellbeing.	n/a	n/a

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	Torbay's least and most deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females.			
Human Rights impacts		There is no differential impact, however all officers need to be aware of the Human Rights Act 2010 Section 149.	n/a	n/a
Child Friendly (Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) considerations): *Summarise the CRIA considerations for this proposal, including which groups of children and young people may be affected (e.g., care experienced children/young people, care*		There is no differential impact.	n/a	n/a

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
leavers, children with SEND), how their rights and best interests have been considered, and any engagement undertaken with children/young people and/or their representatives. Set out any mitigations to address identified adverse impacts and how these will be monitored.				

10. Cumulative Council Impact:

10.1 None

11. Cumulative Community Impact:

11.1 None

12. Monitoring and Evaluation:

12.1 The Strategy draws out a series of stories that make Torbay special and develops a set of objectives around them. The list of objectives is set out in full at the conclusion of Part One, on pages 16-19. Some of these objectives will be fully achievable by 2031, while others will progress as part of a longer-term process.

12.2 In Part Two, each story is explored in more detail, and its main historical assets are listed. Key sites are presented in order of priority for action, using a ‘traffic light’ system. A table shows the objectives associated with each story and lists how we will know if we are on course to achieve them. The strategy does not set out individual tasks – these are set in a complementary Annual Heritage Action Plan. This will be monitored and evaluated by the Principal Historic Environment Officer in collaboration with the Service Manager for Development Management.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Torbay Heritage Strategy 2026-2031 Part 1

Appendix 2 – Torbay Heritage Strategy 2026-2031 Part 2

Background Documents:

None

Officer Contact Details:

Name: Rob Palmer
Title: Principal Historic Environment Officer
Email address: Robert.palmer@torbay.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

TORBAY COUNCIL



Torbay Heritage Strategy 2026 – 2031 Part One

Adopted DATE

Table of Contents

Foreword 3
Introduction 4
Vision 4
Purposes 4
Approach 5
Policy context 6
Torbay's history in brief 10
Heritage assets and designations 12
Environmental designations 13
Assets beyond Torbay 13
Vulnerabilities and opportunities 15
Vulnerabilities 15
Opportunities 16
Objectives 18
Acknowledgements 23

Cover image: Torre Abbey

Foreword

The Torbay Heritage Strategy has been revised and updated to reflect the progress made since 2021 and to reaffirm our commitment to putting Torbay's fascinating history and rich heritage at the heart of the area's economic, cultural and social life.

Since 2021, the Strategy has contributed significantly to our ability to attract grant funding, develop positive relationships with key partners such as Historic England and support the local heritage sector. It's now time to build on this foundation and set out our ambitions for the next five years.

In recent years, the profile of our distinctive built, cultural and natural heritage has continued to rise. In 2024, Torbay was given Heritage Place status by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, with Torbay Council as the local lead organisation. This gives the Council and our communities a golden opportunity to attract investment from the Heritage Fund that increases pride in place and connects residents and visitors with heritage.

We know that there are many competing priorities for limited resources, so this strategy considers how to prioritise heritage, including assets on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. The heritage review was conducted by our Heritage and Design team. Our thanks to the team and to all our partners and stakeholders who contributed to the process.

This strategy will sit alongside and complement a new five-year cultural strategy for Torbay that is currently in development following a cultural infrastructure review that took place in 2025. It is aligned with the existing Torbay Local Plan 2012-2030 and the draft Torbay Local Plan 2025-2045, the Torbay Community and Corporate Plan, the English Riviera Destination Management Plan, the Torbay Economic Strategy, the Torbay Story, and the UNESCO Global Geopark Management Plan 2023-2033.

Research consistently shows that built, cultural and natural heritage have significant positive impacts on economic and social development. We hope that this strategy provides a pathway towards fully realising the benefits of our unique heritage for everyone in Torbay, and acts as a tool for positive regeneration and economic growth.

Signatories:

Introduction

Vision

We envisage heritage at the heart of the cultural and creative development of Torbay, making our home – the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark - a better place in which to live, work, learn and visit.

Caring for our outstanding historic assets and sharing our stories will maximise the potential for heritage to bring social, cultural and economic benefits to all parts of the Bay. To do this, we will develop better understanding of the risks to historic places and of the diverse meanings of heritage to different people. In line with the Local Plan, the Community and Corporate Plan and the Torbay Story, heritage will be key to driving the visitor economy as Torbay attracts new audiences seeking distinctive experiences.

We recognise that our built, natural and cultural heritage are essential to Torbay's sustainable growth. In Torbay, heritage is a key economic driver that supports tourism, regeneration, investment and place-making. The bay's historic buildings, conservation areas, archaeological assets and cultural landscapes contribute to a distinctive identity that attracts visitors, businesses and residents. By conserving and enhancing these assets, this strategy will support sustainable economic growth, strengthen town centres, create skilled employment and reinforce Torbay's position as a unique coastal destination.

Purposes

The Torbay Heritage Strategy enables our vision to be realised by setting out a clear and focussed agenda for elected Council members and officers at Torbay Council to follow until 2031. It is also a tool to involve and inspire developers, building owners, heritage organisations and voluntary groups.

There is enormous interest in local heritage among Torbay residents, and this strategy encourages opportunities for all our communities to understand, enjoy and share our history. It provides a focus for the historic environment and highlights our museum and archive collections. It encourages new development and diversification of use that respects and finds inspiration in the distinct characters of our towns and countryside.

Attracting new and younger visitors and lengthening the tourist season are fundamentally important to Torbay's future economy. This strategy puts heritage at the centre of our visitor offer.

The climate emergency affects every area of our work so this strategy considers both the risks to historic assets and how we can decarbonise the way we work at and visit heritage sites.

All of Torbay's human stories have their roots in the land and the sea. The international significance of our geology and the environment, heritage and culture associated with it is recognised in the English Riviera's designation as a UNESCO Global Geopark. This strategy supports the Global Geopark as an overarching framework within which the social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of conserving our heritage are fully utilised to build a thriving future.

Approach

This document updates the Torbay Heritage Strategy 2021-2026. It takes into account progress made and issues that have arisen since 2021 along with changes to the local and national policy framework. It will sit alongside and complement the new five-year cultural strategy that is in development.

Torbay Council commissioned an independent heritage consultancy, Heritage Arts and People (HAP), in January 2020 to produce the previous version of this document. The approach was to consult widely both internally and externally at the start of the process and to develop our Strategy in response.

There was an online residents' consultation that received 745 responses. It found that local people care deeply about special places and are enthusiastic about opportunities for greater engagement as visitors, volunteers and event attendees. This strategy was created in response to the priorities, concerns and ideas raised by this consultation.

There was also a stakeholders' gathering for heritage sector organisations, in addition to individual meetings, and many local heritage organisations kindly contributed their expertise and views. Stakeholders were also invited to contribute their views to the revision of the Strategy in 2026.

From this process, we drew out a series of stories that make Torbay special and developed a set of objectives around them.

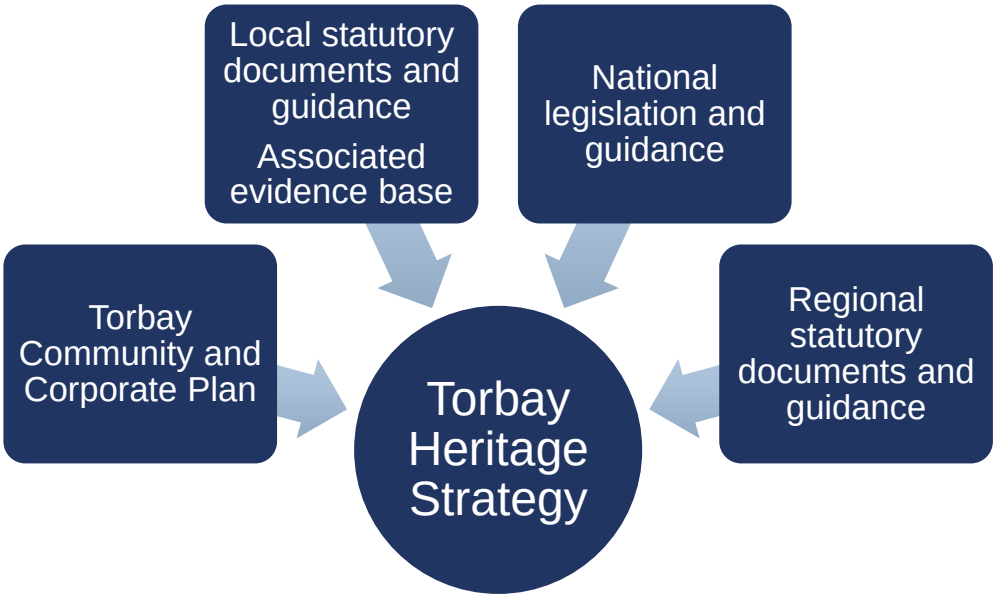
The list of objectives is set out in full at the conclusion of Part One, on pages 16-19. Some of these objectives will be fully achievable by 2031, while others will progress as part of a longer-term process.

In Part Two, we explore each story in more detail and list its main historical assets. Key sites are presented in order of priority for action, using a ‘traffic light’ system. A table shows the objectives associated with each story and lists how we will know if we are on course to achieve them. The strategy does not set out individual tasks – these are set in a complementary Annual Heritage Action Plan.

In addition to the main stories, we examine cross-cutting issues and consider how heritage relates to wider public services in ‘Heritage sector and services’.

Policy context

The Torbay Heritage Strategy does not exist in isolation; it supports and is supported by a series of interlocking policy documents. As heritage interacts with so many aspects of life, this strategy complements Torbay Council’s approach to a wide range of policy areas and functions within the context of national and local planning.



Policy Framework Diagram

National

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in August 2026. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It states very clearly the importance of the conserving and enhancing the historic environment and a wide range of heritage assets. Both the NPPF and the **National Planning Practice Guidance** are material considerations in relevant planning applications.

Torbay

Torbay Council's Community and Corporate Plan 2023-2043 articulates at a strategic level the ambitions of the Council and the principles within which the Council will operate. It sets out the ambition for a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay for all, within themes of people and community, pride in place and economic growth.

This strategy will help us deliver these ambitions through:

- Thriving people: access to heritage and culture can contribute to improved health and wellbeing. This strategy will contribute to creating positive places.

- Thriving economy: there is significant change in the strategic funding context. This strategy will support key funding bids. Attracting new and younger visitors and lengthening the tourist season are fundamentally important to Torbay's future economy. This strategy puts heritage at the centre of our visitor offer.

- Tackling climate change: this strategy considers climate change and its impact on heritage assets and how they can be used to support decarbonisation.

- Council fit for the future: Torbay Council owns and manages a range of heritage assets and is a leading organisation within the Bay which supports the wider heritage sector. This strategy aims to strengthen the sector and explains our priorities for key locations.

The Torbay Local Plan Update (2025-2045) and the three adopted (made) Neighbourhood Plans for Torquay, Paignton and Brixham Peninsula together provide the basis for planning decisions within Torbay. It aims to maximise heritage and cultural opportunities for the enjoyment and benefit of residents and visitors.

A revised and updated five-year cultural strategy for Torbay is in development at the time of writing.

Torbay Council's Economic Growth Strategy recognises that the visitor economy is fundamental to economic growth and sets the framework for capitalising upon our heritage.

The English Riviera Destination Management Plan 2022-2030 identifies heritage and culture as one of six 'signature experiences' that make up the visitor experience in Torbay.

The **Urban Design Guide** Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in 2007 to guide the general form and design of future development. New guidance is likely to result from of the Local Plan review process that will need to enhance consideration of Torbay's unique environment, townscape character and urban form and heritage. Brixham Neighbourhood Plan includes supporting bespoke design guides with historic references to the distinctive character areas.

The **Greenspace Strategy** (to 2026) is a SPD which outlines how Torbay Council and the community intend to deliver and maintain high quality green spaces which enable equal access and opportunity for all, as well as protecting and enhancing the local environment. A refresh of the Greenspace Strategy is likely to emerge as part of the Local Plan review process.

Torbay Council's Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was adopted in 2021. It includes heritage assets in the assessment of trip generators and attraction. Heritage considerations and opportunities will be considered in future updates to the Torbay LCWIP and within the strategic design and development of the Council's pipeline of walking, wheeling and cycling projects.

Torbay Council's **Strategic Asset Management Plan** sets out our approach to the strategic management of the assets that we own. It forms part of a suite of key strategic documents for the Council's vision for the built environment which have been developed in consultation with the community, including the Torbay Heritage Strategy.

Torbay Story promotes the area and highlights its positive aspects and potential. The aim is to attract external investment and to support economic growth and development for Torbay. There is potential for heritage to have a greater presence in the Torbay Story in the coming years.

Local

South Devon National Landscape Management Plan commits to conserving and enhancing the National Landscape's historic features and distinctive vernacular buildings as part of a living and working landscape. Ten special qualities summarise the unique 'natural beauty' for which the South Devon National Landscape is designated as a nationally important protected landscape. These include, 'A landscape with a rich time depth and a wealth of historic features and cultural associations'. The current Plan is due to be reviewed in summer 2026.

Torquay, Paignton, Brixham Neighbourhood Plans all aim to protect and enhance local identity and the historic environment. Brixham Neighbourhood Plan includes supporting bespoke design guides with historic references to the distinctive character areas in the Peninsula.

There are 24 Conservation Areas in Torbay. During the period until 2031, we intend to roll out a programme of reviewing and updating our **Conservation Area Appraisals** and developing Conservation Area Management Plans in collaboration with local communities.

Torbay's history in brief

The foundation of Torbay's exceptionally long human story is its geology. The sea carved out the Bay from the soft red sandstone, leaving the limestone headlands at Hope's Nose and Berry Head. Torbay's geology has fascinated scientists for centuries and is the source of the name used around the world for the period in which these features formed: the Devonian. More recently, over the last two million years, rainwater seeping through cracks and fissures slowly dissolved the limestone to form caves such as Kents Cavern in Torquay and Windmill Hill Cavern in Brixham. Discoveries in the caves have revealed human occupation going back half a million years, making Torbay internationally important for Palaeolithic archaeology. There is evidence here of three of the four human species ever to have lived in Britain.

Later, Neolithic and Bronze-Age farmers left signs of their passing at Wall's Hill and Broadsands tomb. Evidence of an early Iron Age settlement was recently uncovered at Churston. This was the beginning of the small-scale farming and fishing that were the way of life for generations of Torbay people who shaped the landscape we see today.

A picture of Torbay in the Roman period has started to emerge from digs in an around Torbay in recent years. Archaeologists have found varying amounts of Romano-British material at these sites, suggesting that communities here embraced 'Romanisation' in differing ways.

In the Middle Ages, Torquay developed around the Saxon hamlet of Torre (from 'tor' meaning hill or craggy peak). Torre Abbey, one of the most important historic buildings in the Bay, was the base for the monks who controlled much of the Bay and are credited with building the first fishing quay. Paignton appeared in the Domesday Book in 1086 as Peinton. The earliest settlement is believed to have taken place around 700 AD – the name means 'the farm of Paega's people'. Meanwhile, Brixham evolved from the Saxon 'Briseham'. Higher Brixham was originally a rural settlement while in Lower Brixham fishing was the main activity.

The harbour at Brixham grew due to the safe anchorage created by the shape of the Bay. William of Orange, later King William III of England, landed with his army there in 1688. It was used by the naval fleet during times of crisis, prompting the construction of the Berry Head Forts during the Napoleonic Wars.

Napoleon himself was an early tourist attraction on a prison ship anchored off Torquay, while the families of naval officers came to settle in the area. Torbay became famous for its mild climate and beauty and a resort began to grow at Torquay. From the Georgian period and accelerating in the Victorian and Edwardian eras, the grand villas and mansions that give much of the town its distinct

character were built for visiting gentry. The town's prosperity was reflected in fine civic buildings such as the Town Hall. Agatha Christie was born in Torquay in 1890 and spent much of her early life in Torbay.

As mass tourism became a possibility with the development of the railways, so new structures sprang up in Torquay and Paignton, including promenades, parks and gardens, theatres, picture houses and dance halls.

Brixham in the nineteenth century was a thriving fishing port and shipbuilding centre. It was here that deep sea trawling was pioneered, a development that had a profound impact on all the sea fishing communities of Northern Europe.

In the twentieth century, Torbay played an important role in the First and Second World Wars, as a site for war hospitals, training and troop billeting, and an embarkation point for the D-Day landings. Refugees from Belgium found sanctuary in the Bay during both wars, particularly in Brixham.

In the post-war period British tourists took advantage of new cheap ways to travel abroad and Torbay as a resort (the English Riviera), felt the effects of a decrease in the popularity of seaside holidays. Torbay became a popular retirement and relocation destination for people from other parts of the UK, in particular the English Midlands. Being coastal, Torbay has always welcomed overseas travellers, and in the twenty-first century it became home to a new Polish community, among others.

The thread that runs throughout our history is the coastal landscape. The richness of the sea and the land and the mild climate have attracted people for millennia and continue to do so. Countless generations have left their mark here, shaping the rural and urban landscapes that we know today. These layers of history are an essential part of Torbay's unique character and the foundation of a dynamic, inclusive heritage for everyone who lives, works and visits here.

Heritage assets and designations

A heritage asset is defined in Annex B: Glossary of the NPPF (2026) as:

‘A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes but is not limited to designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)’.

When producing this strategy, we undertook a detailed assessment that rated Torbay’s designated assets according to their significance, vulnerability to climate change and other threats, their potential for viable use and their accessibility. The types of designation included are listed below. The information about the designated status of sites was taken from the National Heritage List for England, March 2026.

In addition, we believe that although they are not part of the planning system, artefacts and archives profoundly enrich our understanding of places and should be cherished and understood in tandem with them. Torbay holds collections of enormous interest, including items of international importance. Therefore, these types of asset are also listed in relation to the places and stories they illuminate.

Listed buildings are considered to be of national importance and are therefore protected. Listed buildings come in three categories of significance:

- Grade I for buildings of the highest significance
- Grade II*
- Grade II

There are currently 864 listed buildings in Torbay. 96% of these are Grade II listed. In the limited space of this strategy, we consider Grade I and Grade II* buildings individually while Grade II listings are largely considered collectively as part of Conservation Areas. Occasionally a Grade II listed building is considered individually where it is of particular relevance.

Conservation Areas exist to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place. There are some extra planning controls and considerations in place to protect them. Torbay currently contains 24 Conservation Areas. There are 16 in Torquay, four in Paignton and four in Brixham.

Scheduled Monuments are important historic buildings or sites that are not used as dwellings or for worship. There are 11 Scheduled Monuments in Torbay with a further two on the border with the South Hams.

Registered Parks and Gardens are planned open spaces such as private gardens, town squares, parks and cemeteries. There are currently six Registered Parks and Gardens in Torbay. Full definitions of these designations can be found on the Historic England website:
What is Listing? | Historic England

Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. They are identified through the conservation area review process and through the production of a local heritage list. The need for a list is a requirement of the 2026 NPPF, Policy HE1 e.

Environmental designations

Many heritage sites in Torbay also have high environmental value and so have multiple designations. This strategy complements Torbay Council's work on green infrastructure and we believe that our approach to heritage and the environment must be co-ordinated. Therefore, this strategy takes account of environmental designations where they apply to heritage sites. These include:

- National Landscapes (formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
- Public Right of Way (PRoW)

Assets beyond Torbay

There are some heritage assets beyond the boundary of Torbay that are intrinsically connected to our heritage and are therefore included in this strategy. All of the sites in this category are in the South Hams and are managed by the National Trust. We intend to work closely with colleagues at South Hams District Council and the National Trust to ensure that we develop a connected and consistent approach to these important places.

There are no known Protected Wrecks within the boundary of Torbay Council's remit as a planning authority, which extends as far as the low water mark. Beyond this, responsibility for heritage assets at sea lies with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). The Lyme Bay and Tor Bay marine Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is overseen by Natural England. We intend to maintain a close working relationship with the MMO and Natural England on matters related to maritime heritage in Torbay.

Vulnerabilities and opportunities

Vulnerabilities

Climate emergency

Climate change threatens Torbay's historic buildings, landscapes and archaeology in a number of ways:

- Coastal flooding as the sea level rises
- Impact of extreme weather events such as intense storms and drought
- Increased coastal erosion from wave action
- Changes to habitable ranges of invasive vegetation, fungus and pests
- Damage from increased rainfall
- Soil instability and chemical changes
- Different planting necessary in parks, gardens and farmland

Unsuitable development

Heritage assets in both urban and rural areas can be vulnerable to development that detrimentally changes their character. This type of threat can range from large new developments that overwhelm the historic character of a whole area to small changes to individual buildings. Over time, the incremental effect of these changes can erode the qualities that make a place special. However, positive development management can use the historic environment to promote high-quality development and a better sense of place.

Lack of investment in historic fabric

Over many decades, under-investment in Torquay, Paignton and Brixham town centres was a significant issue. While a transformative programme of town centre regeneration is now underway in Torbay, risks to heritage assets remain. Linked to the unviable and unsustainable uses, a lack of appropriate maintenance that can lead to an 'unloved' appearance eroding the special sense of place, and more serious problems with the fabric and structure of buildings, has arisen.

Lack of local access

Heritage is at greatest risk of being lost if it is not experienced and valued by local people. A particular problem for areas that have long-established tourism industries is that residents can feel shut out of key sites that are focussed on attracting visitors.

When we asked for suggestions to help local people better engage with heritage in our 2020 heritage survey, the most popular suggestion (25% of all answers) was better and more easily

accessible information. There was also a strong feeling that inadequate or expensive parking was a barrier. When combined with our commitment to decarbonising Torbay, it is clear that better access to heritage sites by walking, cycling and public transport is needed.

Heritage crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour

Heritage crime is any offence which harms the value of heritage assets and their settings. However, other crimes such as theft, criminal damage, arson and anti-social behaviour offences can also damage and harm heritage assets and interfere with the public's enjoyment and knowledge of their heritage.

Opportunities

Torbay Heritage Place

In 2024, Torbay was awarded ‘Heritage Place’ status by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Heritage Places is a long-term, strategic investment in up to 20 different places across the UK that will last until 2033. As the lead organisation for Torbay Heritage Place, Torbay Council is coordinating a programme of heritage projects with our partners and communities. We will also support local organisations to apply for funding under the Torbay Heritage Place umbrella. Torbay Heritage Place will seek to deliver the objectives set out in this Strategy

Torbay Culture and Heritage Forum

Since the previous version of this strategy was adopted, the Torbay Culture and Heritage Forum has been established, facilitated by the Council’s Culture and Events team. This is a very positive development that will nurture opportunities for collaboration and mutual support between different culture and heritage organisations.

Heritage assets

Torbay boasts an extraordinary range of heritage assets spanning millennia of human activity. Our collections, monuments, landscapes and buildings connect us to stories of international significance. The popular perception of Torbay as a seaside holiday destination has obscured the area’s fascinating history and now is the time for its importance to be more widely recognised.

English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark

All of human history in Torbay has been shaped to some extent by the underlying geology. The UNESCO Global Geopark designation, therefore, can be used as a catalyst for funding, tourism,

education and outdoor activity and offers an umbrella under which all aspects of heritage can be explored and celebrated.

Local engagement

The Torbay Heritage Survey 2020 showed an enormous interest in heritage among local residents. 99% of respondents said that experiencing the heritage around them was important to their quality of life, with 77% saying it was very important. Many respondents were keen to participate in more active care of heritage assets.

The huge public interest in the future of iconic buildings such as Oldway Mansion, Torquay Pavilion and Paignton Picture House shows that local people are passionate about protecting much-loved sites. Groups devoted to Torbay's heritage on social media attract thousands of followers and contributors. Our residents are eager to engage with local history and there is great potential to involve more people in collective efforts to care for and promote our heritage.

New tourist audiences

Research in 2025 as part of the development of Torbay Heritage Place revealed that heritage (including natural, built and cultural heritage) was an attracting factor for 67% of visitors to Torbay, and that almost all will engage with at least one heritage site in some way during their trip. The total value of heritage tourism to Torbay was estimated at £249 million in 2024. The researchers identified potential to significantly grow the market for heritage-driven tourism, especially among younger audiences and through amplifying the connection between heritage and wellbeing, and then utilising this growth to maximise the revenue income of these sites.

Development and reuse

Torbay's heritage can inspire new development that enhances our historic environment and makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Meanwhile, historic buildings can be restored and protected for the future by finding appropriate new and viable uses. Torbay Council encourages the use of traditional materials for all development and refurbishment proposals where it is appropriate and viable to do so, including those materials that are locally sourced. This benefits the local economy by supporting local businesses and encouraging the development of conservation skills.

The historic environment can be used to support Torbay Council's regeneration programme which will bring economic and social benefits across local communities within the Bay. This strategy will

seek to support this regeneration programme and the positive enhancement of the local historic environment.

Sites formerly managed by Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust

Torbay Council has recently taken over the management of outdoor heritage sites which were previously managed on the Council's behalf by Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust, after the Trust went into administration. These include Berry Head, Walls Hill and the grounds of Cockington Court. This presents an opportunity for Torbay Council to protect and enhance historic assets and biodiversity on these sites, while enabling residents and visitors to enjoy their heritage.

South West Coast Path

The South West Coast Path (SWCP) National Trail will mark its 50th anniversary in 2028 – an opportunity to celebrate and promote the section through Torbay. In March 2026, the King Charles III England Coast Path (ECP) National Trail was opened, following the route of the SWCP in Torbay. In addition to providing additional funding to improve the route of the SWCP, the establishment of the ECP also delivers new open access rights around the coast including around the whole of Torbay, helping connect people with the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape.

Objectives

ID	Objective
SEC01	Everyone in Torbay, including looked-after children, people with support needs, and those who face barriers to participation and opportunity, can access, experience and enjoy heritage.
SEC02	Torbay attracts more visitors seeking a heritage destination.
SEC03	Torbay's heritage sector is strong, connected, inclusive and collaborative.
SEC04	Heritage assets in Torbay are protected from the effects of climate change and carbon reduction is central to their management.
SEC05	The special and distinctive characteristics of Torbay's Conservation Areas are, where appropriate, preserved and enhanced.

SEC06	Building owners, retailers and developers are encouraged and equipped to enhance the built environment in historic areas.
SEC07	Public spaces in historic areas are easy to navigate and, if possible, enhanced by appropriate street furniture and signage.
SEC08	Walking and cycling to Torbay's heritage sites and in the historic environment is easy, enjoyable and popular.
SEC09	Collections related to Torbay within the Devon Archives are secure, well managed and where appropriate, easily accessible.
SEC10	Torbay's Historic Environment Record is comprehensive and well managed.
SEC11	National and international visitors are attracted to the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark (ERUGGp). Visitors and residents experience, enjoy and understand the Geopark through easily accessible, high quality and consistent information and opportunities for engagement at multiple sites.
SEC12	The UNESCO Global Geopark designation is secure for the future and the work of the ERGO is sufficiently resourced to deliver its aims.
SEC13	Historic assets in the care of Torbay Council are in good condition, sustainably managed and safeguarded for the future.
GEO01	Natural sites where underlying geology is most accessible and visible are in excellent condition.
GEO02	Local stone worked features in churches and other historic buildings are in excellent condition.
HMN01	Torbay's story of early human evolution and migration, and the role of archaeological pioneers here, is widely known, valued and celebrated.

HMN02	Visitors and local people experience and enjoy Torbay's internationally important prehistoric sites and collections at multiple locations.
HMN03	Ashhole Cavern is managed appropriately and protected for the future.
HMN04	The chambered tomb at Broadsands is managed appropriately and protected for the future.
MED01	Torre Abbey, including its grounds and collections, is conserved and enhanced, and its future is secure. Local people and visitors experience and enjoy it as a key heritage site, accessible open space and high-profile event venue.
MED02	The special character of Old Paignton Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced
MED03	The Bishop's Palace is managed appropriately and protected for the future
AGR01	The special character of Torbay's agricultural landscape is understood, preserved and enhanced.
AGR02	Access to and around rural areas is easy and enjoyable by public transport, walking and cycling.
AGR03	Walls Hill ancient field system is managed appropriately and protected for the future.
AGR04	Rural sites with significant historic assets are in Countryside Stewardship where appropriate.
NPL01	Battery Gardens is appropriately managed, maintained and protected for the future, and visitors are encouraged to engage with the site's heritage.

NPL02	Visitors and local people experience and enjoy Torbay's Napoleonic heritage at multiple locations.
TRW01	The special character of Brixham Town Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced.
TRW02	*Vigilance* is functioning as a high quality, popular heritage asset for Brixham, engaging residents and visitors with trawling history and natural heritage.
RST01	Oldway Mansion, including its outbuildings, gardens and pleasure grounds, is where appropriate, conserved and enhanced, and its future is viable, sustainable and secure. Local people and visitors experience and enjoy it as a key heritage site and accessible open space.
RST02	Torquay Pavilion is conserved and where appropriate enhanced, with a viable and sustainable commercial use.
RST03	Lupton House is conserved and where appropriate enhanced, and its Italianate garden is restored and maintained.
RST04	Princess Gardens and Royal Terrace Gardens are maintained and protected for the future
RST05	The special characters of Roundham and Paignton Harbour and Torquay Harbour Conservation Areas area preserved and where appropriate enhanced.
RST06	Babbacombe Cliff Railway is recognised as a heritage asset and is protected for the future.
LIT01	Paignton Picture House is fully restored, is well used by the community and is an anchor heritage site within a regenerated town centre.

LIT02	People seeking an Agatha Christie experience are attracted to Torbay in significant numbers.
LIT03	Visitors and residents experience, enjoy, understand and contribute to Torbay's literary heritage.

Acknowledgements

Our thanks to the staff and volunteers of the following organisations who gave their time and expertise to help produce the Torbay Strategy 2021-2026 and were invited to comment on the updated strategy for 2026-2033.

Brixham Town Council
Devon Gardens Trust
English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark*
Friends of the Vigilance
Historic England
Kents Cavern
Lupton Trust
National Lottery Heritage Fund
National Trust
Paignton Heritage Society
South Devon AONB Partnership (now South Devon National Landscape Partnership)
South West Coast Path
South West Heritage Trust
Torbay Civic Society
Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust (no longer in existence)
Torbay Community Development Trust
Torbay Culture (no longer in existence)
Torquay Museum
Torre Abbey

Our thanks also to the staff and volunteers of the following organisations who gave feedback on the revised Strategy in 2026:

Brixham Heritage Museum
Devon County Council
Paignton Picture House Trust

*A full list of Geopark partners can be found on the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark website at **www.englishrivierageopark.org.uk**

This document can be made available in other languages and formats.

For more information please contact **heritageanddesign@torbay.go.uk**



TORBAY COUNCIL



Torbay Heritage Strategy 2026 – 2031 Part Two

Adopted DATE

Table of Contents

Introduction 3
Heritage services and sector 3
Our stories 11
Geology 11
Early humans 15
Monastic and medieval 19
Agricultural life 23
Napoleonic era 27
Trawling 30
Golden age of the resorts 32
Agatha Christie and writers on the Riviera 38
Emerging stories 42

Cover image: Torre Abbey

Introduction

This part of the Torbay Heritage Strategy expands on the objectives set out in Part One. It is organised around a set of stories from the past that are particularly special to Torbay. In each section, we list the places and objects that embody the story today and consider how they should be prioritised and cared for. We also look at the Council services that underpin and interact with heritage in the Bay and acknowledge areas where we hope new understanding will emerge in the coming years.

Heritage services and sector

English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark

Covering the area of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham, the UNESCO Global Geopark designation is the highest level of international recognition an area can be awarded for its extraordinary geology, and linked environment, heritage and culture. It is managed by the English Riviera Geopark Organisation (ERGO) which is made up of a range of agencies including Torbay Council and supported by a wider network of members who share its vision. Torbay Council hosts the ERUGGp Co-ordinator.

UNESCO Global Geopark designation is subject to review every four years. The English Riviera was successfully revalidated in 2023, meaning that the area, provided it continues to adhere to the UNESCO International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme Statutes and Guidelines, retains the status until 2027.

Spatial planning

The Spatial Planning Team plays a key role in protecting and enhancing Torbay's historic and natural environment. This principle has shaped strategic decisions on the location and scale of development and informed the preparation of placemaking, design and heritage policies that safeguard and encourage investment to improve the Bay's distinctive character. As the Local Plan is reviewed and updated, the Spatial Planning Team will continue to ensure that growth is planned sensitively and that development within historic and environmentally sensitive settings is appropriately guided. The Council recognises the importance of maintaining sufficient expertise and resources to support this function.

Conservation Area Appraisals

An appraisal defines the characteristics of a Conservation Area and evaluates what makes it special. It enables developers, Council members and planning officers to assess the impact of a proposed development and it is a key tool in managing change within historic urban areas. Torbay has 24 Conservation Areas with a high concentration (16) in Torquay, many of which are adjoining. Thanks to Torbay Heritage Place, Torbay Council has embarked on a programme of updating our CAAs and developing Conservation Area Management Plans (CAMPs) to provide up-to-date tools for today's development context, to engage building owners and to foster pride in local areas. We are developing a new, collaborative approach to producing CAAs and CAMPs with the active participation of local communities and intend to continue the programme throughout the period of this Strategy.

Museums

Torquay is home to three accredited museums: Torre Abbey, Torquay Museum and Brixham Heritage Museum. Paignton Heritage Centre has also recently been established at Paignton Library. Between them, they house collections of impressive range and richness, and every year they welcome thousands of local visitors and tourists to exhibitions and events. The Quarternary Caves Collection and Archive held at Torquay Museum has been recognised by Arts Council England as being of national and international significance. Torre Abbey is owned by Torquay Council while Torquay Museum, Brixham Heritage Museum and Paignton Heritage Centre are run by independent organisations.

Archive and local studies services

Local authorities are required to provide an archive service that acts as a place of deposit for all official records. They are also treasure troves of documents, photographs and recordings relating to local people and places. Archive collections are the cornerstone of historical research and maintaining access to them is fundamentally important to a dynamic understanding of our past. Archive collections relating to Torquay have always been integral to Devon Archives and continue to be held at Devon Heritage Centre in Exeter. The service is managed by the South West Heritage Trust under a contract with Torbay Council. The arrangement means that material relating to Torbay is cared for to the highest standard and remains at the heart of the county's written record. A service introduced in 2020 allows local people to pre-order documents from Devon Heritage Centre to be viewed at Torre Abbey in quarterly sessions, an initiative supported by Torbay Council.

In addition, extensive local studies records are held at Torbay's public libraries, managed by Libraries Unlimited, and local independent museums. These collections offer a wide range of

resources such as rare books, parish registers, newspapers and census information to local historians and family history researchers. At the time of writing, Torquay Museum is pursuing UNESCO Memory of the World status for its archive collections.

Historic Environment Record

Historic Environment Records (HER) bring together information relating to landscapes, buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas and archaeological finds within local authority areas. The Torbay HER provides essential information to inform planning decisions and it is available for public enjoyment, benefit and use. It is currently managed by the Historic Environment team at Devon County Council under a contract with Torbay Council. The administrative history of Torbay's HER has led to a backlog of entries accumulated in past years that is not covered by this arrangement. Torbay Council is committed to finding a solution to avoid historical and archaeological information being missed in the planning process.

Heritage destination marketing

As set out in Part One, there is clear potential to grow the audiences for heritage-led tourism in Torbay. We intend to build on our relationship with ERBIDCo and the private sector to achieve this as part of our ambition to reposition the English Riviera as the UK's premier holiday resort of the future.

Heritage sector development

A thriving heritage sector depends on a mutually supportive network of diverse organisations that can share information and work together. The recent establishment of the Torbay Culture and Heritage Forum, facilitated by the Council's Culture and Heritage team, is a very positive development.

Integrated heritage

Experiencing, enjoying and caring for heritage can bring a huge range of social, cultural, economic, health and environmental benefits. We believe that our approach to heritage must be integrated with across all aspects of Torbay Council's work.

Climate emergency

In 2019, Torbay Council declared a climate emergency. Torbay Council is a partner of and supports the work of the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group, which is aiming to help us get to net zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest and prepare Devon for the necessary adaptation to infrastructure and services required to respond to climate change. As described in

‘Vulnerabilities’, heritage assets are at risk from a changing climate and have a role to play in decarbonising.

Objectives

ID	Objective	Measures of success	Partners
SEC01	Everyone in Torbay, including looked-after children, people with disabilities and/or support needs, and those who face barriers to participation and opportunity, can access, experience and enjoy heritage.	Torbay Council heritage site managers and colleagues in social care and social services work together to identify opportunities to benefit service users. Our interpretation and communication of heritage reflects and gives voice to diverse audiences. Visitor data from our sites shows increasingly diverse visitor profile. Organisations in the wider heritage sector are supported to improve inclusivity.	Local community, health and heritage organisations
SEC02	Torbay attracts more visitors seeking a heritage destination.	Heritage features in bay-wide destination marketing and campaigns. Online visitor information specific to heritage is easily accessible and high profile. Key heritage attractions promote links to other heritage sites. Increase in percentage of visitors citing heritage as a reason for visiting.	English Riviera BID
SEC03	Torbay’s heritage sector is strong, connected, inclusive and collaborative.	The Torbay Culture & Heritage Forum is established and self-sustaining, and includes organisations of all sizes.	Local heritage organisations

		Increased numbers of volunteers and voluntary opportunities across the sector. Partnership projects are successful in working strategically and attracting external funding.	
SEC04	Heritage assets in Torbay are protected from the effects of climate change and carbon reduction is central to their management.	New flood defence schemes recognise local distinctiveness in design and materials and take into account relationship to heritage assets. All Torbay Council owned heritage assets are managed to take into account climate issues including flood risk, rainwater and heat protection, effects on building fabric, underlying stability, suitable planting, pests and invasive vegetation. Updated Conservation Area Appraisals assess risks from climate change. Guidance for building owners includes reference to mitigation and/or carbon reduction measures. Sustainable transport to all key heritage sites is encouraged and supported.	Transport and community partners
SEC05	The special and distinctive characteristics of Torbay's Conservation Areas are, where appropriate,	All Conservation Area Appraisals and Conservation Area Management Plans are reviewed, updated and adopted where necessary. Building owners and managers in Conservation Areas feel supported.	Building owners, developers and local communities.

	preserved and enhanced.	Proposals that enhance heritage assets or their setting are supported, subject to Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies.	
SEC06	Building owners, retailers and developers are encouraged and equipped to enhance the built environment in historic areas.	Proposals for new developments which enhance or better reveal the architectural heritage of their setting are supported. Shop front design guides for Torquay, Paignton and Brixham are published and promoted. New design guidance Building owners and communities are supported to enhance their local historic environment.	Building owners, managers and developers
SEC07	Public spaces in historic areas are easy to navigate and, if possible, enhanced by appropriate street furniture and signage.	Unnecessary street furniture and signage is removed. Design of all new and replacement street furniture references and enhances the architectural heritage of its setting. Wayfinding in the public realm clearly and consistently aids navigation to key heritage sites and around the historic environment without unnecessary visual intrusion.	
SEC08	Walking and cycling to Torbay's heritage sites and in the historic environment	Key heritage sites are integrated into the new Torbay Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.	Local heritage organisations

	is easy, enjoyable and popular.	Promotion of walking and cycling is integral to all heritage site visitor information.	
SEC09	Collections related to Torbay within the Devon Archives are secure, well managed and where appropriate, easily accessible.	The current service is maintained. Projects to enable further conservation, cataloguing and research of Torbay collections are supported. Torbay residents are actively engaged in archive research and enjoy easy access to the collections.	South West Heritage Trust
SEC10	Torbay's Historic Environment Record is comprehensive and well managed.	The current service is maintained. The backlog of entries is added.	Devon County Council
SEC11	National and international visitors are attracted to the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark (ERUGGp). Visitors and residents experience, enjoy and understand the Geopark through easily accessible, high quality and consistent information and opportunities for	All ERUGGp partners are consistently and actively promoting the ERUGGp as part of their own activities. There is an increase in visitors citing the ERUGGp as a reason for their trip. There is an increase in understanding and engagement among residents. ERUGGp has up to date, well maintained and effective communications tools. English Riviera Geopark Organisation (ERGO) is delivering high quality education and outreach outcomes.	All ERGO members and partners

	engagement at multiple sites.	Wayfinding and interpretation of geology is consistent, high quality and widely available across partner sites and in the wider landscape. Building owners and site managers are well supported to interpret and promote their assets within the ERUGGp brand.	
SEC12	The UNESCO Global Geopark designation is secure for the future and the work of the ERGO is sufficiently resourced to deliver its aims.	Torbay Council is a key ERUGGp partners and are providing the most appropriate hosting for staff. All members of ERGO, their organisations and staff are actively contributing to and supporting the ERUGGp at the same or higher level than in previous years.	All ERGO members and partners
SEC013	Historic assets in the care of Torbay Council are in good condition, sustainably managed and safeguarded for the future.	The social, economic and environmental benefits of Torbay Council's historic assets are being realised for local people. Torbay Council maintains and repairs assets in line with best conservation practice. There is a consistent approach to management across the Council's estate of historic buildings, gardens, landscapes and monuments.	

Our stories

Sites key

High priority for action
Medium priority for action
Low priority for action
Outside Torbay

Geology

As well as creating the tapestry of valleys, ridges, cliffs and beaches that give Torbay its unique character, geology has always shaped human activity here, as we can see in the harbours, farmland, settlement patterns and building materials. It also supports rare habitats for many important plant and animal species.

Torbay is famous for its limestone cliffs and rich, exposed geological heritage, from Devonian reefs to Pleistocene caves. The arms of the Bay are formed by massive limestone headlands at Hope's Nose and Berry Head, while softer Permian sandstone forms the lower lying land. The famous red cliff exposures can be seen around the coast of Preston and Paignton from Corbyn's Head to Roundham Head and beyond. Over many millennia, the action of water on the limestone created caves such as Kents Cavern.

The geology of Torbay was first mapped in the 1830s. Geological pioneers Roderick Murchison and Adam Sedgwick realised that fossils found in the limestones at sites in Torbay, such as Lummaton Quarry, gave vital evidence of what was happening to the Earth 409-363 million years ago. They named this geological period the Devonian, the term which is still used globally today.

Torbay's limestone and sandstone were extensively quarried and can be seen in many buildings such as Torre Abbey and Torquay Town Hall. Quarries also sprang up where the limestone had metamorphosed into marble. In the nineteenth century, Torbay marble was crafted into exquisite interior features, art and jewellery for wealthy customers. Marble objects from this period can be seen in many churches and grand houses in Torbay.

Key assets

Sites

Asset	Heritage Designation	Environmental designation	Ownership	Heritage at Risk Register
Torre Abbey	Grade I listed building Scheduled Monument		Torbay Council	
Ashhole Cavern, Brixham	Scheduled Monument		Private owner	Y
Coast/beaches	n/a	In parts: National Landscape, PRoW, SSSI, LNR, NNR, SAC	Multiple owners	
Windmill Hill Cave, Brixham	Scheduled Monument		Private owner	
Kents Cavern, Torquay	Scheduled Monument	SSSI	Private owner	
Grade I listed churches: Church of All Saints; Church of St John the Evangelist; Roman Church of Our Lady, Help of Christians and St Denis, St John the Baptist Parish Church, Paignton	Grade I listed building		Diocese of Exeter	

Grade II* listed churches: Church of St Luke, Torquay; Church of St Mary Magdalene, Torquay; Church of St Mary, Collaton St Mary; Church of St Matthew, Chelston; Church of St Matthias, Torquay	Grade II* listed building		Diocese of Exeter	
Barton Road Cemetery, Torquay	Registered Parks and Gardens		Torbay Council	
Devonian type locality, Lummaton	n/a	SSSI	Private owner	
Bishops Walk	ProW		Torbay Council	

Other assets

- Exceptional fossil and geological specimen collections and an extensive Victorian geological library at Torquay Museum. The collections include thousands of specimens of Devonian fossil corals and creatures and local minerals. The museum maintains strong links with the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark.
- The UK's only substantial collection of South Devon and Torbay marble objects, held at Torquay Museum. This includes extremely fine and rare work such inlaid pictures and platters, tables, vases and jewellery. There are also marble samples used at the factories and a selection of photographs of the industry.
- Marble objects in the collections of Torre Abbey

Objectives

ID	Objective	Measures of success	Partners
GEO01	Natural sites where underlying geology is most accessible and	In determining planning applications regard is given to impact of proposals on the condition and public accessibility and	ERGO, local landowners, land managers and developers

	visible are in excellent condition.	interpretation of natural geological features. Proposals for new developments which enhance or better reveal natural geological features are supported. Torbay Council and Natural England are working together to encourage and support site managers and private owners in the conservation and enhancement of natural geological features.	
GEO02	Local stone worked features in churches and other historic buildings are in excellent condition.	In determining planning applications relating to historic buildings, regard is given to the significance of existing local stone features. Proposals for new developments which enhance or better reveal the significance of worked local stone within the historic setting are supported. Torbay Council and Historic England are working together to encourage and support building owners in the conservation and enhancement of historic local stone features and the sourcing of local stone. Torbay Council is conserving and enhancing worked stone features in all historic buildings in our care.	Historic England and building owners including Diocese of Exeter

Early humans

Torbay is home to collections and sites of international importance in the story of human evolution and migration.

At Kents Cavern there is evidence of three of the four human species known to have lived in Britain. Finds at the site include a fragment of jawbone dated to the period between 44,200 and 41,500 years ago, when a brief warm spell between ice ages made this part of Britain temporarily habitable. Scientific dating in 2011 revealed the true age of the fragment and established it as the oldest direct evidence of modern humans in Northern Europe. It has changed how we understand the interaction between modern humans and Neanderthals on the very edge of the habitable world.

The jawbone was originally found in 1927 by Arthur Ogilvy, curator of Torquay Museum. The find came towards the end of a remarkable period of discovery in Torbay's caves that began in the early nineteenth century. A series of explorers were drawn there, most notably the archaeologist William Pengelly who excavated Kents Cavern over a period of 15 years. His finds included tools, animal bones and hand axes from humans who lived over 450,000 years ago. The meticulous methods he developed in Torbay laid the foundation for all modern cave archaeology and his diaries offer fascinating insights into his life and work.

Ashhole Cavern in Brixham was excavated in the nineteenth century and evidence of occupation from the Neolithic to the Roman period was discovered.

Windmill Hill Cave, also in Brixham, is a system of galleries and smaller chambers lying mostly beneath a house in Mount Pleasant Rd. William Pengelly's excavations here in the nineteenth century revealed a rich assemblage of animal remains and flint tools that provided the first evidence for extinct animal species and humans co-existing.

Key assets

Sites

Asset	Heritage Designation	Environmental designation	Ownership	Heritage at Risk Register
Ashhole Cavern, Brixham	Scheduled Monument		Private owner	Y

Chambered tomb at Broadsands	Scheduled Monument		Torbay Council	
Windmill Hill Cave, Brixham	Scheduled Monument		Private owner	
Kents Cavern, Torquay	Scheduled Monument	SSSI	Private owner	
Two bowl barrows at Beacon Hill	Scheduled Monument		Private owner	

Other assets

Torquay Museum holds over 32,000 specimens relating to the quaternary period in South Devon and a unique related archive. This collection is designated by Arts Council England and is of national and international significance. Its highlights are numerous and include:

- KC4 human maxilla, the jawbone that provides the earliest evidence of anatomically modern humans in North West Europe.
- William Pengelly's Windmill Hill Cave and Kents Cavern notebooks, documenting the first excavations to unlock the true antiquity of humans anywhere in the world.
- The oldest bifacial tools discovered in the UK, over 525,000 years old.
- Very early specimens of cave lion and ancestral bear Ursus deningeri.
- A selection of Neanderthal tools including very rare leafpoints.
- Unique evidence for cannibalism in the Mesolithic and surviving human DNA in 9,000-year-old bones.

Objectives

ID	Objective	Measures of success	Partners
HMN01	Torbay's story of early human evolution and migration, and the role of archaeological pioneers here, is widely known, valued and celebrated.	The early human story and its discovery is a key feature of all bay-wide tourism marketing and Global Geopark communications.	ERGO, ERBID, key heritage sites and schools.

		Schools and community groups in Torbay are supported and encouraged to engage with prehistoric sites and collections. Torquay Museum is adequately resourced to conserve and interpret its early human collection to a level appropriate to its importance. A higher proportion of visitors are aware of and actively seeking to engage with the early human story when choosing Torbay as a destination.	
HMN02	Visitors and local people experience and enjoy Torbay's internationally important prehistoric sites and collections at multiple locations.	The links between locations and collections is integral to all key sites' communications and interpretation. Key sites successfully attract funding through local partnerships to create excellent public engagement opportunities.	ERGO and key heritage sites
HMN03	Ashhole Cavern is managed appropriately and protected for the future.	A Conservation Management Plan agreed between the landowner, Torbay Council and Historic England, and condition is monitored. A scheme to improve access and interpretation is implemented. Ashhole Cavern is removed from the Heritage at Risk Register. The potential for a wider Monument Management Scheme (MMS) for Torbay is explored.	Historic England and private landowner

HMN04	The chambered tomb at Broadsands is managed appropriately and protected for the future.	A Conservation Management Plan agreed between the tenant, Torbay Council and Historic England, and condition is monitored. A scheme to improve access and interpretation is implemented. The potential for a wider Monument Management Scheme (MMS) for Torbay is explored.	Historic England

Monastic and medieval

Medieval Torbay was the location of some significant religious sites including Torre Abbey in Torquay and the Bishop's Palace in Paignton, a residence of the Bishops of Exeter for 500 years. Local landowning families also built fine country homes. Outside these impressive buildings, the area was sparsely populated, although it is thought that the extent of settlement may have been under-estimated as evidence is likely to have been obscured by later buildings in the urban areas. New developments in our towns may reveal archaeology that adds to our understanding of this period.

By far the most important building in medieval Torbay was Torre Abbey. It was founded in 1196 and built from stone quarried from Corbyn Head. The Abbey became enormously wealthy and influential, controlling much of the land and activity in Torbay. It is believed that the monks built the first fish quay, giving Torquay its name. After the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539, Torre Abbey passed into private ownership until 1930, when it was acquired by Torquay Council.

Today Torre Abbey houses a museum, art gallery, event venue and gardens, Torbay Council has secured funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a major initiative called New Beginnings: Chapter One. It is an ambitious two-part project to reset Torre Abbey in its landscape. The goal is to make the entire site more accessible, sustainable, and financially secure so it can be enjoyed for generations to come. The project will reconnect people with the abbey's rich heritage through creative interpretation of its hidden archaeology and open up Torquay's largest green space, enhancing wildlife habitats and biodiversity, and making the site more resilient to climate change. Chapter One focuses on the Spanish Barn, the former Pitch and Putt, the South Lawn, and the ground immediately around the Spanish Barn. These improvements will allow year-round use, better community access, and essential conservation of the Grade I listed building.

There are also several listed medieval churches in Torbay, the most significant of which is the Church of St John the Baptist in Paignton. It was founded in the twelfth century and has many elaborate and interesting features, including the most spectacular chantry chapel in Devon outside Exeter Cathedral.

Key assets

Sites

Asset	Heritage Designation	Environmental designation	Ownership	Heritage at Risk Register
Torre Abbey	Grade I listed building Scheduled Monument		Torbay Council	
Torre Abbey Chapel	Grade I listed building		Torbay Council	Y
Old Paignton	Conservation Area		Private, multiple owners	
Bishops Palace, Paignton	Grade II* listed building Scheduled Monument		Diocese of Exeter	Y
Spanish Barn, Torre Abbey	Grade I listed building		Torbay Council	
St Michael's Chapel, Chapel Hill	Scheduled Monument		Torbay Council	
Cockington village	Conservation Area		Private, multiple owners	
Higher Brixham	Conservation Area		Private, multiple owners	
Church of St John the Baptist	Grade I listed building		Diocese of Exeter	

Grade II* listed churches: Church of St Andrew, Torquay; Church of St George and St Mary, Cockington; Church of St Mary the Virgin, Brixham; Church of St Mary the Virgin, Churston Ferrers	Grade II* listed building		Diocese of Exeter	
Ilsham Manor Oratory	Grade II* listed building		Private owner	Y
Blagdon Manor, Paignton	Grade II* listed building		Private owner	
Kirkham House, Paignton	Grade II* listed building		English Heritage	
Compton Castle	Grade I listed building Scheduled Monument		NT	

Other assets

- The Cary family archive collection is held at Devon Heritage Centre and includes nearly 8000 documents from the thirteenth century onwards. In 2024, the collection was fully catalogued thanks to funding from The National Archives and is now available to researchers.

- Medieval artefacts in the collections of Torre Abbey, including suits of armour, decorative tiles and stonework.

Objectives

ID	Objective	Measures of success	Partners
MED01	Torre Abbey, including its grounds and collections, is conserved and enhanced, and its future is secure. Local people and visitors experience and enjoy it as a key heritage site, accessible open space and high-profile event venue.	Torre Abbey is financially self-sustaining as an attraction and commercial event venue with integral café. Torre Abbey's setting is well-maintained and connected to wider walking and cycling routes. The public is consulted on the future of the grounds. Local communities use the open space extensively for outdoor recreation. Volunteers are actively engaged in a wide range of roles. Visitor numbers to all parts of the site continue to increase.	Local communities
MED02	The special character of Old Paignton Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced	Design of new sea defences protects the Conservation Area from flooding while recognising its distinct character (see SEC04). Further loss of locally distinctive and historic fabric is discouraged. A Conservation Area Management Plan is developed and adopted.	Building owners, developers and local communities.
MED03	The Bishop's Palace is managed appropriately and protected for the future	No immediate risk of decay. All interested and responsible parties are supported in carrying out an ongoing management plan. The Bishop's Palace is removed from the Heritage at Risk Register.	Historic England and Diocese of Exeter (or any future owner).

Agricultural life

Torbay's combination of fertile soil, sheltered coast and mild climate has enabled people to feed their families well for thousands of years. Small scale farming and fishing were the main occupations of communities here for most of Torbay's past and have created the rural landscape we know today. The agricultural countryside within the South Devon National Landscape is recognised a historic asset of national importance.

Settled farming began in the Neolithic period. Traces of these early farmers are evident in a chambered tomb near Broadsands and burial mounds at Beacon Hill and Barton Pines. Later Iron Age field patterns can be seen at Walls Hill. The local Dumnonii people cultivated the land in their own style throughout the Roman era and beyond, until Anglo-Saxon settlers brought with them an open field system. In later centuries, land ownership was consolidated into manors and estates in the hands of local gentry and religious houses. By the sixteenth century, the land was largely enclosed. It was at this time that the characteristic pattern of small, irregular fields and high Devon hedges emerged. Torbay was productive enough to feed its own population and provide victualling to Navy and merchant ships in its harbours.

People in rural Torbay lived on dispersed farmsteads or in small villages. Cottages and farm buildings were built of local stone and cob and were often thatched. Cockington is the most well-known historic village in Torbay and is cherished for its air of timelessness. Agricultural tools and domestic objects held at local museums, in particular the extensive collection at Torquay Museum, have great potential to connect us to past generations.

Other historic features of the rural landscape include sunken lanes, hedgerows, orchards, ancient trees, village greens and traditional signage. These features create the distinctive character of rural Devon, provide vital habitats for wildlife and give structure to transport routes and green spaces. The rural landscape positively contributes to the setting of many individual heritage assets such as listed buildings.

The semi-natural countryside offers simple and low-cost opportunities to improve physical and mental wellbeing through outdoor exercise, a sense of peace and space, and a connection to the shared past. It is also a working landscape, managed by farming communities whose long heritage continues into a living modern culture.

Key assets

Sites

Asset	Heritage Designation	Environmental designation	Ownership	Heritage at Risk Register
Prehistoric field system at Walls Hill	Scheduled Monument		Torbay Council	Y
Spanish Barn, Torre Abbey	Grade I listed building		Torbay Council	
Conservation Areas: Churston Ferrers, Cockington and Galmpton	Conservation Area			
Conservation Areas: Maidencombe and Shorton	Conservation Area		Private, multiple owners	
Occombe Farm	n/a	LNR, SSSI	Torbay Council	
Two bowl barrows at Beacon Hill	Scheduled Monument		Private owner	
Two prehistoric hilltop enclosures, a ditch system and four bowl barrows, Marldon	Scheduled Monument		Private, multiple owners	
Agricultural landscape including field patterns, orchards, hedgerows, soils	Grade II listing of buildings	In parts: National Landscape, SSSI, NNR, LNR	Multiple owners	

Manor Farmhouse, Torquay	Grade II* listed building		Private owner	

Other assets

- Torquay Museum houses one of the most important regional folk life collections in the UK. It contains hundreds of rare, pre-industrial rural life objects such as tools and furniture, many in a uniquely Devonian style.
- Relevant archive collections held at Devon Heritage Centre include tithe maps and apportionments, manorial documents, farm account books, sale catalogues, diaries and early photographs of rural life.

Objectives

ID	Objective	Measures of success	Partners
AGR01	The special character of Torbay's agricultural landscape is understood, preserved and enhanced.	Historic agricultural features such as orchards and hedgerows are key assets in the new Torbay Green Infrastructure Plan. Traditional and local materials are used in new developments in rural areas. Proposals that enhance the rural landscape are supported, subject to Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies. Regard is given to the impact of proposals on views of and from designated protected areas within Torbay.	Local communities and farmers
AGR02	Access to and around rural areas is easy and enjoyable by public transport, walking and cycling.	Connectivity to and within rural areas is increased through the delivery of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Torbay.	Torbay Council

AGR03	Walls Hill ancient field system is managed appropriately and protected for the future.	A management plan is agreed between Torbay Council, Historic England and Natural England that explores opportunities under current and future Stewardship schemes, and an ongoing review process is in place. There is no inappropriate furniture on site. Invasive vegetation is under control. Measures have been taken to address erosion and increase understanding and engagement. Walls Hill is removed from the Heritage at Risk Register.	Historic England and Natural England
AGR04	Rural sites with significant historic assets are in Countryside Stewardship where appropriate.	Torbay Council, Natural England, Historic England and landowners work together to identify sites where Stewardship could be beneficial.	Natural England, Historic England and local landowners

Napoleonic era

Torbay's rapid development in the nineteenth century owed much to the Napoleonic wars. Napoleon Bonaparte himself even became the Bay's first star attraction.

The wars prevented wealthy Britons from travelling to mainland Europe, so they began to look for destinations closer to home. At this time, the natural harbour of Tor Bay was frequently used as an anchorage for the Channel Fleet that was protecting England from invasion by Napoleon. The families of high-ranking naval officers visited Torquay, further enhancing the town's reputation. Brixham was an important victualling port, where navy crews could stock up on fresh vegetables, meat and water. Meanwhile, all along Torbay's coast, business boomed for local smugglers of French brandy.

The fear of an attack on England by the French led to a decision to strengthen the coastal defences at Berry Head with a new fort and redoubt to protect the existing batteries. The remains there today represent an exceptionally well-preserved survival from the Napoleonic era that offers great insight into strategic military thinking of the time. The site is managed by Torbay Council for the enjoyment of all, and there is great potential to extend the interpretation of its history.

After the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, Napoleon was captured by the British and held on the warship HMS *Bellerophon*. It anchored in Torbay for two days and caused a sensation. Crowds flocked to glimpse him from the shore and even hired boats to get closer to the celebrity prisoner. He was soon removed to St Helena but by now Torbay was on the map.

In subsequent decades, local landowner Sir Lawrence Palk drove the development of Torquay after being inspired by the Italian architecture he saw on the Grand Tour. Torbay's mild climate and beautiful coastline made it an ideal location to import Italian design ideas, so Palk and local dignitary William Kitson commissioned villas and crescents that recreated a Mediterranean atmosphere. New, exclusive residential areas such as the Warberries and Lincombes became fashionable.

Key assets

Sites

Asset	Heritage Designation	Environmental designation	Ownership	Heritage at Risk Register
Battery Gardens, Brixham	Scheduled Monument		Torbay Council	
Brixham Town	Conservation Area		Private, multiple owners	
Berry Head Forts and complex	Grade II* listed building Scheduled Monument	NNR, National Landscape, SSSI, SAC	Torbay Council	

Other assets

- A letter signed by Napoleon from the collections of Torquay Museum, on display at Torre Abbey.
- A contemporary watercolour painting showing tourists in boats trying see Napoleon on the *Bellerophon*, at Torquay Museum.
- An important collection work by Napoleonic prisoners of war in Dartmoor Prison, at Torquay Museum.
- Paintings, prints and engravings in collections of Torre Abbey showing portraits of Napoleon and his family, battles and his imprisonment on the *Bellerophon.*
- Copy of the death mask of Napoleon in the collections of Torre Abbey.
- A walking stick believed to have been carved by Napolean when he was a prisoner of war, on display at Brixham Heritage Museum.

Objectives

ID	Objective	Measures of success	Partners
NPL01	Battery Gardens is appropriately managed, maintained and protected for the	Scheduled structures are free from vegetation.	Historic England and local volunteers

	future, and visitors are encouraged to engage with the site's heritage.	A management plan is agreed between Torbay Council and Historic England, and an ongoing review process is in place. Both Napoleonic and WW2 heritage is interpreted and accessible on site.	
NPL02	Visitors and local people experience and enjoy Torbay's Napoleonic heritage at multiple locations.	Napoleonic heritage is well interpreted at key sites (Battery Gardens, Berry Head and Brixham Harbour) and links between sites are highlighted. Greater engagement with Torbay's Napoleonic heritage among visitors and residents.	Historic England and local volunteers

Trawling

This story is specific to Brixham, although its influence has been felt in fishing communities around Britain and northern Europe. In the late eighteenth century, motivated by dwindling catches, Brixham fishermen and boat builders set about creating faster boats that could fish in deep water. The design they developed was known as a Brixham trawler. It was a wooden sailing trawler, about 18-24 metres in length, with a long, straight keel. Its sleek underwater profile and tall rig gave it the speed fishermen needed to reach remote fishing grounds towing a large trawl and return in relatively short time.

The sails of the Brixham trawlers were dyed a distinctive red colour with local ochre to give them extra protection – another example of the influence of Torbay's geology.

To maximise the time spent fishing the rich waters of the North Atlantic, some Brixham men began to spend seasons in the north of England, at Grimsby and Hull. Soon this led to the permanent migration of many fishermen. The design of the Brixham trawlers was copied around the British coast as new ports sprang up to take advantage of the deep-sea grounds that were opening up to faster boats. Brixham retains a shared history with Grimsby, Hull and other deep-sea fishing ports, which arguably have closer cultural links with the town than Paignton and Torquay. By the end of the nineteenth century there were more than 3000 sailing trawlers based at British ports, with a fleet of 400 at Brixham.

Today, Brixham's trawling heritage is evident in the distinctive setting of the harbour and the historic buildings and infrastructure of the town. It is still a busy port with a living cultural heritage of fishing. Trawler design has undergone many changes and only a handful of the original sailed boats survive. *Vigilance* is looked after by a team of volunteers and has recently been undergone a two-year programme of restoration thanks to funding from the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. *Vigilance* could be a focus for hands-on heritage skills learning and interpretation of trawling history. She has the potential to offer trips along the Torbay coast that would open up not only fishing and maritime stories, but also natural history and a new view of the UNESCO Global Geopark.

Key assets

Sites

Asset	Heritage Designation	Environmental designation	Ownership	Heritage at Risk Register
Brixham Town	Conservation Area		Private, multiple owners	

Other assets

- The 1926 Brixham trawler *Vigilance*, managed by voluntary group Friends of the *Vigilance*.
- Fishing and ropemaking exhibition and photographic collection at Brixham Heritage Museum.
- Extensive shipping records relating to the Port of Brixham held at Devon Heritage Centre.

Objectives

ID	Objective	Measures of success	Partners
TRW01	The special character of Brixham Town Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced.	Further loss of natural, local slate roofing is discouraged and its use is supported in new buildings and restoration works. Creative interpretation of Brixham's distinctive heritage is accessible in the public realm.	Building owners, developers and local communities.
TRW02	*Vigilance* is functioning as a high quality, popular heritage asset for Brixham, engaging residents and visitors with trawling history and natural heritage.	Excellent programme of public engagement and permanent interpretation on and around *Vigilance* is planned and supported.	Friends of the Vigilance

Golden age of the resorts

The modern characters of Torquay and Paignton have been shaped in large part by their history as seaside resorts. As we have seen, tourists began visiting in large numbers in the nineteenth century, starting an explosion of development and a ‘golden age’ of prosperity that lasted until the Second World War. The architectural heritage from this period includes large numbers of villas, civic buildings, shops, churches, entertainment spaces, public gardens and tourist infrastructure. In Torquay, the town’s former wealth is evident everywhere in the grand style of its historic buildings and open spaces. The maintenance of this heritage presents particular challenges in an area tackling deprivation today.

The scale of development during this period means that late Georgian, Victorian and early twentieth century architecture is prominent in both towns and makes up the majority of the built environment. This is where most interaction with Torbay’s heritage happens, as people move through the urban environment, rather than during intentional visits to historic sites. Many of these buildings are listed and fall within Conservation Areas.

One of the most distinctive characteristics of the resorts’ buildings, gardens and artefacts is the influence of Italianate design. It was consciously imported and reimagined in an effort to create a Mediterranean-style resort in a northern European setting – an ‘English Riviera’. It inspired the Italianate garden at Lupton House, which is now at serious risk of decay. Recognising this style, protecting surviving examples and taking new inspiration from it are essential if we are to retain and enhance the special qualities of our resorts.

Wealthy people first came here for their health, particularly to escape cold winters in the rest of Britain. This heritage of healthcare and relaxation has many parallels with today’s interest in wellbeing. Later tourists came for summer holidays and entertainment. New theatres and concert venues attracted the most prestigious acts from London for the summer season. The most iconic of these buildings is the Pavilion in Torquay. It is currently vacant and funding is being sought for its full restoration and active re-use. As an emblem of Torbay’s special entertainment heritage and a unique landmark, it is imperative that a commercially viable new use is found for the building.

Many wealthy families who were attracted to Torbay settled and built large homes here. The most well-known and extravagant of these is Oldway Mansion near Paignton, built by the American sewing machine manufacturer Isaac Singer. Later in its life, the building was used as offices for Torbay Council, which still owns it. Oldway Mansion has been empty since 2013 and is now in urgent need of substantial investment for its restoration and re-use. Torbay Council has a Masterplan for Oldway and elements of phase one are currently being delivered.

Key assets

Sites

Asset	Heritage Designation	Environmental designation	Ownership	Heritage at Risk Register
Oldway Mansion (house)	Grade II* listed building		Torbay Council	Y
Torquay Pavilion	Grade II listed building		Torbay Council	
Paignton Picture House	Grade II* listed building		Paignton Picture House Trust	Y
Lupton Park	Registered Parks and Gardens		Lupton House Trust	Y
Oldway Mansion (grounds)	Registered Parks and Gardens		Torbay Council	Y
Lupton House	Grade II* listed building		Lupton House Trust	Y
Roundham and Paignton Harbour	Conservation Area		Private, multiple owners	
Torquay Harbour	Conservation Area		Private, multiple owners	
Conservation Areas: Abbey Road, Babbacombe Downs, Barton, Belgravia, Cary Park, Chelston,	Conservation Area		Private, multiple owners	

Lincombes, Maidencombe, Polsham, St Marychurch, Tormohun, Torre, Upton, Warberries, Watcombe Park				
Cockington Court	Grade II* listed building		Torbay Council	
Hesketh Crescent, Torquay	Grade II* listed building		Private, multiple owners	
Watcombe Park and Brunel Manor	Registered Parks and Gardens		Part owned by Torbay Council	
Princess Gardens and Royal Terrace Gardens	Registered Parks and Gardens		Torbay Council	Y
Coast/beaches	n/a	In parts: National Landscape, PRoW, SSSI, LNR, NNR SAC	Multiple owners (Shoreline Management Plan)	
Babbacombe Cliff Railway	Within CA but no designation of assets		Torbay Council	
Grade II* listed buildings: 1-15 Wellswood Park Road, Torquay; 163 Newton Road, Torquay; Aylmer, Brixham; Beacon	Grade II* listed building		Private owners	

Terrace, Torquay; Hatley St George, Torquay;				
Little Theatre, Torquay	Grade II* listed building		TOADS Theatre Company	
Bishops Walk	n/a	PRoW	Torbay Council	
Castle Tor	Registered Parks and Gardens		Divided, private owners	
Coleton Fishacre (house)	Grade II listed building		NT	
Coleton Fishacre (park and gardens)	Grade II* listed building		NT	

Other assets

- Extensive archive collections documenting the growth of the resorts held at both Torquay Museum and Devon Heritage Centre.
- Social history artefacts including shop signs and costumes from the period at Torquay Museum.
- The Seaside Fun gallery at Torre Abbey which includes several contemporary paintings of fashionable visitors and locals enjoying the resorts in the nineteenth century.

Objectives

ID	Objective	Measures of success	Partners
RST01	Oldway Mansion, including its outbuildings, gardens and pleasure grounds, is where appropriate, conserved and enhanced, and its future is viable, sustainable and secure. Local people and visitors experience and enjoy it as a key heritage site and accessible open space.	Short term grant funding is successfully secured to stabilise the building(s) and works complete. Medium to long term programme of fundraising for delivery of Oldway Masterplan is in place and works in progress where funding allows. Local communities use the grounds extensively for outdoor recreation.	Historic England and local communities
RST02	Torquay Pavilion is conserved and where appropriate enhanced, with a viable and sustainable commercial use.	The building is safe to access, further decay has been halted and a programme of restoration is in place. Appropriate long-term management of the building in line with its cultural and historic value is agreed. Proposals which conserve and enhance the building and find appropriate new uses for it will be supported.	Historic England and all interested parties
RST03	Lupton House is conserved and where appropriate enhanced, and its Italianate garden is	There is ongoing constructive engagement between all interested parties including Torbay Council, Lupton House Trust and Historic England.	Lupton House Trust and Historic England

	restored and maintained.	A management plan is agreed and operational, and Lupton House Trust are appropriately supported to deliver it. The building is secure and deterioration is halted. The Italianate garden is in a programme of restoration.	
RST04	Princess Gardens and Royal Terrace Gardens are maintained and protected for the future	The Gardens continue to be maintained to a high quality. The Gardens are removed from the Heritage At Risk Register. Historic parks and gardens are key assets in the new Torbay Green Infrastructure Plan.	Local communities
RST05	The special characters of Roundham and Paignton Harbour and Torquay Harbour Conservation Areas area preserved and where appropriate enhanced.	Further loss of historic fabric is discouraged. Walking and cycling in these areas is encouraged. A Conservation Area Management Plan is developed and adopted.	Building owners, developers and local communities.
RST06	Babbacombe Cliff Railway is recognised as a heritage asset and is protected for the future.	Babbacombe Cliff Railway is appropriately managed and conserved	Babbacombe Cliff Railway CIO.

Agatha Christie and writers on the Riviera

Torbay has a rich literary heritage, with world famous novelist Dame Agatha Christie as its figurehead.

Agatha Christie was born in Torquay in 1890. She began writing crime stories while volunteering as a nurse and dispenser at the Torquay Town Hall Red Cross Hospital during the First World War. It was here that she gained her knowledge of poisons. Her characters from this time were based on people she observed on the Torquay tram. She also met some of the Belgian refugees who sought sanctuary in Torbay, and from them she took the inspiration for her most famous detective, Poirot.

She was a keen cinema goer and she had a favourite seat at the Paignton Picture House, which will re-open to the public in 2027 thanks to significant investment and work in recent years . Locations in her novels are often inspired by local places, for example Kents Cavern. Her beloved holiday home, Greenway, above the River Dart, provided the setting for several fictional murders. The house is now run by National Trust and houses an important collection of Christie artefacts.

Greenway is a place of pilgrimage for Agatha Christie fans, but other sites associated with her are not yet fully integrated into Torbay's tourism offer. In 2025, a statue of her by artist Elisabeth Hadley was unveiled in Torquay as part of the town's harbourside improvements. It has the potential to be a focal point for further developing tourism themed around Christie and her stories.

While Agatha Christie may be Torbay's most famous daughter, many other writers stayed and produced work here, where the beauty and sea air was believed to be restorative and inspiring. They included Oscar Wilde, Mary Shelley, T.S Elliot, and many others.

Torbay is within the area covered by Exeter's UNESCO City of Literature status, and indeed links with Agatha Christie are among the reasons for the designation. We intend to fully explore opportunities resulting from the status that could further promote our literary heritage and support a vibrant culture of writing in the Bay.

Key assets

Sites

Asset	Heritage Designation	Environmental designation	Ownership	Heritage at Risk Register
Paignton Picture House	Grade II* listed building		Paignton Picture House Trust	Y
Kents Cavern, Torquay	Scheduled Monument	SSSI	Private owner	
Church of All Saints	Grade I listed building		Diocese of Exeter	
Greenway	Grade II* listed building	National Landscape	NT	

Other assets

- The UK's only museum collection of Agatha Christie ephemera and memorabilia, held at Torquay Museum. Its 1,000 items include books and first editions, costumes from television adaptations, a set from ITV's Poirot and a large collection of souvenirs, film and theatre programmes, film posters and fan items.
- Almost 21,000 items at Greenway, collected and treasured by the Christie family over several generations.
- The Agatha Christie Potent Plants Garden at Torre Abbey, featuring poisons used in her books.

Objectives

ID	Objective	Measures of success	Partners
LIT01	Paignton Picture House is fully restored, is well used by the community and is an anchor heritage site within a regenerated town centre.	The restoration of Paignton Picture House is complete and there is an ongoing programme of maintenance and conservation. Paignton Picture House Trust is well managed and sufficiently resourced to deliver the business plan and manage its ongoing use. Paignton Picture House is integrated into the programme of wider town centre regeneration.	Paignton Picture House Trust and Historic England.
LIT02	People seeking an Agatha Christie experience are attracted to Torbay in significant numbers.	A strong relationship with the National Trust integrates Greenway into Torbay's Agatha Christie offer. Greenway is included as a key destination in sustainable transport planning in Torbay. The Agatha Christie Festival is appropriately supported and promoted and continues to thrive. Collaboration between sites and organisations that have Agatha Christie collections or associations is supported and encouraged. Visual links to Agatha Christie in the public realm are clearly marked and celebrated. Increase in visitors citing Agatha Christie connection as a reason for visiting.	ERBID, the National Trust and other key sites

LIT03	Visitors and residents experience, enjoy, understand and contribute to Torbay's literary heritage.	Torbay's literary heritage is promoted and celebrated. Schools and community groups in Torbay are supported and encouraged to engage with literary heritage in creative ways. Literary heritage is a foundation for supporting new work by local writers.	Local creative arts organisations and communities

Emerging stories

Our understanding of Torbay's past evolves constantly as new discoveries are made and the preoccupations of our own time change. Torbay Council encourages activities that uncover historical evidence, listen to unheard voices or re-evaluate established stories through new lenses.

Over the next five years, we expect to understand more about a range of topics, including:

Romans and Romano-British Torbay

Until recently, little was known about Torbay during the Roman occupation of Britain. Archaeological finds at Ipplepen, just outside Torbay, have revealed that official Roman involvement in our region, on the fringes of the Roman Empire, could be greater than previously thought. The finds have recently been accessioned to Torquay Museum. In recent years, excavations at two Romano-British farmstead enclosures in Torbay have shown a marked difference in the abundance of Romano-British material, which possibly indicates very localised variations in how local communities embraced 'Romanisation'. There is much still to be learned about Roman-era Torbay and we hope that archaeology will continue to enrich our understanding in the coming years.

Marble industry

Research by the team at Torquay Museum has shed new light on Torbay's marble industry, a significant story that had been almost forgotten. In the nineteenth century, Torbay had a natural supply of high-quality marble and plenty of wealthy customers eager to buy luxury fittings for their new villas and mansions, fashionable marble jewellery and exclusive souvenirs. Many local people were employed in the industry, as quarrymen, engineers, designers, masons, craftsmen and retailers. Torquay marble can be seen in most grand houses and churches of the period in Torbay, including Oldway Mansion.

Torquay Museum holds a collection of impressive artefacts but more work is needed to identify Torbay marble features and objects as local marble is often mislabelled. To better understand the history of the industry and its potential for public engagement, it is also necessary to establish the condition and accessibility of quarry sites and to track down relevant archive material.

Smuggling

The success of Brixham's annual pirate festival offers an opportunity to engage a wider audience with the town's real and more complex history through related maritime topics. Smuggling has a long history in Brixham with social, economic and cultural impacts. The smuggling exhibition at

Brixham Heritage Museum is a way into the subject that could be extended via more research to establish and connect relevant sites in the town.

Recent decades

Torbay Council believes that recent history should be recognised, recorded and valued, and that all our communities should have the opportunity to contribute to our shared narratives. Therefore, we encourage new research and interpretation of the Bay's twentieth and twenty-first century heritage. Since the Second World War, many people have settled in Torbay from elsewhere, particularly from other parts of the UK and Eastern Europe. Their experiences enrich our culture and are part of Torbay's story.

We recognise that priorities may emerge relating to these or other topics during the life of the Torbay Heritage Strategy, and it must have the flexibility to incorporate new objectives and actions accordingly.

This document can be made available in other languages and formats.

For more information please contact **Future.Planning@torbay.gov.uk**

This page is intentionally left blank

TORBAY COUNCIL

Report title: Amendment to boundary of Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	20 October 2026
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr Chris Lewis, Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth
Email:	chris.lewis@torbay.gov.uk
Lead Director:	Malcolm Coe, Director of Finance David Carter, Director of Regeneration
Email:	malcolm.coe@torbay.gov.uk
Wards affected:	Preston and Cockington with Chelston

1. Summary of Report:

1.1 Torbay Council sold Occombe Farm and associated land in July 2026 – this land forms part of the Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve (LNR). It is understood that the designation as a Local Nature Reserve was originally sought in order for the previous Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust to more easily access grant funding.

1.2 There is an expectation that the land forming Local Nature Reserves needs to be under control of the party who designated it as such. Therefore, it is proposed to amend the boundary of the LNR to be as shown in Appendix 2.

1.3 The amendment reflects the change in land ownership for which the new owner intends to invest in the farm site, supporting regeneration, tourism and economic activity. The proposal has been informed by independent ecological advice and consultation with Natural England.

1.4 Any proposals brought forward by the new owner would still need to go through the normal planning process and be assessed against national planning policy, the Local Plan,

environmental requirements and other relevant planning considerations, including the Site of Special Scientific Interest designation on part of the land.

1.4 The Local Nature Reserve will continue to exist, with the vast majority of the reserve remaining protected. An updated management plan will help ensure that the retained reserve continues to be managed, enhanced and accessible for wildlife, education and recreation.

2. Recommendations and Proposed Decision:

2.1 That the amendment to the Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve boundary, as set out in Appendix 2 to the submitted report, be approved with any necessary declaration and associated requirements being made.

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Proposed Decision:

3.1 The Council sold the land at Occombe Farm in July 2026 and committed to use reasonable efforts to secure re-designation of the Local Nature Reserve regarding the land sold, in order to meet the expectation that the land forming LNRs should be under the control of the party who designated it.

3.2 The proposed amendment to the boundary reflects the change in ownership and has been informed by an independent ecological assessment and consultation with Natural England. The majority of the Local Nature Reserve will remain in place and will continue to be managed for wildlife, education and recreation. Any future development proposals for the site would remain subject to the statutory planning process and assessment against relevant planning and environmental policies.

4. Background and Context:

4.1 The boundary of the Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve is shown in Appendix 1 – this includes the land at Occombe Farm which the Council has sold.

4.2 There is an expectation that the land forming Local Nature Reserves is under the control of the local authority who designated it as such. Therefore, the Council agreed to make reasonable efforts to re-designate the LNR regarding the land recently sold. To this end it is proposed to amend the boundary of the LNR as shown in Appendix 2.

4.3 An ecology report has been commissioned, and Natural England has been consulted. The Ecological Assessment Report can be found at Appendix 3. The report suggests that mitigation measures set out at Section 4 *Mitigation strategy/ opportunities for enhancement*

measures could be implemented in the remaining LNR to mitigate the removal of the LNR designation on the land sold at Occombe Farm. Appendix 4 contains Natural England's response. Natural England has requested Torbay to "*update the existing management plan for the new LNR boundary and provide Natural England with a copy of this document. As the local authority you should then prepare a formal (legal) declaration to revoke the declaration document (this need only be one side of A4 paper) accompanied by a local nature reserve map"*

4.4 Following consideration of the feedback from Natural England and the independent ecological assessment, approval is sought to amend the Local Nature Reserve boundary to remove the land sold at Occombe Farm whilst retaining the remainder of the LNR. It should be noted that the proposal has no impact on the Site of Special Scientific Interest which continues to cover part of the land sold.

4.4 Pending a decision, Torbay Council has provided an updated management plan to Natural England and should the recommendations be approved will prepare a declaration document accompanied by a local nature reserve map.

5. Alternative Options Considered:

5.1 The alternative option would be for Occombe Farm to remain designated as an LNR. If the LNR designation were to remain, agreement would need to be reached with the landowner and the land would need to be managed as a Local Nature Reserve alongside the new landowners' aspirations for the site.

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

6.1 The proposal aligns with the previous decision of the Council to dispose of Occombe Farm and associated land whilst retaining the majority of the Local Nature Reserve and supporting continued environmental stewardship through an updated management plan.

7. Consultation and Engagement:

7.1 Torbay Council having declared the local nature reserve is responsible for making decisions about changes to the boundary of the local nature reserve. Torbay Council must consult Natural England on the amendment of the boundaries with the initial consultation having been carried out through the provision of the Ecological Assessment Report (appendix 3) and Natural England's response (appendix 4).

7.2 In terms of the procedure that the Council must follow for formal de-registration, legal advice has been obtained which confirms that the next steps are:

a) The Council is to draw up a formal declaration and de-declaration document accompanied by the LNR map at a scale which accurately shows the LNR boundary.

b) The formal document is signed according to the Council's scheme of delegation. The LNR map will show the current LNR boundary and it will show the amended LNR boundary.

c) The local authority shall formally notify Natural England of the LNR amendment of boundaries in writing and send them a copy of the signed legal document, together with a map.

d) Natural England will then update the LNR Records.

8. Implications:

Financial Implications:

8.1 The Council has agreed to sell the land and agreed to make reasonable efforts to remove the LNR designation from the sold land. The Council's Asset Management Strategy states that the Council will 'always seek to maximise the full market receipt for their assets whether by way of freehold disposal or leasehold interest'. The independently appointed valuation established that the interested party's offer is above market value.

Legal Implications:

8.2 The amendment of the Local Nature Reserve boundary requires the Council to follow the statutory process for revocation of part of the declaration, including consultation with Natural England and the preparation of a formal declaration document and revised boundary map. Legal advice has been obtained on the required process.

Corporate Parenting/Children and Young People:

8.3 No impacts are anticipated with the removal of the LNR designation to Occombe Farm resulting in an amended boundary to the remaining LNR. The Occombe Farm land is currently unused and does not provide any service to children or young people. The new landowner's proposal includes leisure facilities that improve health and wellbeing to the community and has been recently re-opened. The existing LNR will continue to operate as a nature reserve.

Associated Risks, Risk Tolerance Level and Mitigations:

A summary of key risks associated with the recommendations in this report are:

1. Financial Risk – mitigated through the de-registration of the LNR relating to the land sold.
2. Ecology Risk – monitored through the range of possible mitigation measures.

The risks of not approving the recommendations include failure to obtain a capital receipt preventing regeneration strategies across Torbay. Overall risk exposure is assessed as acceptable within the Council's risk tolerance appetite.

Full risks are set out below:

Risk	**Risk score before mitigations (likelihood x impact)**	**Mitigations**	**Risk Score after mitigations (likelihood x impact)**	**Risk tolerance**
Loss of ecology	9	Monitored through the range of possible mitigation set out in section 4 of the Ecological Assessment Report contained in appendix 3.	2	The suggested mitigation measures will enhance the ecological value of the remaining LNR.
Social Value	9	Careful consideration of the mitigation set out in section 4 of the Ecological Assessment Report contained in appendix 3.	2	The suggested mitigation measures will enhance the user experience (social and educational) of the remaining LNR.

Contributions to tackling climate change or achieving carbon neutrality:

8.4 Ecological measures set out in section 4 of the Ecological Assessment Report to improve the remaining LNR will in turn will play its part in tackling climate change. For example, conservation days involving habitat management, tree planting and invasive species control will help protect and enhance the local environment having a positive impact on talking climate change.

Social Value Considerations:

8.5 Measures to improve public access, ensure public safety and to promote educational value (but avoid significant impacts to habitats and species) as suggested in section 4 of the ecological assessment report in appendix 3 will enhance users experience of the remaining LNR.

Procurement Implications:

8.6 There are no significant procurement implications.

Other Implications:

8.7 There are no significant additional implications.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age	• 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. • 55% of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. • 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	The proposal may affect people of all ages who use the site for recreation, informal exercise, education and enjoyment of nature. No significant adverse impacts have been identified as the proposal does not remove the wider Local Nature Reserve and ecological enhancement measures are proposed for the remaining reserve. The future reopening of Occombe Farm may also increase opportunities for intergenerational participation, education and leisure activities.	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.
Carers	• At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. • 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care.	Whilst no significant adverse impacts are anticipated, the Council recognises that people with disabilities and their carers may derive particular benefit from access to green spaces for recreation, wellbeing and connection to nature. Consideration has therefore	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
		been given to whether the land being removed from the Local Nature Reserve designation provides specific accessibility benefits which are not replicated elsewhere within the remaining reserve. The proposal relates to the removal of a statutory designation rather than the closure of the site to public access. The remaining Local Nature Reserve will continue to be available and opportunities to improve accessibility will be considered through the updated management plan.		
Care experienced	• As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	The Council has considered the proposal in its role as a Corporate Parent. Access to green spaces can support the health, wellbeing, social development and resilience of care experienced young people, who may experience poorer outcomes than their peers across a range of measures. The proposal relates to the removal of the Local Nature Reserve designation from part of the site rather than the	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
		removal of access to the wider reserve. No evidence has been identified to suggest that care experienced young people make disproportionate use of the land affected by the proposed boundary amendment. The wider Local Nature Reserve will remain accessible and ecological enhancement measures are proposed to improve its environmental, educational and recreational value. As such, no significant adverse impacts on care experienced young people are anticipated.		
Disability	• In the 2021 Census, 23.9% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.	Whilst no significant adverse impacts are anticipated, the Council recognises that people with disabilities may derive particular benefit from access to green spaces for recreation, wellbeing and connection to nature. Consideration has therefore been given to whether the land being removed from the Local	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
		Nature Reserve designation provides specific accessibility benefits which are not replicated elsewhere within the remaining reserve. The proposal relates to the removal of a statutory designation rather than the closure of the site to public access. The remaining Local Nature Reserve will continue to be available and opportunities to improve accessibility will be considered through the updated management plan.		
Gender reassignment	• In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth.	No evidence has been identified to suggest that people sharing this protected characteristic are currently more likely to be affected by the proposed amendment to the Local Nature Reserve boundary. The proposal relates to a geographical change in designation and does not alter eligibility for services or result in	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
		differential treatment of any protected group. Any future management arrangements for the remaining reserve will continue to promote inclusive access for all sections of the community.		
Marriage and civil partnership	• Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.	No evidence has been identified to suggest that people sharing this protected characteristic are currently more likely to be affected by the proposed amendment to the Local Nature Reserve boundary. The proposal relates to a geographical change in designation and does not alter eligibility for services or result in differential treatment of any protected group. Any future management arrangements for the remaining reserve will continue to promote inclusive access for all sections of the community.	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.
Pregnancy and maternity	• Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a	No evidence has been identified to suggest that people sharing this	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment	Swisco or another.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3). • For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0).	protected characteristic are currently more likely to be affected by the proposed amendment to the Local Nature Reserve boundary. The proposal relates to a geographical change in designation and does not alter eligibility for services or result in differential treatment of any protected group. Any future management arrangements for the remaining reserve will continue to promote inclusive access for all sections of the community.	Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Timescales to be confirmed.
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: • 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh • 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African • 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	No evidence has been identified to suggest that people sharing this protected characteristic are currently more likely to be affected by the proposed amendment to the Local Nature Reserve boundary. The proposal relates to a geographical change in designation and does not alter eligibility for services or result in differential treatment of any protected group. Any future management arrangements for the remaining	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	• 96.1% as White • 0.4% described their ethnicity another way. • Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.	reserve will continue to promote inclusive access for all sections of the community.		
Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following; • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddhist • 0.2% are Hindu • 0.6% are Muslim • Less than 0.1% are Sikh • 0.1% are Jewish • 0.7% have another religion	No evidence has been identified to suggest that people sharing this protected characteristic are currently more likely to be affected by the proposed amendment to the Local Nature Reserve boundary. The proposal relates to a geographical change in designation and does not alter eligibility for services or result in differential treatment of any protected group. Any future management arrangements for the remaining reserve will continue to promote	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	• 43.2% have no religion • 6.3% did not answer	inclusive access for all sections of the community.		
Sex	• 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.	No evidence has been identified to suggest that people sharing this protected characteristic are currently more likely to be affected by the proposed amendment to the Local Nature Reserve boundary. The proposal relates to a geographical change in designation and does not alter eligibility for services or result in differential treatment of any protected group. Any future management arrangements for the remaining reserve will continue to promote inclusive access for all sections of the community.	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows;	No evidence has been identified to suggest that people sharing this protected characteristic are currently more likely to be affected by the	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within	Swisco or another.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	• 89% as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian • 1.1% as Bisexual • 0.1% as Pansexual • 0.1% described their sexuality another way • 7.4% of people didn't answer the question	proposed amendment to the Local Nature Reserve boundary. The proposal relates to a geographical change in designation and does not alter eligibility for services or result in differential treatment of any protected group. Any future management arrangements for the remaining reserve will continue to promote inclusive access for all sections of the community.	appendix 3 from this report.	Timescales to be confirmed.
Armed Forces Community	• In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. • In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.	No evidence has been identified to suggest that people sharing this protected characteristic are currently more likely to be affected by the proposed amendment to the Local Nature Reserve boundary. The proposal relates to a geographical change in designation and does not alter eligibility for services or result in differential treatment of any protected group. Any future management arrangements for the remaining reserve will continue to promote	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
		inclusive access for all sections of the community.		
Additional considerations:				
Socio-economic impacts (including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	• Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	Access to green space can be particularly important for people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, as it provides free opportunities for recreation, exercise and wellbeing. Consideration has therefore been given to whether the proposal could disproportionately affect residents living in more deprived communities. Whilst the removal of the designation represents a reduction in the overall extent of protected land, the wider Local Nature Reserve will remain available and mitigation measures are proposed to enhance its ecological, educational and social value. No disproportionate adverse impacts on residents experiencing deprivation have been identified at this stage.	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	• For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between males who live in Torbay's least and most deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females.	Access to natural environments contributes positively to physical activity, mental wellbeing and social connection. The Council has considered whether the proposed amendment to the Local Nature Reserve boundary could adversely affect these benefits. As public access to the wider reserve will remain and the ecological assessment identifies opportunities for enhancement of the retained reserve, significant adverse public health impacts are not anticipated. The reopening of Occombe Farm may also create additional opportunities for recreation and community participation.	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.
Human Rights impacts		Consideration has been given to the Human Rights Act 1998. The proposal is not considered to interfere disproportionately with any Convention rights. The proposal concerns a change to the boundary of a Local Nature Reserve designation following the sale of land and does not remove	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
		public access to the remaining reserve. The proposal has been informed by an ecological assessment and consultation with Natural England and is considered proportionate and justified in the circumstances.		
Child Friendly (Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) considerations): *Summarise the CRIA considerations for this proposal, including which groups of children and young people may be affected (e.g., care experienced children/young people, care leavers, children with SEND), how their rights and best interests have been considered, and any engagement undertaken with children/young people and/or their representatives. Set out any mitigations to address identified adverse impacts*		The proposal has been considered from the perspective of children's rights and wellbeing. Children and young people may use the site for informal recreation, educational visits, nature-based learning and family activities. The proposal relates to the removal of the Local Nature Reserve designation from part of the site rather than the removal of public access to the wider reserve. No significant adverse impacts on children's rights are anticipated. The ecological enhancements proposed for the retained reserve have the potential to strengthen educational and environmental learning opportunities in the future. Care experienced children, children with SEND and other	See section 4 from the Ecological Assessment Report contained within appendix 3 from this report.	Swisco or another. Timescales to be confirmed.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
and how these will be monitored.		vulnerable groups are not expected to experience disproportionate impacts from this proposal.		

10. Cumulative Council Impact:

10.1 None

11. Cumulative Community Impact:

11.1 The majority of the Local Nature Reserve will remain in place and continue to provide ecological, educational and recreational benefits to the community. Enhancement measures identified within the ecological assessment and the updated management plan will support the ongoing value of the reserve.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation:

12.1 Monitoring and evaluation will be required once a timescale and confirmation of the mitigation measures are taken through the updated management plan.

Appendices:

1. Existing LNR
2. Proposed amended LNR boundary
3. Ecological Assessment Report
4. Natural England consultation response

Background Documents:

None

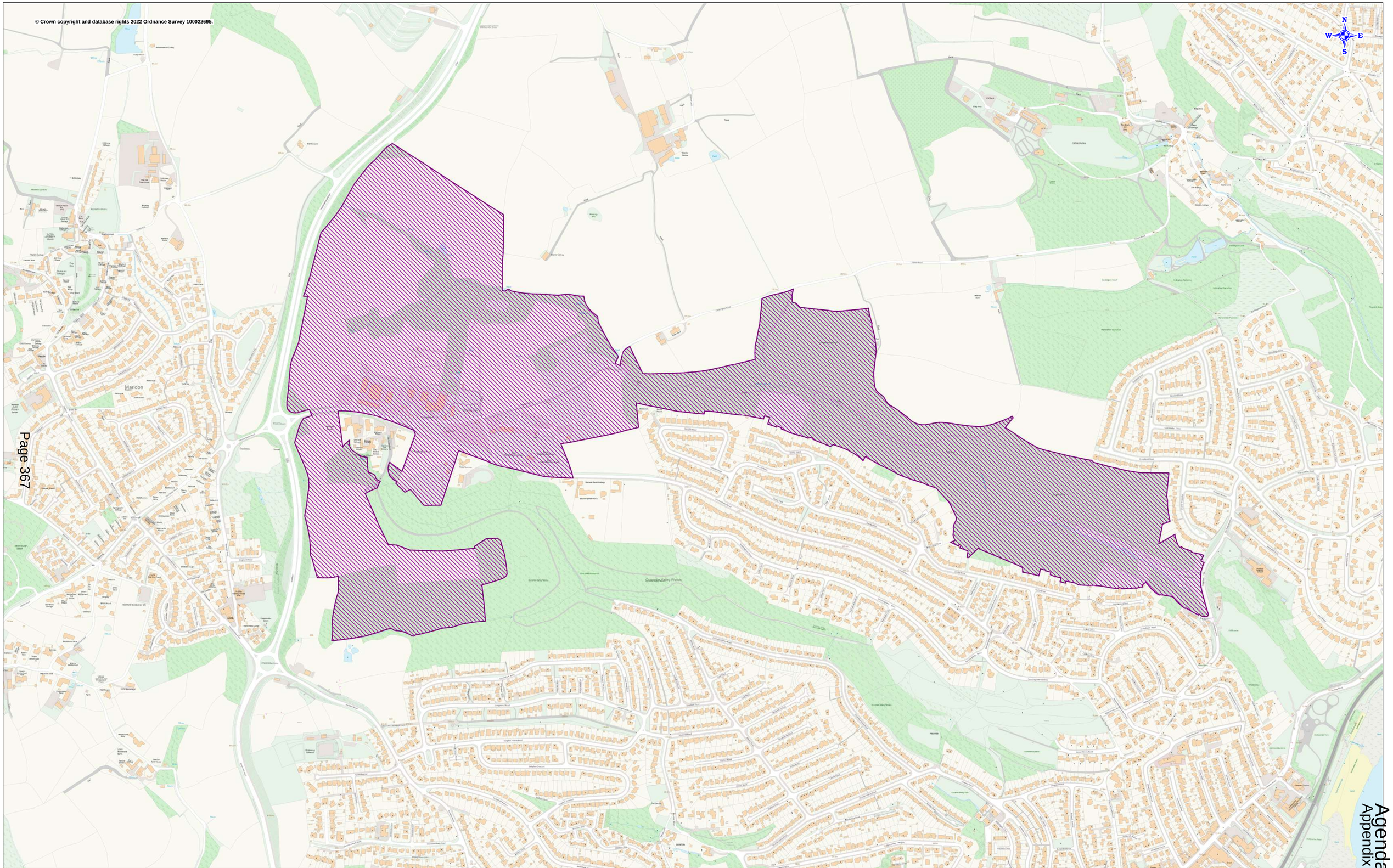
Officer Contact Details:

Name: Ed Brown

Title: Development Manager

Email address: edward.brown@torbay.gov.uk

© Crown copyright and database rights 2022 Ordnance Survey 100022695.



EM Plan No: EM4421A
Date: 25 June 2026
Title: Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods
Local Nature Reserve ref: 1122975

TORBAY COUNCIL - ASSET MANAGEMENT

Scale: 1:6000 @ A2
Area: 94.40 hectares

TORBAY COUNCIL

This page is intentionally left blank

© Crown copyright and database rights 2022 Ordnance Survey 100022695.

EM Plan No: EM4421
Date: 24 June 2026
Title: Proposed changes to Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve, ref: 1122975

TORBAY COUNCIL - ASSET MANAGEMENT

Scale: 1:6,000 @ A2
Area: 57.97 hectares

TORBAY COUNCIL

This page is intentionally left blank

Ecological Assessment Report

Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve

Torbay Council

July 2026

Report reference	Report Status	Date	Prepared by	Authorised
260805_P3124_Occombe_Farm_ Ecological_Assessment_Final	Final	05/08/26	Diana Morgan BSc ACIEEM Amy Moscrop BSc MSc ACIEEM	Matt Cowley MSc PhD CEnv MCIEEM

EAD Ecology
Armada House
Odhams Wharf
Topsham
Exeter
EX3 0PB
Tel: 01392 260420

Email: info@eadecology.co.uk
www.eadecology.co.uk

The information which we have prepared is true, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of the client and unless otherwise agreed in writing by EAD Ecology, no other party may use, make use of or rely on the contents of the report. No liability is accepted by EAD Ecology for any use of this report, other than for the purposes for which it was originally prepared and provided.

EAD Ecology has exercised due care in preparing this report. It has not, unless specifically stated, independently verified information provided by others. No other warranty, express or implied, is made in relation to the content of this report and EAD Ecology assumes no liability for any loss resulting from errors, omissions or misrepresentation made by others.

Any recommendation, opinion or finding stated in this report is based on circumstances and facts as they existed at the time that EAD Ecology performed the work.

Nothing in this report constitutes legal opinion. If legal opinion is required the advice of a qualified legal professional should be secured.

© Copyright EAD Ecology 2026

Contents

1 Introduction, background and approach 4
1.1 Introduction 4
1.2 Approach 4
2 Ecological Baseline 6
2.1 Desk study 6
2.2 Habitats descriptions 6
2.3 Protected and notable species 9
3 Assessment 11
3.2 Summary 16
3.3 Conclusion 16
4 Mitigation strategy/ opportunities for enhancement measures 17
4.2 Management Plan 17
4.3 Public access and engagement/ education opportunities 17
4.4 Habitat measures 18
4.5 Responsibilities 19
5 References 20

Tables

Table 1. Protected and notable species summary 9
Table 2: LNR criterion comparison table 11

Figures

Figure 1: Site Location Plan

Appendices

Appendix 1: UK Habitat Classification Plans, Target Notes and Photographs
Appendix 2: Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Ancient Woodland Plans

1 Introduction, background and approach

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 EAD Ecology was commissioned by Torbay Council to undertake a site survey and Ecological Assessment to inform proposed de-declaration of part of the Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve (LNR) (approximate OS Grid Ref: SX879631; refer to Figure 1), hereafter 'the LNR' or 'the site'.

1.1.2 The LNR has been split into two separate areas. Area A has been identified by Torbay Council for removal from the LNR (site boundary A). The remaining land in the LNR - Area B (site boundary B) will be retained; refer to Figure 1.

1.1.3 When consulted by Torbay Council on the proposals, Natural England advised that if de-declaration of part of the LNR was unavoidable, then Torbay Council should mitigate through proportionate enhancement of the remaining LNR. If mitigation could not be fully achieved, they should provide compensatory land of an equivalent nature conservation and recreational value.

1.1.4 We understand that Area A of the LNR has been sold by Torbay Council, the purchaser may reinstate the LNR designation in the future; however, this is not confirmed. If Area A of the LNR is not reinstated within an agreed timeframe, Torbay Council would deliver commensurate enhancement of the retained areas of the LNR to mitigate the loss.

1.1.5 This report documents the following:

- The ecological baseline for Areas A and B, including information on their nature conservation designations, habitats, and the presence/potential presence of protected and notable species.
- Assessment and comparison of Area A and Area B in relation to appropriate LNR designation criteria.
- Principles for a potential mitigation and enhancement strategy for the retained LNR (Area B).

1.2 Approach

Desk study

1.2.1 The desk study comprised a search of ecologically sensitive sites and records for the LNR and vicinity via Defra's MAGIC website. The scope of the search included:

- Statutory designated sites of nature conservation value within or adjacent to the LNR;
- Extent of ancient woodland within and adjacent to the LNR (as held within the Natural England Ancient Woodland Inventory (revised layer used where available); and
- Extent of habitats held within the Natural England Priority Habitats Inventory within and adjacent to the LNR.

Baseline habitats within the LNR

1.2.2 A desk study was undertaken to provisionally digitise and classify all habitat parcels within the site to at least UKHab Level 2, using QGIS. The desk study included a review of OS basemap data, satellite imagery and DEFRA MAGIC datasets.

Site survey

1.2.3 On-site habitats in Areas A and B were subject to UK Habitat Classification survey (UKHab Ltd, 2023), undertaken by an experienced botanist from EAD Ecology (Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC) Level 5 Surveyor) on 09 and 10 July 2026; refer to Section 2.2 and Appendix 1. Habitats were assigned a primary code and secondary codes were recorded as applicable. Parcel boundaries identified during the desk study were updated/refined during the survey visits where required. As part of the survey the suitability of habitats for legally protected and otherwise notable species was assessed.

Limitations

1.2.4 Some areas of the site were inaccessible due to dense vegetation e.g. bracken; scrub and were therefore surveyed from the margins or inferred from most recent satellite imagery. Further areas were also inaccessible due to lack of landowner permission. Further botanical survey would be required to confirm the exact type and extent of some of the habitats shown on the UKHab Survey Plans in Appendix 1; however, for the purposes of this assessment, this was not considered a significant limitation as the extent and quality of the key habitats present could be accurately determined.

2 Ecological Baseline

2.1 Desk study

European and Nationally designated sites

2.1.1 There are no European designated sites within 5km of the LNR. Two additional nationally designated sites lie within/ adjacent to the LNR subject to this report (refer to Appendix 2). Occombe Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies within Area A of Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods LNR. Occombe Valley Woods LNR lies directly to the south and west of Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods LNR. Occombe SSSI is designated for its lowland neutral grassland and wet woodland (refer to Appendix 2).

2.2 Habitats descriptions

Overview

2.2.1 Habitat descriptions and parcel reference numbers are provided below; these should be read in conjunction with the UK Habitat Classification Plans; refer to Appendix 1.

2.2.2 Priority Habitats (those listed in accordance with Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006) recorded within the site during the UKHabs survey comprised 'lowland mixed deciduous woodland' (present in Areas A and B), 'lowland fens' (present in Area A), 'lowland meadow' (present in Area A), 'traditional orchard' (present in Area A) and 'native hedgerow' (present in Areas A and B).

Habitats within Area A
Developed land

2.2.3 Developed land was present in the south of Area A. This included roads, buildings, a vegetated garden and car park associated with the previous Occombe Farm business.

Traditional orchard

2.2.4 A traditional orchard (G6) was present near the buildings and vegetated garden in the south of Area A. The orchard comprised semi-mature fruit trees with modified grassland beneath.

2.2.5 Traditional orchard is a Priority Habitat.

Cropland

2.2.6 Several arable fields were present in the western and north-western parts of Area A and were planted with cereal crops or managed as perennial rye-grass leys. The fields were bounded by native hedgerows; refer to Paragraph 2.2.17.

Bracken

2.2.7 Several stands of dense bracken (>95% canopy cover) were present within the grassland fields in the east of Area A, as well as near the lowland meadow (G2).

Modified grassland

2.2.8 Species-poor modified grassland was present in several parcels north of the developed land (G4–G7). Some of these areas had previously been managed as animal paddocks. One parcel (G6) occurred within the traditional orchard; refer to Paragraph 2.2.4. Additional areas of regularly mown modified grassland were present around the developed land in the south of Area A.

Other neutral grassland

2.2.9 Several parcels of 'other neutral grassland' were present in the east of Area A. The vegetation was relatively tall due to lack of grazing or other management. Dense stands of bracken were encroaching onto the grassland; refer to Paragraph 2.2.7.

Other woodland; broadleaved

2.2.10 Two small parcels of 'other woodland; broadleaved' were present in Area A (W1, W3) and were limited to field corners. These were even-aged and relatively recently planted, with some tree guards still present. Species present included field maple, ash and sweet chestnut, with an understorey of hazel, hawthorn and dogwood. Some limited woodland ground flora was present including ivy and ferns.

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

2.2.11 A parcel of lowland mixed deciduous woodland was located within the centre of Area A and extended eastwards (W2). The canopy was dominated by pedunculate oak and ash, with an understorey comprising hazel and holly. The woodland had a varied age structure, including mature and veteran trees. Ancient woodland indicator species were present including wood sedge. Some wetter areas with species indicative of wet conditions were present where a stream ran through the woodland. Evidence of recent tree felling was recorded within parts of the woodland. A boardwalk ran through much of the length of the woodland.

2.2.12 Lowland mixed deciduous woodland is a Priority Habitat.

Lowland fens

2.2.13 A small area of fen / rush vegetation (F1) was present near the centre of Area A and formed a mosaic with lowland meadow vegetation. Vegetation was dominated by rushes including jointed rush and soft rush, as well as herbs including meadowsweet, water mint, common fleabane and marsh bedstraw.

2.2.14 Lowland fen is a Priority Habitat.

Lowland meadow

2.2.15 An area of species-rich lowland meadow (G2) was present in a mosaic with the fen / rush habitat (F1). Species present included devil's-bit scabious, quaking grass, betony, meadowsweet and common knapweed. Encroachment by dense bracken was evident at the margins.

2.2.16 Lowland meadow is a Priority Habitat.

Native hedgerow

2.2.17 Native hedgerows were present across Area A. Some of these were species-rich and contained species including hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, dogwood, spindle, field maple and rose sp. Several hedgerows were large (>3m tall and wide) and sympathetically managed.

2.2.18 Native hedgerow is a Priority Habitat

Other standing water (non-Priority)

2.2.19 Two ponds (P1 and P2) were present within Area A. P1 contained standing water at the time of survey and the surface was covered entirely by duckweed. It was lined with butyl lining. P2 was dry at the time of survey.

Other rivers and streams

2.2.20 A stream ran through Area A, predominantly through the lowland mixed deciduous woodland parcel (W2). The stream was shallow and had a silt and gravel substrate.

Habitats within Area B
Developed land

2.2.21 Developed land was present in the north of Area B. This included commercial land associated with a plant nursery, as well as existing roads.

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

2.2.22 A large parcel of lowland mixed deciduous woodland (W5; Scadson Woods) comprised the eastern portion of Area B. Canopy species included oak, ash and sycamore. Native woodland ground flora was present and included ancient woodland species such as wood sedge. A stream flowed through the centre of the woodland. Some non-native invasive species were present across the woodland including variegated yellow archangel and buddleia, and there were signs of ash dieback throughout the woodland. Evidence of recent tree felling was present in some areas. There were wide and well-used unsurfaced paths through the woodland.

2.2.23 An additional parcel of lowland mixed deciduous woodland was present in the south of Area B (W12). This was a younger woodland with a less complex structure than W5. Canopy species included oak and ash with understorey species including hazel. There were well-worn unsurfaced paths through the woodland.

2.2.24 Lowland mixed deciduous woodland is a Priority Habitat.

Other woodland; broadleaved

2.2.25 Small parcels of planted 'other woodland; broadleaved' were present in Area B and were also limited to field corners. They had a similar structure and composition to those within Area A.

Cropland

2.2.26 Several arable fields were present in the south-western portion of Area B and were planted with cereal crops at the time of survey. The fields were bounded by native hedgerows; refer to Paragraph 2.2.31.

Bracken

2.2.27 One stand of dense bracken (>95% canopy cover) was present within the east of Area B (G21).

Modified grassland

2.2.28 Several parcels of species-poor modified grassland were present in the west of Area B. These were largely agricultural fields either grazed or cut for hay. One parcel (G17) appeared neglected and had a tall sward due to lack of grazing or other management.

Other neutral grassland

2.2.29 Several grassland parcels within Area B were categorised as 'other neutral grassland,' however due to lack of access, these were surveyed from the margins. Further survey would be required to confirm the grassland type.

Dense scrub

2.2.30 Small patches of dense scrub were present across Area B. Constituent species included bramble, willow sp., and blackthorn.

Native hedgerow

2.2.31 Native hedgerows were present along field boundaries within Area B. Some of these were species-rich and contained species including hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, dogwood, spindle, field maple and rose sp.

2.2.32 Native hedgerow is a Priority Habitat.

Other rivers and streams

2.2.33 The stream present within Area A continued through W5 within Area B.

2.3 Protected and notable species

2.3.1 Table 1 summarises the potential protected and notable species that could occur within Area A and B of the LNR.

Table 1. Protected and notable species summary

Species / Species group	Details	Suitable habitat present in Area A	Suitable habitat present in Area B
Roosting bats	Trees and buildings in Area A and Area B provided suitable bat roosting habitat.	✓	✓
Nesting birds	Area A and Area B provided suitable nesting and foraging habitat for birds, including the specifically protected species cirl bunting.	✓ (cirl bunting confirmed)	✓
Amphibians	Suitable breeding habitat for amphibians (including great crested newt (GCN)) was recorded in Area A. Field margins, hedgerows, scrub and grassland provided suitable terrestrial habitat for common amphibian species and GCN in both Area A and B.	✓	✓
Reptiles	Field margins, hedgerows, tussocky grassland and scrub within the Area A and B provided suitable habitat for common reptiles.	✓	✓
Badger	The woodland, hedgerows and scrub in both Area A and B was suitable for badgers.	✓	✓
Hazel dormouse	Hedgerows, woodland and scrub within Area A and B provided suitable habitat for hazel dormice.	✓	✓
Otter and water vole	The watercourse within Area A and B provided potentially suitable conditions for both otter and water vole.	✓	✓

Table 1. Protected and notable species summary

Species / Species group	Details	Suitable habitat present in Area A	Suitable habitat present in Area B
Other Mammals (hedgehog)	Habitats within Area A and B were suitable for hedgehog.	✓	✓

3 Assessment

3.1.1 An assessment of Areas A and B is provided by Table 2 below; this compares Area A, Area B and the LNR at designation at baseline using the following criteria:

- Wildlife / habitat interest;
- Habitat integrity / extent;
- Public enjoyment;
- Educational value;
- Condition / management;
- Strategic biodiversity role; and
- Ability to function as LNR.

Table 2: LNR criterion comparison table

LNR Criterion	Position at Designation (Baseline)	Current Position – Area A (Release Area)	Current Position – Area B (Retained LNR)	Conclusion
Wildlife / Habitat Interest	Mosaic of habitats including wet meadows, unimproved grassland and woodland. Good range of plants (particularly orchids), great green grasshopper, cirl bunting and barn owl. (Natural England, Designated Sites View accessed 28/07/2026).	Area A supports a mosaic of habitats including semi-natural broadleaved woodland, lowland meadow, stream, neutral grassland, fen, species-rich hedgerows, traditional orchard and mature trees. Several of these are Priority Habitats. A portion of Area A is designated as a SSSI, and a part of the woodland is classified as Ancient Woodland. The site supports species of conservation importance, including cirl bunting, and the species-rich	Area B supports a large, contiguous block of semi-natural broadleaved woodland, which supports ancient woodland flora and is likely to provide habitat for a wide range of woodland birds, bats, mammals and invertebrates. Further habitats of ecological importance are present within Area B including additional blocks of broadleaved woodland, neutral grassland and species-rich hedgerow.	Both areas retain significant ecological interest. Area B supports the largest contiguous block of semi-natural woodland. Area A retains biodiversity value and comprises a more varied habitat mosaic, including ancient woodland and habitats of national importance (SSSI).

		hedgerows and woodland provide suitable habitat for hazel dormice. The site is also likely to support notable invertebrate species. Habitats of lower intrinsic ecological value are also present, including arable land and developed land associated with Occombe Farm.	The diversity of habitats overall is lower than Area A. Habitats of lower intrinsic ecological value also present, including arable land.	
Habitat Integrity / Extent	A well-connected and contiguous habitat that contributes to a large, continuous green space, creating ecological corridors, maintaining biodiversity, strengthening ecosystem function, and ensures landscape-scale connectivity across the wider area.	Habitats within Area A, particularly to the north of Occombe Farm, remain largely contiguous and retain ecological connectivity with Scadson Woods to the east. The woodland forms a habitat block of sufficient size to maintain ecological function. Development is largely confined to the southern boundary and has not significantly fragmented the woodland or other semi-natural habitats within the northern portion of the site.	Area B comprises a substantial, contiguous block of woodland, which remains well connected to adjacent surrounding habitats. Its size and continuity enhance its resilience and ability to support functioning ecological communities.	Area B represents the most coherent and resilient habitat for LNR designation, while Area A contributes to greater habitat diversity and connectivity in the wider landscape.
Public Enjoyment	At designation, the LNR was promoted as a publicly accessible woodland with marked paths, walking trails, cycling routes, and opportunities for wildlife watching. The woods are	Public access to Area A is currently restricted. Existing infrastructure, including boardwalks, gates and surfaced paths, remain present and in good condition but are becoming overgrown	Area B is currently well used by the public for walking, dog walking and informal recreation, with an established network of unsurfaced paths providing access	Area B currently fulfils the recreational function of an LNR, although opportunities remain to enhance

	connected by a network of public walking and cycling routes between Occombe Farm and Cockington, allowing visitors to explore the reserve for recreation.	due to a lack of site management. Several unsurfaced paths are partially or wholly inaccessible due to overgrown vegetation. Occombe Farm provides nearby parking and there is an established surfaced route into the woodland. Interpretation and visitor signage are absent. Subject to improved management and reopening of access, the area retains the potential to provide opportunities for public enjoyment.	throughout much of the site. Interpretation and visitor signage is present but limited and there is no dedicated parking, although most visitors are likely to access the site locally on foot. Opportunities remain to enhance opportunities for visitors through improved signage, interpretation, access infrastructure, and visitor facilities.	its accessibility, visitor infrastructure and interpretation. Area A has the infrastructure and potential to support public enjoyment but is presently constrained by restricted access and limited maintenance.
Educational Value	Torbay's Greenspace Strategy stated that the Local Nature Reserves at Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods should be maintained to provide opportunities for people to study, learn about, and enjoy local wildlife and geological features (Torbay Council, 2007). At designation, the LNR was easily accessible so provides potential for local educational use.	Area A has potential for educational use due to the diversity of habitats present, including woodland, meadow, ponds and orchard. Existing visitor infrastructure associated with Occombe Farm, including parking, toilets and indoor facilities, provides opportunities for organised educational visits and community engagement. Current restrictions to access limit this function in the short term but could be addressed through future management.	Semi-natural woodland habitat within Area B offers opportunities for education and outdoor learning. The absence of supporting visitor facilities such as parking, toilets and educational infrastructure limits its capacity for organised educational activities compared with Area A.	Area A has greater capacity for structured educational use owing to its supporting facilities, while Area B provides opportunities for environmental education within the woodland.
Condition / Management	The LNR was managed primarily by the Torbay Coast	No evidence of recent habitat management was present	Some woodland management activity is	Both areas would benefit from

	and Countryside Trust (TCCT) on behalf of Torbay Council. The Trust prepared a site-specific management plan, endorsed by English Nature to guide the conservation and enhancement of the reserve while ensuring continued public access (Torbay Council, 2005).	within Area A. Semi-natural habitats are undergoing scrub and bracken encroachment, with grassland habitats showing signs of declining condition in the absence of grazing or appropriate management. Public access infrastructure also shows evidence of deterioration through lack of maintenance. Despite this, habitats retain ecological value, and their condition could be improved through appropriate habitat management.	evident within Area B, including tree felling. Invasive non-native species are present within the woodland and require ongoing management to control or eradicate. Further woodland management could improve habitat condition, structural diversity and long-term resilience within Area B.	conservation management. Area B is currently managed as functioning woodland, whilst Area A requires renewed habitat and visitor management to maximise its ecological and recreational value.
Strategic Biodiversity Role	Contributes to Torbay's strategic green infrastructure and ecological network by enhancing habitat connectivity, supporting functional ecological corridors, and reducing habitat fragmentation across the wider area. Complements the nearby Occombe Valley Woods LNR which was designated in 2003 (Torbay Council, 2005)	Area A contributes to the wider ecological network through its diverse habitat mosaic and direct connectivity with Scadson Woods and surrounding habitats. The diversity of habitats likely supports a range of Priority Species. The area also contributes to landscape-scale habitat diversity through the presence of open habitats that complement the adjacent woodland.	Area B forms the ecological core of the retained LNR, comprising a substantial and well-connected woodland block within the wider woodland network. The woodland functions as an important habitat resource and wildlife corridor, supporting ecological connectivity and providing resilience within the local green infrastructure network. Its size and continuity make it an important component of	Area B provides the principal strategic ecological function within the retained LNR, while Area A enhances habitat diversity and connectivity across the wider landscape.

			the wider ecological landscape.	
Ability to Function as LNR	The site is capable of functioning as a coherent LNR of meaningful size and ecological value, containing a continuous network of habitats that support biodiversity conservation, ecological connectivity, and long-term habitat management. Its scale and quality provide a sustainable resource for wildlife while accommodating opportunities for public enjoyment, recreation, and environmental education.	Area A continues to support habitats and species of significant conservation importance and retains the capacity to function as part of a LNR. Its current contribution to the recreational and educational functions of the LNR is constrained by restricted public access and the need for improved habitat and visitor management. Appropriate restoration of access and conservation management would enhance its ability to fulfil wider objectives of an LNR designation.	Area B currently functions effectively as a LNR including in relation to wildlife value, integrity and extent, public enjoyment, and strategic biodiversity role. It is regularly used by the public for recreation. The woodland possesses sufficient ecological value, habitat extent and public accessibility to continue fulfilling primary objectives of an LNR designation. Opportunities exist to further enhance biodiversity value through management and to provide enhanced visitor infrastructure and interpretation and facilities for educational use.	Area B currently functions effectively as a LNR. Area A retains many of the characteristics associated with LNR designation but currently doesn't contribute to the LNR's public access, recreational and educational functions.

3.2 Summary

3.2.1 Overall, both areas continue to support habitats and species of significant ecological interest. Area B contains the largest contiguous block of semi-natural woodland and therefore provides the greatest contribution to the ecological integrity and functioning of the LNR. Area A, however, supports a more diverse habitat mosaic, contributing substantially to biodiversity at the landscape scale despite the development of the buildings associated with Occombe Farm.

3.2.2 Area B currently fulfils the primary ecological, recreational and public access objectives of a LNR designation. It provides the ecological core of the retained LNR, supporting habitat connectivity and resilience within Torbay's green infrastructure network. Although Area A complements this by contributing habitat diversity, supporting Priority habitats and species, and maintaining ecological connectivity across the wider landscape, its current functionality is constrained by restricted public access and the absence of active habitat and visitor management. Appropriate restoration of access and site management would enable the site to fulfil the wider objectives of LNR designation.

3.3 Conclusion

De-declaration of Area A

3.3.1 The assessment demonstrates that, whilst Area A continues to support habitats and species of significant ecological importance, including Priority Habitats, Ancient Woodland and land within a Site of Special Scientific Interest, it no longer fulfils the full range of functions expected of a Local Nature Reserve. In particular, restricted public access, the absence of active habitat and visitor management, and the limited provision of opportunities for recreation and environmental education mean that the area currently makes only a limited contribution to the public objectives of the designation.

3.3.2 Although Area A retains substantial biodiversity value and continues to contribute to the wider ecological network, these interests are largely protected through existing statutory and non-statutory designations, wildlife legislation and planning policy. On balance, the assessment concludes that whilst Area A's de-declaration would reduce the diversity and extent of habitats within the LNR, it would not undermine the overall purpose or integrity of the designation, given the retained extent and function of Area B.

Continued Function of Area B as a Local Nature Reserve

3.3.3 The retained Area B continues to satisfy criteria for designation as a LNR. It comprises a substantial and coherent block of semi-natural woodland that supports habitats and species of conservation importance, maintains ecological connectivity within the wider green infrastructure network, and provides a resilient ecological resource at the landscape scale. The site remains publicly accessible and is well used for informal recreation, including walking, dog walking and nature appreciation, thereby continuing to deliver the public enjoyment objectives of the designation. Whilst opportunities exist to enhance habitat management, interpretation and educational provision, these represent improvements rather than fundamental requirements for the site's continued designation. Consequently, Area B remains capable of functioning effectively as a coherent and sustainable LNR, continuing to fulfil the primary objectives of nature conservation, public access and community engagement established through its original designation.

4 Mitigation strategy/ opportunities for enhancement measures

4.1.1 As outlined in Paragraphs 1.1.2 - 1.1.4, should Area A of the LNR not be reinstated as an LNR, Torbay Council have agreed to undertake appropriate enhancements within the retained areas of the LNR to mitigate the impact of its reduction in size. The following identifies opportunities for enhancement within the retained Area B of the LNR.

4.2 Management Plan

4.2.1 Following review of the Council report for the designation of the LNR on 22nd February 2005, it is understood that Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust (now ceased operations) prepared a site-specific Management Plan for the LNR, endorsed by English Nature. However, there is no record of this document. It is recommended that a new Management Plan be prepared, approved by Natural England and then implemented. This could include measures to maintain and enhance the function of the LNR, as detailed below.

4.3 Public access and engagement/ education opportunities

4.3.1 Measures to improve public access, ensure public safety and to promote educational value but avoid significant impacts to habitats and species, could include:

- New information boards, designed in consultation with an ecologist, provided along the public routes, describing the species present and the measures that members of the public can take to help conserve them. These would aim to promote education and awareness of the LNRs natural features.
- The network of footpaths could be improved. Any new and existing routes should be inclusive, clearly signed, and use appropriate surfacing for a variety of users. In addition, if considered necessary, visually sensitive wayfinding markers could be installed. These could be simple timber bollards with directional information which indicate walking route directions for members of the public at entry points to the LNR.
- Installation of infrastructure such as benches, dog waste bins and signage.
- Monitoring and maintenance to ensure fencing, signage, footpaths and other infrastructure remain safe, accessible and effective.
- An appropriate programme of safety checks of trees with potential to impact path users as advised by a tree risk assessment, and any safety works implemented, subject to advice from an ecologist.
- Establishing and supporting partnerships with local schools/ colleges and organisations such as Wildlife Trusts for outdoor learning and engagement. The reserve could be used as an outdoor classroom for ecology, biology and environmental science studies. Curriculum-linked learning activities covering biodiversity, climate change, woodland management and conservation could also be developed.
- Volunteer conservation days involving habitat management, tree planting and invasive species control could be organised to encourage community participation. Citizen science projects, such as bird monitoring, butterfly surveys and bat walks could also be developed.
- To deliver wide ranging opportunities for public use and education in the absence of Area A, consideration should be given to identifying suitable land (of low ecological value) either on or close to the site that could be used to provide complementary facilities, including car parking, toilets and indoor educational and community space. Provision of such facilities would mitigate the loss of similar facilities (albeit not currently in use) in Area A.

- To enhance the educational and enjoyment value, consideration should be given to habitat creation in areas of low ecological value (cropland; modified grassland) focusing on habitats with education value (e.g. wildlife pond with dipping platforms), this would mitigate the loss of habitats in Area A.

4.4 Habitat measures

4.4.1 It is recommended that the Management Plan includes suitable woodland management. Woodland with high biodiversity value comprises native tree species, with a diversity of ages and well-structured canopy and shrub layers with minimum invasive species cover.

Thinning

4.4.2 Areas of lowland mixed deciduous and broadleaved woodland could be enhanced through selective felling/thinning outside of the nesting bird season and taking into account the potential presence of hibernating dormice (i.e., December - February inclusive) to allow space for retained trees as they mature and to promote growth of understorey and ground flora vegetation. Logs and brash should be stacked to create habitat piles that would benefit wildlife. Haul routes and ground disturbance should be minimised as far as possible to avoid disturbing hibernating dormice. Trees with potential bat roost features and/or other features of ecological value should be retained.

Deadwood and damage

4.4.3 Standing and fallen deadwood should be retained. Where trees are present and are dead/dying, particularly ash due to ash dieback, these should be retained where possible if there are no health and safety risks, e.g., close to public footpaths. In some parcels, it may be appropriate to monolith dead or dying trees to prevent the tree from failing and uprooting and to create habitat for wildlife; refer to the UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason and Wray, 2025) for further information.

Planting

4.4.4 Woodland areas which are lacking in understorey could be planted with a mix of native understorey shrub species to increase species diversity (following selective thinning to open-up the canopy where necessary). Locally sourced shrubs should be used where possible; this could include taking established saplings, or germinating seeds to plant, from adjacent/nearby woodland parcels where natural regeneration is successful. Any plant losses should be replaced in the planting season following the loss.

Management of non-native species

4.4.5 Management and monitoring of invasive and non-native species within the woodland should be undertaken. Where present, phased removal programmes should be undertaken. This should then be followed up with native planting or regeneration.

Dense scrub

4.4.6 Where suitable, areas of mixed/ bramble scrub should be enhanced/maintained through planting a range of native shrub species to increase species and structural diversity. Following enhancement, these areas should be monitored every five years and selected areas cut/thinned during the winter months to maintain a diverse age range and structure and to create rides/glades.

Bracken

4.4.7 To diversify areas of dense bracken, these could be cut in mid-July, when it is 50-75cm high, and again six weeks later, and repeated annually for three years. The areas could then be planted with a mix of native shrub species and allowed to develop into mixed scrub and managed as above.

Other neutral grassland

4.4.8 Areas of other neutral grassland could be enhanced through annual scrub clearance to maintain less than 5% of scrub. This should be undertaken annually outside of the nesting bird season but whilst dormice are hibernating (i.e., December - February inclusive). Subject to further survey and condition assessments some grassland parcels could be enhanced through increasing species diversity by over-seeding in late summer/autumn or spring with a suitable native wildflower mix or green hay from a nearby suitable grassland.

Additional habitats

4.4.9 Complementary habitat creation should be considered in areas of low ecological value (e.g. modified grassland, cropland) either on-site or in land acquired off-site. Habitats could include ponds, traditional orchard and wildflower meadow. Such habitat creation would mitigate the reduction in habitat extent and diversity associated with the de-designation of Area A and provide enhanced education and public enjoyment opportunities.

4.5 Responsibilities

4.5.1 Creation and implementation of the Management Plan would be the responsibility of Torbay Council. It is recommended that they appoint relevant technical specialists including arboriculturalist, landscape architect and ecologists.

5 References

British Standards Institute (2013) BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development. BSI, London.

English Nature (2004) Species Conservation Handbook. English Nature, Peterborough.

Natural England: Designated Sites View - Occombe Farm & Scadson Woods LNR (https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteLNRDetail.aspx?SiteCode=L1122975). Accessed 28/07/2026.

Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2025). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Version 1.2.* Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

Torbay Council (2005). Designation of Local Nature Reserves. Report No: 11/2005.

Torbay Council (2007). Torbay Local Development Framework 2005 - 2026 Greenspace Strategy. Adopted Supplementary Planning Document. PART 1: Strategy.

UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (at https://www.ukhab.org).

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



Page 392

Key

- Site boundary A - area proposed to be de-classified
- Site boundary B - area that is to remain an LNR

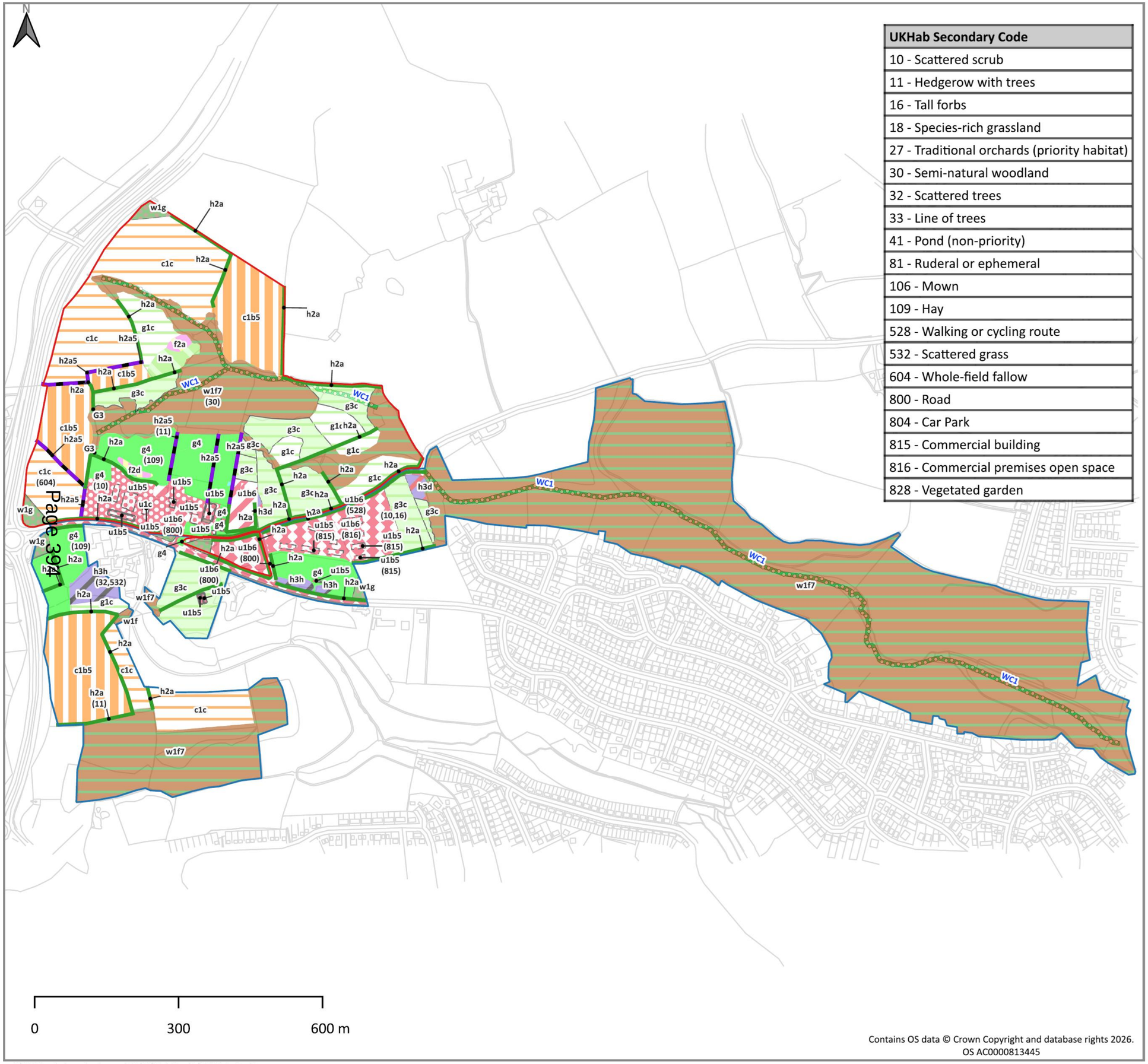


ead ecology www.eadecology.co.uk	Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods LNR		
	Torbay Council		
	Site Location Plan		
	05/08/2026	Created by: EH	Scale at A3 1:15,000

Project workspace - L:\Technical Information\GIS\QGIS\Workspaces\Desk Study - Site Search\Site search.qgz

Appendix 1: UK Habitat Classification Plans, Target Notes and Photographs

Note: The first UKHab survey plan in Appendix 1 has the UKHab codes shown, the second plan has individual parcel reference numbers.



UKHab Secondary Code
10 - Scattered scrub
11 - Hedgerow with trees
16 - Tall forbs
18 - Species-rich grassland
27 - Traditional orchards (priority habitat)
30 - Semi-natural woodland
32 - Scattered trees
33 - Line of trees
41 - Pond (non-priority)
81 - Ruderal or ephemeral
106 - Mown
109 - Hay
528 - Walking or cycling route
532 - Scattered grass
604 - Whole-field fallow
800 - Road
804 - Car Park
815 - Commercial building
816 - Commercial premises open space
828 - Vegetated garden

Key

- Site boundary A - area proposed to be de-classified
- Site boundary B - area that is to remain an LNR
- g1c - Bracken
- g3a - Lowland meadows
- g3c - Other neutral grassland
- g4 - Modified grassland
- w1f - Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
- w1f7 - Other lowland mixed deciduous woodland
- w1g - Other woodland-broadleaved
- h3d - Bramble scrub
- h3h - Mixed scrub
- f2a - Lowland fens
- f2d - Aquatic marginal vegetation
- c1c - Cereal crops
- u1 - Built-up areas and gardens
- u1b5 - Buildings
- u1b6 - Other developed land
- u1c - Artificial unvegetated unsealed surface
- u1f - Sparsely vegetated urban land
- r1g - Other standing water
- c1b5 - Rye grass and clover leys
- h2a - Native hedgerow
- h2a5 - Species-rich native hedgerow
- r2b - Other rivers and streams

Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database rights 2026.
OS AC0000813445

ead ecology
www.eadecology.co.uk

Torbay Council		
Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods LNR		
UKHab Survey Plan		
05/08/2026	Created by: EH	Scale at A3 1:7,600

V:\3124 Occombe farm and scadson woods LNR\GIS\Master Template\QGIS Master Template.qgz

UKHab Secondary Code
10 - Scattered scrub
11 - Hedgerow with trees
16 - Tall forbs
18 - Species-rich grassland
27 - Traditional orchards (priority habitat)
30 - Semi-natural woodland
32 - Scattered trees
33 - Line of trees
41 - Pond (non-priority)
81 - Ruderal or ephemeral
106 - Mown
109 - Hay
528 - Walking or cycling route
532 - Scattered grass
604 - Whole-field fallow
800 - Road
804 - Car Park
815 - Commercial building
816 - Commercial premises open space
828 - Vegetated garden

Key

- Site boundary A - area proposed to be de-classified
- Site boundary B - area that is to remain an LNR
- g1c - Bracken
- g3a - Lowland meadows
- g3c - Other neutral grassland
- g4 - Modified grassland
- w1f - Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
- w1f7 - Other lowland mixed deciduous woodland
- w1g - Other woodland-broadleaved
- h3d - Bramble scrub
- h3h - Mixed scrub
- f2a - Lowland fens
- f2d - Aquatic marginal vegetation
- c1c - Cereal crops
- u1 - Built-up areas and gardens
- u1b5 - Buildings
- u1b6 - Other developed land
- u1c - Artificial unvegetated unsealed surface
- u1f - Sparsely vegetated urban land
- r1g - Other standing water
- c1b5 - Rye grass and clover leys
- h2a - Native hedgerow
- h2a5 - Species-rich native hedgerow
- r2b - Other rivers and streams

0 300 600 m

Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database rights 2026.
OS AC0000813445

ead ecology www.eadecology.co.uk	Torbay Council		
	Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods LNR		
	UKHab Survey Plan		
	05/08/2026	Created by: EH	Scale at A3 1:7,600

Habitat Parcel Number	Description and Photograph
G2	Lowland meadow habitat. Species present included sweet vernal-grass, Yorkshire-fog, quaking grass, devil's-bit scabious, meadowsweet, black knapweed and betony. 
F1	Fen / rush vegetation. Species present included common fleabane, water mint, willowherb sp., marsh bedstraw, jointed rush and soft rush. 

Habitat Parcel Number	Description and Photograph
H	Hedgerows within both Area A and B were large and sympathetically managed. Some were species-rich and included hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, dogwood, spindle, field maple and rose sp. 
C6	Rye-grass ley within Area A, recently cut. 
B2	Storage barns located within Area A. 

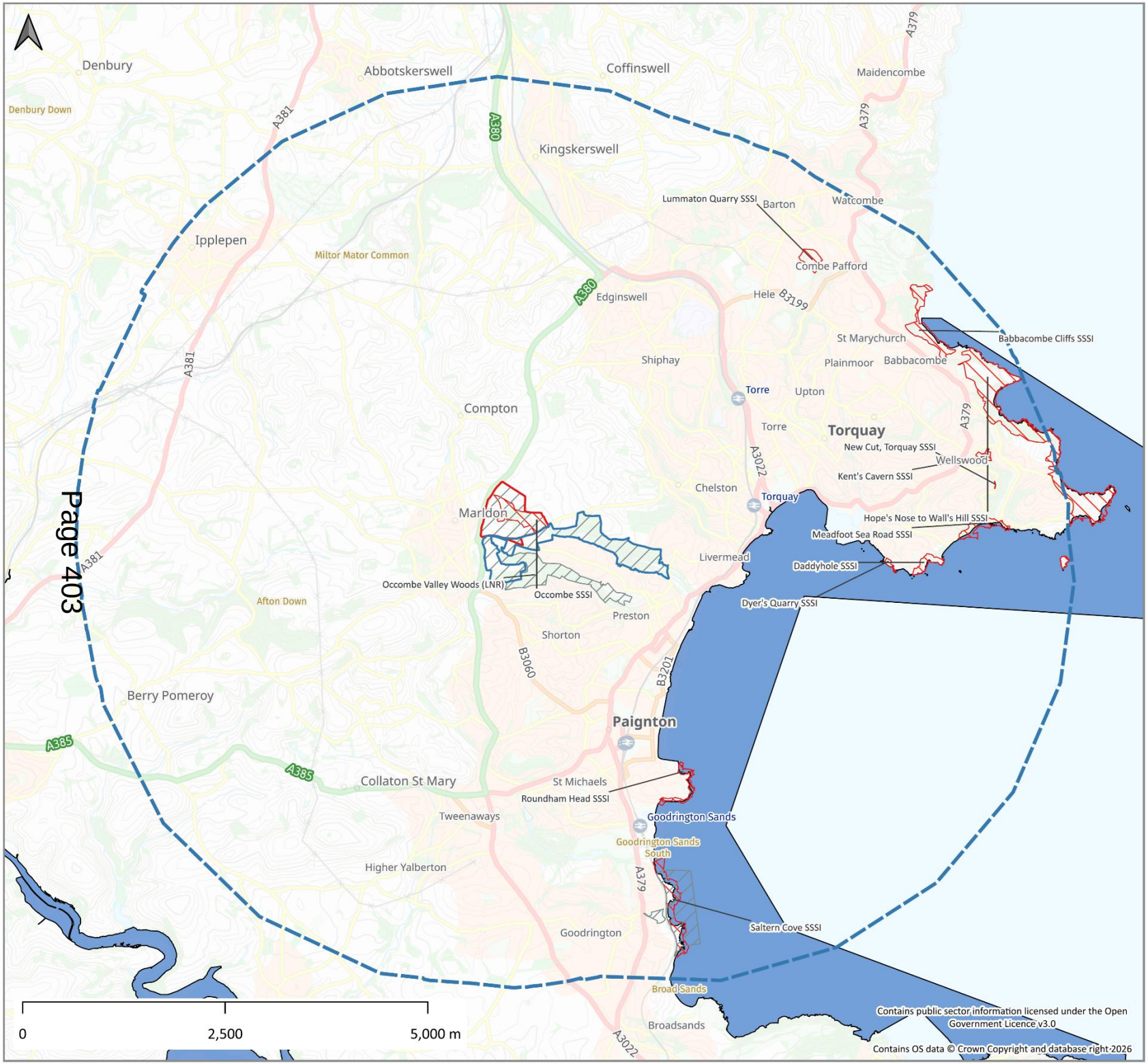
Habitat Parcel Number	Description and Photograph
U4	Overgrown and neglected vegetable garden within Area A. 
G6	Traditional orchard within Area A. 

Habitat Parcel Number	Description and Photograph
W2	A boardwalk present within the W2 woodland in Area A. 
G5	Modified grassland present in Area A, previously used as animal paddocks. 

Habitat Parcel Number	Description and Photograph
P1	A pond located within Area A. Covered entirely with duckweed and with limited marginal aquatic vegetation. 
W5	Paths through Scadson Woods, regularly used by the public (Area B). 
W5	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland in W5, showing complex canopy structure as well as evidence of tree felling (Area B). 

Habitat Parcel Number	Description and Photograph
W12	Parcel of lowland mixed deciduous woodland within Area B, showing a younger age-structure and lower structural complexity than W5. Well-worn unsurfaced paths present. 

Appendix 2: Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Ancient Woodland Plans



Page 403

Key

Site boundary A - area proposed to be de-classified

Site boundary B - area that is to remain an LNR

Site buffers

5km buffer

Nationally Designated Sites (within 5km)

Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Marine designation

Marine Conservation Zones

Non-statutory designated sites are not detailed on this plan.

ead ecology www.eadecology.co.uk	Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods LNR
	Torbay Council
	Statutory Designated Sites Plan
	05/08/2026 · Created by: EH · Scale at A3 1:45,000

COUNTY: DEVON SITE NAME: OCCOMBE

DISTRICT: SOUTH WEST

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, (as amended).

Local Planning Authority: DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL, Torbay Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SX 876634 Area: 11.9 (ha.) 29.4 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 202 1:10,000: SX 86 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): – Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1992 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:
New site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:
This site consists of five herb-rich, unimproved meadows, supporting grassland communities which are now restricted both nationally and in Devon due to agricultural intensification. A range of grassland types are represented within the site, from a dry, well-drained sward to poorly-drained marshy areas bordering the stream which runs the length of the site. Numerous wet flushes add further diversity, as does an area of ancient semi-natural woodland and adjacent tall herb fen and carr vegetation which links the unimproved fields.

The gently sloping fields, sited at an altitude of 100m above O.D., are located across the boundary between Devonian slates and shales, and Permian conglomerates, breccias, and sandstones. The geology is further complicated by a fault which cuts across the site and gives rise to localised exposures of Devonian limestone. This has resulted in a generally acid to neutral site with variable drainage which is impeded in part, but with an increasingly calcareous influence towards the western end.

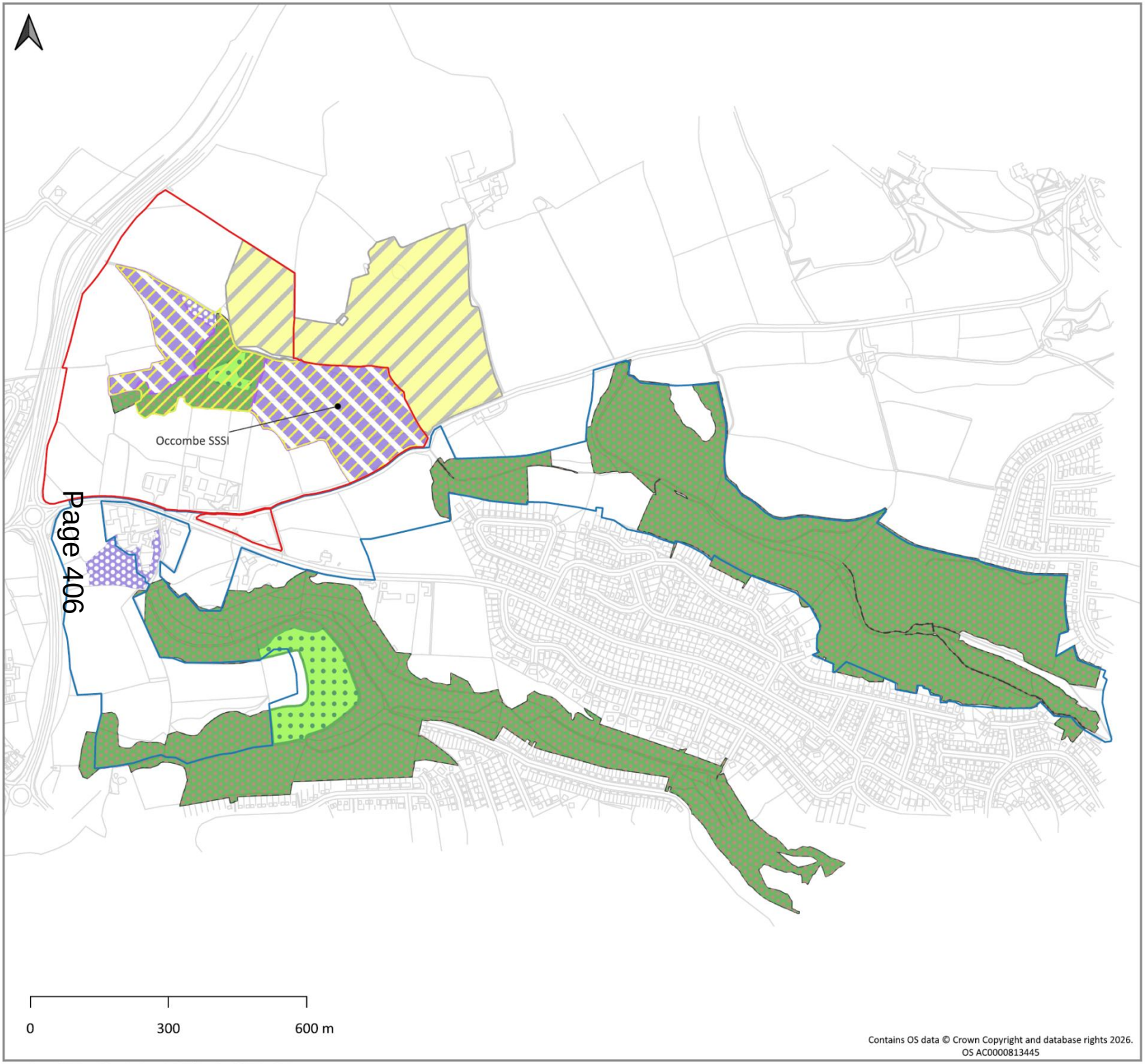
The majority of the herb-rich grassland is neutral and is characterised by Crested Dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* and Common Knapweed *Centaurea nigra* with frequent Heath-grass *Danthonia decumbens*. Typical herbs of this community are Common Bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, Field-woodrush *Luzula campestris* and Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis*. Eight species of sedge have been recorded including Spring-sedge *Carex caryophyllea* and Flea Sedge *C. pulicaris*. Where the well-drained grassland communities merge into the frequent wet flushes, the vegetation becomes characteristically taller and is dominated by Rough Meadow-grass *Poa trivialis* and Floating Sweet-grass *Glyceria fluitans*. Marsh Valerian *Valeriana dioica*, a local plant species in Devon, Ragged Robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and Marsh-marigold *Caltha palustris* are frequent here, and are also found together with Yellow Iris *Iris pseudacorus* in the waterlogged streamside habitats. Elsewhere, as the vegetation merges into the damp grassland typical of such meadows of undulating topography, Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* and Rushes *Juncus* spp. become increasingly frequent, the dominant grasses being Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus* and Tufted Hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*.

An important feature of the site is the number of orchid species which includes the Green-winged Orchid *Orchis morio*, a very local plant in Devon with a restricted

distribution nationally, and the Common Spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, also with a restricted distribution in Devon.

The central portion of the site is occupied by a small area of predominantly wet woodland, characterized by Alder *Alnus glutinosa* and Grey Willow *Salix cinerea* subsp. *cinerea*, and supporting a ground flora in places dominated by Hemlock Water-dropwort *Oenanthe crocata* and Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, whilst elsewhere it is more varied and includes Yellow Pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum*, Marsh-marigold and Meadowsweet. Towards the edges of the wooded area, where the soils are more freely drained, the canopy is composed of Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur* with a Hazel *Corylus avellana* understorey. Here a ground flora more typical of ancient woodlands is present, with Bluebell *Hyacynthoides non-scriptas*, Sanicle *Sanicula europaeas* and Moschatel *Adoxa moschatellina*.

The site supports the Marbled White butterfly *Melanargia galathea* as well as the Great Green Bush Cricket *Tettigonia viridissima* both of which are restricted to the south and west of Britain.

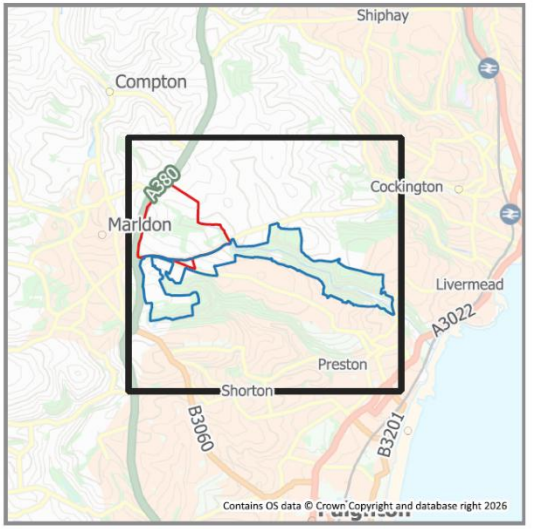


Key

- Site boundary A - area proposed to be de-classified
- Site boundary B - area that is to remain an LNR

Priority Habitats and SSSI Sites

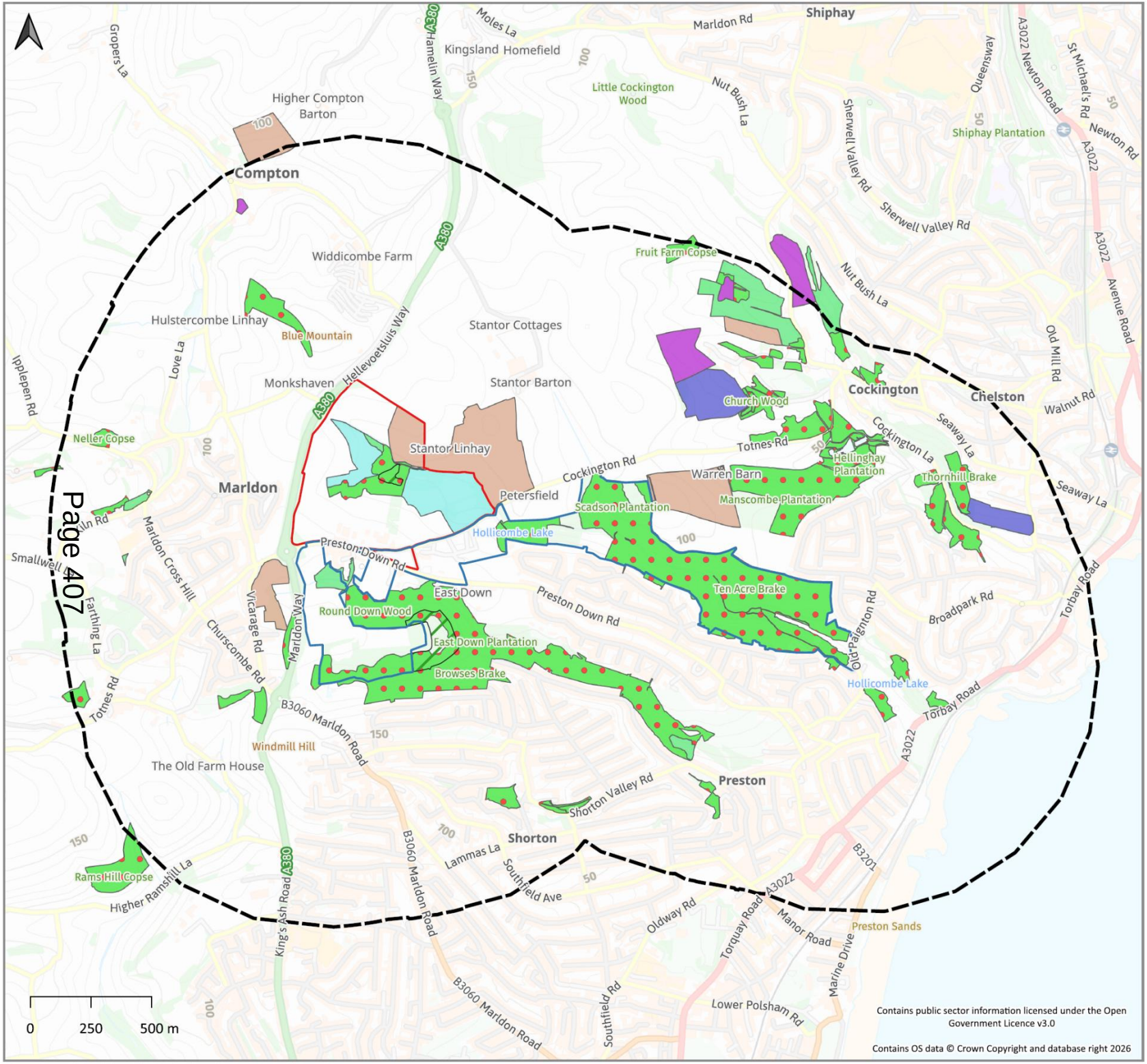
- Ancient woodland
- Deciduous woodland
- Lowland fens
- Good quality semi improved grassland
- No main habitat but additional habitats present
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)



Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database rights 2026.
OS AC0000813445

ead ecology www.eadecology.co.uk	Torbay Council		
	Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods LNR		
	Priority Habitats and SSSI Sites		
	05/08/2026	Created by: EH	Scale at A3 1:7,900

Project workspace - V:\3124 Occombe farm and scadson woods LNR\GIS\Master Template\QGIS Master Template.qgz



Page 407

Key

- Site boundary A - area proposed to be de-classified
- Site boundary B - area that is to remain an LNR

Site buffers

- 1km buffer

Ancient Woodland Inventory

- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)

Priority Habitats Inventory

- Deciduous woodland
- Good quality semi improved grassland
- Lowland fens
- Lowland meadows
- No main habitat but additional habitats present
- Traditional orchard

Plan details habitat data held within the Natural England Priority Habitats Inventory and Natural England Ancient Woodland Inventory (revised layer used where available).

Habitat data held by Local Environmental Record Centres is not displayed.

Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0

Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2026

ead ecology
www.eadecology.co.uk

Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods LNR		
Torbay Council		
Priority Habitat and Ancient Woodland Plan		
05/08/2026	Created by: EH	Scale at A3 1:15,000

ead
ecology

Armada House, Odhams Wharf, Topsham, Exeter EX3 0PB
t: 01392 260420 e: info@eadecology.co.uk
www.eadecology.co.uk

From: Ben Wyatt <Ben.Wyatt@naturalengland.org.uk>
Sent: 19 August 2026 13:47
To: Brown, Edward <Edward.Brown@torbay.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: Amending a local nature reserve boundary - Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve

Good afternoon Ed,

Thank you for sending through the supporting information and for consulting Natural England on the amendment to the Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve boundary.

Having consulted Natural England on this matter, I can confirm that the next step would be to update the existing management plan for the new LNR boundary and provide Natural England with a copy of this document. As the local authority you should then prepare a formal (legal) declaration to revoke the declaration document (this need only be one side of A4 paper) accompanied by a local nature reserve map. The map should be to scale and accurately show the new and existing local nature reserve boundaries aligned with, or within the local authority's legal ownership as recorded by the land registry (where possible, it is encouraged that you align the boundary with the nearest OS MasterMap feature, provided it still falls within the local authorities legal ownership, as this helps improve consistency). Once the relevant local authority committees agree the boundary changes, the formal document should be signed according to the local authority's approved procedures for authorised signatures. This document should be sent, along with a boundary site map to your local Natural England contact or email lnrdeclarations@naturalengland.org.uk. Natural England can then update their local nature reserve records as necessary. (It should be noted that there will be a bit of delay in updating the map on our records as there if currently a backlog due to a change of system and therefore will need to join the queue).
As of tomorrow I am on annual leave until 1st September. Therefore if you have any LNR specific questions which urgently need answering during that time, please contact my colleague Louise Pickard (Louise.Pickard@naturalengland.org.uk) from National Team who is aware of this boundary ammendment and should be able to help you.
Kind regards,
Ben

From: Brown, Edward <Edward.Brown@torbay.gov.uk>
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2026 14:03
To: Ben Wyatt <Ben.Wyatt@naturalengland.org.uk>; SM-NE-LNR Declarations <LNRDeclarations@naturalengland.org.uk>
Subject: Amending a local nature reserve boundary - Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve

Hello Ben,

Thank you for your time on the 13th July in relation to the proposed amendment to the boundary line in relation to the Local Nature Reserve at Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods.

Please find attached an Ecological Assessment for the boundary changes to the existing Local Nature Reserve. This is for the revocation of part rather than the whole LNR.

The local authority must consult with Natural England on the proposed amendment of boundaries. See section “amending a local nature Reserve” paragraph 2. Local nature reserves: setting up and management - GOV.UK

Please can Natural England provide a consultation response to the proposed LNR boundary change. This is in advance of the action set out in paragraph 6 under the heading “amending a local nature Reserve”.

Should you require any further information or if it would help to discuss please feel free to ask.

When we meet you thought the consultation response would be provided in 10 working days. I’d be grateful if you can confirm that this will be the case.

Kind regards

Ed

TORBAY COUNCIL

Ed Brown | Development Manager | Development and Project Management |
Tor Hill House, Torquay TQ2 5QW
Edward.Brown@torbay.gov.uk
07825 832781
My working days are Monday-Thursday

BUILD TORBAY

www.torbay.gov.uk
Facebook | Twitter | LinkedIn | Instagram

This electronic email is confidential and may also be privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender, and please delete the message from your system immediately. The views in this message are personal; they are not necessarily those of Torbay Council.

This message has been sent using TLS 1.2 This email and any attachments is intended for the named recipient only. If you have received it in error you have no authority to use, disclose, store or copy any of its contents and you should destroy it and inform the sender. Whilst this email and associated attachments will have been checked for known viruses whilst within the Natural England systems, we can accept no responsibility once it has left our systems. Communications on Natural England systems may be monitored and/or recorded to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.

This page is intentionally left blank

TORBAY COUNCIL

Report title: Disposal of Surplus Assets Phase 2

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 20th October 2026

Lead Cabinet Member: Cllr Chris Lewis, Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth.

Email: chris.lewis@torbay.gov.uk

Lead Director: Malcolm Coe, Director of Finance

Email: malcolm.coe@torbay.gov.uk

Wards affected: Tormohun, Roundham with Hyde and Furzeham with Summercombe

1. Summary of Report:

1.1 Torbay Council's Asset Management Strategy provides an overview of the Council's land and property estate and identifies the main priorities for managing and developing the estate, including the disposal of surplus assets. The Strategy defines surplus assets as those assets that have been declared surplus to our commercial and/or operational requirement. Often these assets are close to or beyond useful economic life and should be considered for disposal to release the value so the capital can be re-invested elsewhere across the estate.

1.2. The Estates Team has prepared a list of property assets which meet this criterion for disposal. The list and type of assets are varied and the potential capital receipts per disposal may exceed the levels that are delegated to the Director of Finance in the Council's Scheme of Delegation. The team can deploy a range of disposal methods, and it is important to obtain approval from Cabinet to proceed prior to instructing a local commercial agent to deal with individual assets. This will avoid unnecessary cost and the abortive use of resources going forward.

2. Recommendations and Proposed Decision:

2.1 That the Director of Finance be authorised to dispose of the freehold interest of the land and buildings listed in Appendix 1 on suitably agreed terms, adopting the most appropriate methods of disposal, to be determined by the Strategic Head of Asset Management, following an adequate period of marketing on each individual asset.

2.2 That 20% of the sale proceeds from assets that achieve over £100k, and 100% of proceeds from assets that achieve a value of less than £100k, is allocated to the Council's Capital Repair Fund (to improve the condition of retained assets)

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Proposed Decision:

3.1 The proposal to dispose of surplus assets will help deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by reducing the level of surplus assets held by the Council. When considering individual assets for disposal we have taken account of the holding cost of retaining an asset which includes physically managing and visiting each site regularly, extent of backlog repairs and maintenance, security and insurance whilst ensuring the property remains safe and compliant.

3.2 The reasons for the proposal, and need for the decision are, multi-levelled. We are aware certain assets are situated within the community and have remained empty and unused for some time. Frequent site inspections are necessary for insurance purposes. Disposing of assets will have an immediate impact by reducing the cost and necessity for staff and resources to be deployed to manage these properties.

3.3 On disposal it is anticipated that these sites will be repurposed and brought back into beneficial use by the individual purchasers. The Council will also receive a capital receipt from which, part will be recycled for the repair and maintenance of the remaining estate. We recognise the detrimental impact of holding assets empty for prolonged periods of time and how this can generate anti-social behaviour and negative social impact.

4. Background and Context:

4.1 Torbay Council Strategic Asset Management Plan sets out the Council's approach to the strategic management of its assets, how it will support service delivery, provide the Council with

income and how it will fulfil its mission to support, enable and empower its residents, our communities and our partnerships, to promote growth and place shaping within Torbay.

4.2 An identified principle of Strategic Asset Management Plan is, at regular intervals, to review all non-operational and surplus assets to identify opportunities to create or increase revenue income, provide investment opportunities or deliver capital receipts to stimulate development, growth and reinvestment. To this end a disposal schedule of under-performing assets which provide a low return, are non-strategic and are at the end of the economic life has been created.

4.3 Phase 1 of the disposal programme resulted in disposal of 9 assets with an associated capital receipt of £446,000. A number of these assets were long term vacant and surplus, with many achieving a higher capital receipt than was anticipated. In addition to these assets the Estates Team has disposed of other assets to include land at Edginswell and Occombe Farm, generating over £3.5m in capital receipts.

4.4 This disposal phase identifies 3 assets. In disposing of an asset, it is important to ensure the best outcome is achieved and the following has been taken into consideration:

- Holding costs of any surplus assets if to be retained to include staff costs managing the asset, visiting the asset for insurance purposes, dealing with backlog repairs, maintenance and improvements to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and fully compliant.
- Running costs for under-utilised assets.
- Service requirements across the Council.
- Achieving best value.
- Loss of revenue from any income producing assets if sold.
- Detrimental impact on the local area from holding assets empty for prolonged periods, Anti-Social Behaviour and associated social impact.
- Reputational and safety issues around holding long term vacant assets.

4.5 The Estates Team has engaged a local agent to provide informal and initial advice on the most appropriate method of disposal, whether that is private treaty, informal tender or auction. It is proposed that disposal of these assets will conclude before the financial year end.

4.6 By disposing of these assets, the Council secures a capital receipt that can be reinvested into the retained portfolio, enhancing asset performance and reducing future liabilities in accordance with the Asset Management Strategy. For those assets that achieve less than £100k at disposal, the capital receipts will be exclusively directed into the Capital Repair Fund. For assets achieving over £100k, 20% of the capital receipt will be directed into the Capital Repair Fund, with the remaining 80% made available for re-allocation against priority capital projects such as the Strand, Paignton & Preston Waterfront and Oldway.

4.7 It is recognised that the Council's current property portfolio is larger than is operationally necessary and has been subject to prolonged under-investment, resulting in a substantial and

growing, backlog of maintenance. A structured programme of disposals is therefore necessary to reduce the number of non-essential assets held. This will allow the Council to concentrate its capital and revenue resources on a smaller, fit-for-purpose retained estate, ensuring that the assets we continue to hold can be maintained to a higher standard, remain compliant and better able to support operational and strategic objectives.

5. Alternative Options Considered:

5.1 The Council is not under any obligation to dispose of any given asset. However, the Council's ongoing management and cost of holding these assets is significant. The assets are considered surplus to operational requirements, disposing of the assets listed will remove associated liabilities and generate a capital receipt.

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

6.1 Asset disposal is a strategic tool within Torbay Council's Community & Corporate Plan — not just a financial or operational activity. It directly supports Community & People, Pride in Place, Economic Growth, by reshaping the estate so it aligns with long-term priorities.

6.2 Delivery of priority capital projects through raising capital, as well as recycling the funds for the repair and maintenance of the remaining estate.

6.3 Economic growth: disposal of the assets can stimulate economic activity, enabling inward investment.

7. Consultation and Engagement:

7.1 Whereas there has been no formal consultation, the assets identified for disposal have been discussed with Directors, Cabinet and Group Leaders. Engagement has also taken place with the relevant Ward Councillors.

8. Implications:

Financial Implications:

8.1 The Council's Asset Management Strategy makes specific that the Council will 'always seek to maximise the full market receipt for their assets whether by way of freehold disposal or leasehold interest'. Disposing of assets following a suitable period of marketing will ensure that best value is established and obtained meeting that requirement.

8.2. The Council is not under any obligation to dispose of any given asset. However, the Council's ongoing management and cost of holding these assets is significant. Disposing of the assets will remove this liability and generate a capital receipt for re-investment.

9. Legal Implications:

9.1 There are no legal implications anticipated with these disposals. Disposing of the assets will need to be documented, along with the preparation of legal packs to support a sale. The disposals will be dealt with in the first instant by the Council's Legal Property Team.

10. Associated Risks, Risk Tolerance Level and Mitigations:

A summary of key risks associated with the recommendations in this report are:

Risk	**Risk score before mitigations (likelihood x impact)**	**Mitigations**	**Risk Score after mitigations (likelihood x impact)**	**Risk tolerance**
Financial risk – achieving market value	15	By marketing the properties via an agent, the assets will be exposed to the market and best value will be achieved	4	Acceptable
Following disposal an asset is required for service delivery	5	The proposed disposal of the assets has been communicated throughout the Council, the assets are not required for service delivery	2	Acceptable
Risk of clawback of funding where external funders have financed repairs and maintenance in the past.	15	Legal title review and due diligence will ensure risks are mitigated.	4	Acceptable

11. Social Value Considerations:

11.1 Positive long term employment benefits through disposing of surplus assets, attracting inward investment.

12. Procurement Implications:

12.1 None. Market will be tested and assets sold for market value.

13. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The Council has a public sector duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have 'due regard' to advancing equality of opportunity between those persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Act also seeks to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation. It is important that you carefully and thoroughly consider the different potential impacts that the decision being taken may have on people who share protected characteristics.
It is not enough to state that a proposal will affect everyone equally. There should be thorough consideration as to whether particular groups or individuals are more likely to be affected than others by the proposals and decision. Please complete the table below. If you consider there to be no positive or negative impacts state 'there is no differential impact'.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age	• 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. • 55% of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. • 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	No differential impact specific to this group		
Carers	• At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. • 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care.	No differential impact specific to this group		

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Care experienced	• As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	No differential impact specific to this group		
Disability	• In the 2021 Census, 23.9% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.	No differential impact specific to this group		
Gender reassignment	• In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth.	No differential impact specific to this group		
Marriage and civil partnership	• Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were	No differential impact specific to this group		

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	married or in a registered civil partnership.			
Pregnancy and maternity	• Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3). • For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0).	No differential impact specific to this group		
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: • 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	No differential impact specific to this group		

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	• 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African • 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups • 96.1% as White • 0.4% described their ethnicity another way. • Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.			
Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following; • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddhist • 0.2% are Hindu	No differential impact specific to this group		

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	• 0.6% are Muslim • Less than 0.1% are Sikh • 0.1% are Jewish • 0.7% have another religion • 43.2% have no religion • 6.3% did not answer			
Sex	• 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.	No differential impact specific to this group		
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows; • 89% as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian • 1.1% as Bisexual • 0.1% as Pansexual • 0.1% described their sexuality another way • 7.4% of people didn't answer the question	No differential impact specific to this group		

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Armed Forces Community	• In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. • In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.	No differential impact specific to this group		
Additional Considerations:		*Additional considerations:*		
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	• Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	Long term use will be employment related, creating new jobs within the locality.		
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	• For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between males who live in Torbay's least and most	No differential impact specific to this group		

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females.			
Human Rights impacts		No differential impact specific to this group		
Child Friendly (Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) considerations): *Summarise the CRIA considerations for this proposal, including which groups of children and young people may be affected (e.g., care experienced children/young people, care leavers, children with SEND), how their rights and best interests have been considered, and any engagement undertaken with children/young people and/or their representatives. Set out any mitigations to address identified adverse impacts and how these will be monitored.*		No differential impact specific to this group		

14. Monitoring and Evaluation:

14.1 No monitoring or evaluation required, this is a freehold sale of property.

Appendices:

1 Assets recommended for disposal

Background Documents:

Torbay Council Asset Management Strategy

Officer Contact Details:

Name: Jon Veale

Title: Estates Manager

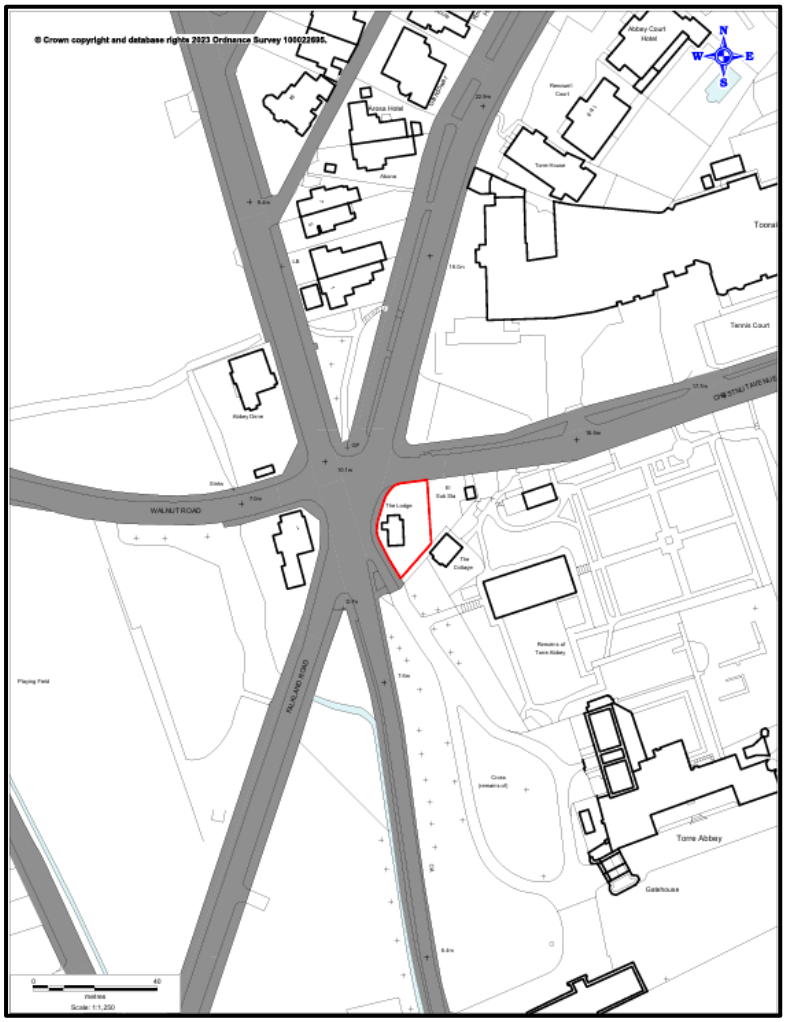
Email address: Jonathan.veale@torbay.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Disposal Schedule – September 2026

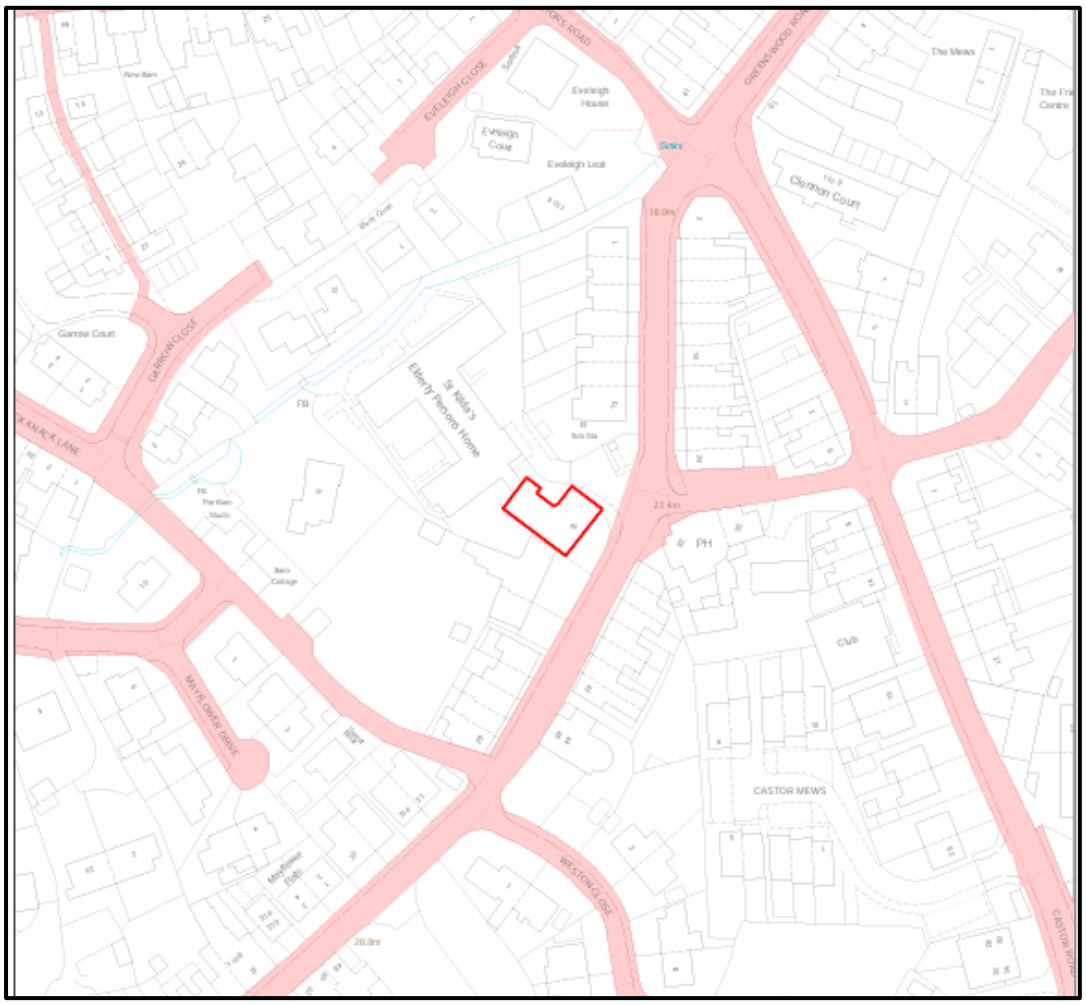
Tranche	Property	Likely Disposal Method
2 – Sept 26 to Mar 27	The Lodge, Torre Abbey, Torquay	Informal Tender / auction
	St Kilda Cottage, Brixham	Informal Tender / Auction
	Halswell House Family Centre, 53 Totnes Road, Paignton	Informal Tender / auction

Plans:

The Lodge, Torre Abbey



St Kilda Cottage



Halswell House

