



# **Brixham**

## Town Design Statement



Brixham is special because of its rich history and heritage and its community

*An integral part of the Brixham Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan*



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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.0.1 The purpose of a town design statement is to set out a community's aspirations for the design of the future development of its town based on an analysis of its character, which will inform and amplify the policies of the Local Development Planning Framework for Torbay. The first Brixham Town Design Statement (2010–2015) was produced by members of the Town Design Panel with the help of residents and organisations in the Brixham Community for the Community. The results of their hard work were drafted and published for consultation by the Brixham public in 2010.
- 1.0.2 The Design Statement gave an account of Brixham's history, including recent events, described the main issues faced by the town and set out principles to guide the way in which these could be dealt with. Since this was published in 2010 the whole Peninsula community, of Brixham, Churston, Galmpton and Broadsands, have been working together on a Neighbourhood Plan that encompasses the whole of the Brixham Peninsula to bring a collective community approach to deciding what is wanted in the future for the area.
- 1.0.3 There have been many changes in Brixham since 2010 and this refreshed version together with statements from the "villages" will now be a part of the final version of the Brixham Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan.

## **2 An overview of Brixham**

- 2.0.1 Brixham is an ancient settlement and is mentioned in the Domesday Book. Over time it became a large inland village and the main industry was farming, which is why "Higher Brixham" is still known locally as "Cow Town".
- 2.0.2 The village at Lower Brixham or "Brixham Quay" was about a mile further down the valley and consisted of a small number of cottages clinging to the steep hillsides on either side of a tidal creek on a peninsula at the southern-most projecting point of Tor Bay, where high cliffs and Berry Head provided protection. The small fishing village was where the fishermen built their cottages on the steep hillsides along both sides of the inlet. The sea came up

then as far as Bolton Cross, where it was thought to have been about 3 metres deep and where a ferry was in use. The inlet was filled in and built over and became “the town of Brixham Quay”.

2.0.3 Higher Brixham developed around the Parish Church of St Mary’s retreating from the inlet up the scenic valley for more than 1½ miles in the direction of Kingswear. The traditional dividing line between the two settlements is the Burton Street, Greenswood Road and Rea Barn Road junction.

2.0.4 Since these early times the area has developed into the town as we know it and Brixham today is the most important fishing port on the south coast of Devon.

## **2.1 Education**

- Primary schools
  - Brixham Church of England Primary School and Neighbourhood Nursery
  - St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School
  - Eden Park Primary School
  - Furzesham Primary and Nursery School
- Secondary schools
  - Churston Ferrers Grammar School is a selective co-educational grammar school with Academy status, situated in the village of Galmpton in Torbay. It is a specialist Humanities College.
  - Brixham College is an average-sized secondary school (11 to 19 years). It converted to become an Academy Educational Establishment in January 2012 and the College opened its sixth form in September 2013. The campus is used by South Devon College for Access to Community Education and provides educational and therapeutic services for people with disabilities.

- 2.1.1 The decision by pharmaceutical giants AstraZeneca to gift their Brixham Environmental Laboratory premises to Plymouth University, when they moved their business away from Freshwater Quarry in 2014, was a generous act and has been welcomed by Brixham.
- 2.1.2 The University aims to add this latest asset to the University's growing network of marine enterprise facilities, a base for a multidisciplinary community of researchers, commercial tenants and visiting scientists from higher education and commerce.
- 2.1.3 It will also provide a learning centre for students, including those at nearby South Devon College, one of the University's academic partners. This will deliver an opportunity for the building to become a world-class centre for collaboration and translational research with emphasis on the marine environment and coastal management issues.

## **2.2 Leisure centre and swimming pools**

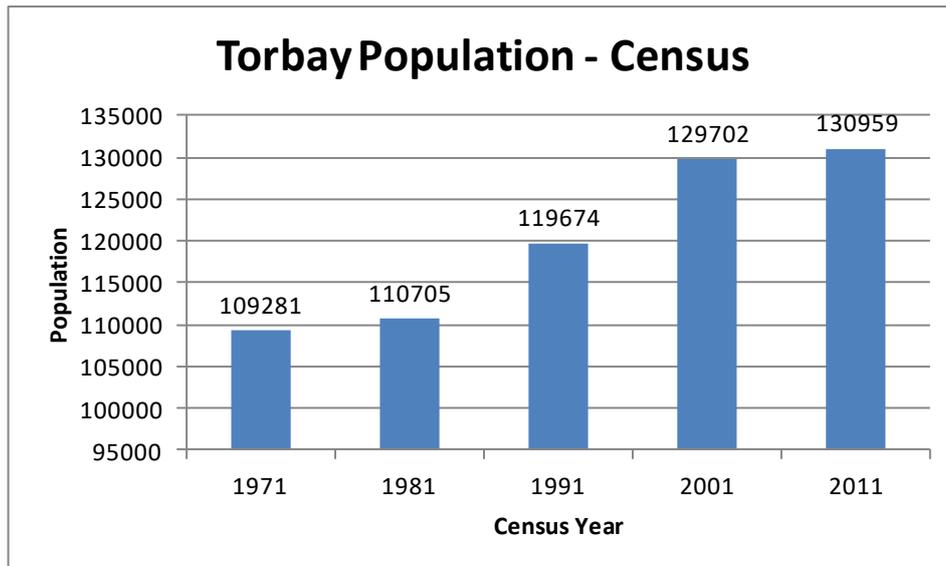
- 2.2.1 Brixham Sports Centre is set within the campus of Brixham College and is the hub of sporting activity for the local community.
- 2.2.2 The Admiral Pool was built in 1975 and for over 40 years it has successfully provided leisure, health, social and educational facilities for the people of Brixham. In March 2016 Brixham Admiral Swim Company Ltd launched a "Buy a Tile" fundraising scheme to contribute towards the cost of tiling the Admiral Pool in July and August 2016.
- 2.2.3 Shoalstone Pool is Brixham's outdoor seawater swimming pool or lido at Shoalstone beach. It is one of only a few left in the country and has large open areas to relax in and enjoy the sun. There is also a small shingle beach adjacent to the pool. There is easy access with adequate parking at the back of the pool and a new café with superb views across the bay. It is open in the summer holiday months when there is lifeguard cover and at other times too for the hardy all-year-round swimmers.

## **2.3 Health provision**

- 2.3.1 There are three medical practices in the town: Compass House Surgery, Kings Street, which has a branch surgery in Galmpton; St Lukes, New Road; and Greenwood Medical, Greenwood Road. These latter two surgeries have joined together and now operate from both the New Road and Greenwood Road sites.
- 2.3.2 There are several dentists in Brixham. There are also a number of care homes. The expectation is that the demand for the provision of good quality residential care will continue to rise, given the local demographics, and the seeming lack of forward planning to cover any potential shortfall in the actual delivery of "Care in the Community".
- 2.3.3 The local cottage hospital is currently operating but we have been advised that the way that care in the community is delivered is likely to be vastly different in the future and these changes will impact on how the present hospital services will be organised. However, it is hoped that the assurances we have been given, that our valued local hospital will continue to have a role in Brixham's future, will be honoured.

## **2.4 Population**

- 2.4.1 The number of Brixham residents in the 2011 Census was 16,693. When compared to the region and other unitary authorities, Torbay showed the lowest increase between the 2001 and 2011 Census at just 1%, that is just over 1,200 people. See Figure 1.
- 2.4.2 Brixham has a significantly higher proportion of elderly/retired persons compared to the national average. There are also a growing number of migrant European workers employed within the lower paid service sector industries and approximately 1% of the population is made up of minority ethnic groups.
- 2.4.3 Table 1 gives more recent data regarding the percentages of those residents aged 65 years and over in 2010–2012 who were living in the wards of the Brixham Peninsula.



*Figure 1: This data is very different from when the 1801 census revealed that Brixham was the largest town in Tor Bay, with a population of 3,500, while Paignton had only 1,575 inhabitants and Torquay a mere 838.*

2.4.4 The population figure rises significantly with the influx of visitors during the holiday season and during the very busy summer months the population can swell to almost double that of the static population.

## 2.5 Regeneration

2.5.1 The £20m Brixham Fish Market was opened by HRH Princess Royal in March 2011 to accommodate the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century fishing industry in Brixham. There is now a new purpose-built fish market, designed to complement the historic port and provide an extended quayside, new processing space and a new fish restaurant and fishmongers.

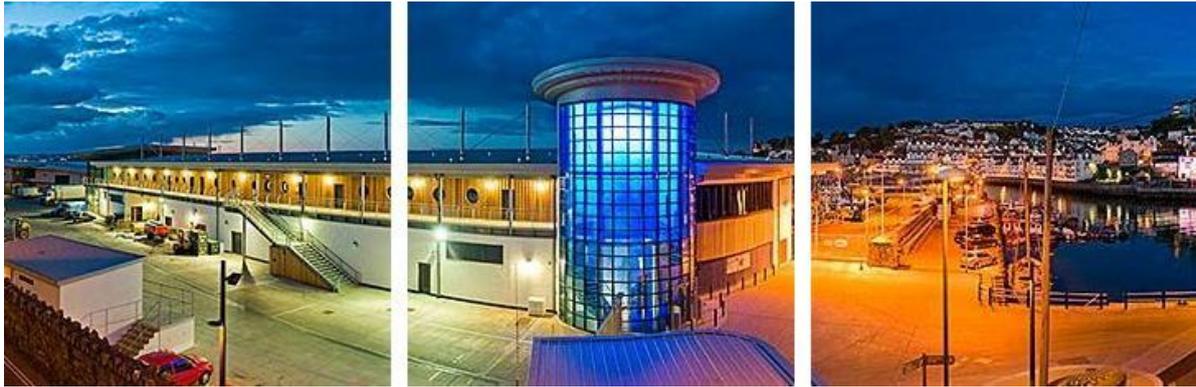
2.5.2 The historic port of Brixham is benefiting from this major regeneration project which was conceived to enhance the local economy, which remains heavily based on the fishing industry, by retaining local employment and generating new jobs.

2.5.3 Unlike many other UK ports, the Brixham Fishery is largely sustainable and has thrived in recent years becoming the top port in England and Wales measured by the value of catch landed. It has a world class reputation for quality Brixham fish which finds its way to local outlets, top London restaurants and the plates of consumers across Europe.

Male % of total population	Female % of total population	Average of both as % of total population
<b>St.Marys/Summercombe</b>		
30.2%	30.9%	<b>30.55%</b>
<b>Churston/Galmpton</b>		
34.5%	37.2%	<b>35.85%</b>
<b>Berry Head/Furzeham</b>		
29.9%	32.7%	<b>31.3%</b>
<b>Average aged 65 and over across the Peninsula</b>		
<b>31.5%</b>	<b>33.6%</b>	<b>32.55%</b>
<b>Add age 60-64 years to 65 and overs</b>		
<b>St.Marys/Summercombe</b>		
30.2% + 6.5% = 36.7%	30.9% + 6.2% = 37.1%	<b>36.9%</b>
<b>Churston/Galmpton</b>		
34.5% + 12.1% = 46.6%	37.2% + 13.2% = 50.4%	<b>48.5%</b>
<b>Berry Head/Furzeham</b>		
29.9% + 8.8% = 38.7%	32.7% + 10.7% = 43.4%	<b>41.05%</b>
<b>Average aged 60 and over across the peninsula</b>		
40.66%	43.93%	<b><u>42.3%</u></b> (rounded to 1 decimal place)
<b>Average aged 60 and over across Torbay</b>		<b><u>31.3%</u></b>
<b>Average aged 60 and over across South Devon &amp; Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group area</b>		<b><u>31.9%</u></b>
<p>NB This area includes much of South Hams, Teignbridge and South &amp; East Dartmoor as well as Torbay - Total population around 273,000 as against Torbay's 132,000</p> <p>This difference where our 60 and over population is 10% higher than the rest of the area has significant implications for healthcare as well as home and employment development</p>		

*Table 1: Percentages of aged 65 and over by ward 2010–2012.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Torquay reference library: [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity)



*Figure 2: The new Brixham Fish Market.*

- 2.5.4 The fishing industry is complemented by supporting marine industries, e.g. marine-related engineering companies, a foundry on the Northfield Industrial Estate as well as fish processing units on smaller local work sites.
- 2.5.5 In May 2016 Brixham was crowned Port of the Year in the UK's only awards ceremony celebrating the commercial fishing industry. Its fish market tour is placed in the top 10 of the best seaside tourist destinations in the UK and it remains the highest earning port in England.

## **2.6 Tourism**

- 2.6.1 Brixham's second most important employment sector is tourism, which has links with the fishing industry, the Marina sited in the outer harbour, the Heritage boat fleet with its fascinating maritime history, the Shoalstone seawater bathing pool, as well as other maritime attractions and activities.



*Figure 3: The Golden Hind replica, a favourite tourist attraction in the inner harbour.*

## **2.7 English Riviera Geopark**

2.7.1 In September 2007 the English Riviera received international recognition for its rich geological, historical and cultural heritage, being the first urban area designated as a UNESCO Global Geopark. Since then the Global Geopark Network has grown and as of September 2016 there are now 111 Geoparks in 32 countries worldwide.

2.7.2 The 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference of UNESCO Global Geoparks was held in September 2016 at the English Riviera Centre, Torquay. It was the first time it had been held in Great Britain and over 600 delegates concerned with the Global Geoparks agenda attended from all over the world. Geoparks work to develop sustainable economies and eco-tourism, and promote engagement with local communities in areas of significant geological interest.



*Figure 4: Sharkham looking towards Mansands.*

2.7.3 Five particular sites of interest in Brixham are Berry Head to Sharkham Point, Breakwater Quarry, Brixham Cavern, Churston Cove and Point, and Shoalstone.

## **2.8 Berry Head National Nature Reserve**

2.8.1 Berry Head National Nature Reserve is one of the gateways to the English Riviera Global Geopark. It is Torbay's most important wildlife site, being home to rare Greater Horseshoe Bats and the largest breeding guillemot colony on the English Channel Coast, for which the cliffs at Berry Head are nationally important. The waters off Berry Head are designated an Area of Special Protection because of this.

2.8.2 Many rare or threatened flora and fauna dependent upon the thin soils, mild climate and exposed conditions of the headland can be found here. It is classified by Natural England as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Legal protection is given to the best SSSI for wildlife and geology. Berry Head is managed by the charity "Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust". There are also Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) within the boundaries of Brixham. An AONB is defined as a precious landscape, whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard it. There are 224 sites in England.

## 2.9 Preservation of green spaces

- 2.9.1 Existing parks and public open spaces are important recreation areas for local people and should be retained, developed and managed appropriately as well as being marketed as part of the tourism offering. Torbay Council has commissioned and is currently engaged in an open space study to ensure the retention and appropriate use of green assets.
- 2.9.2 Gardens are an important feature of new properties and make a significant contribution to the well-being of householders. The design of new developments should seek to maximise this personal space by ensuring a green space is included for each dwelling or in larger developments, where it may be more appropriate, that a central communal green area is provided.
- 2.9.3 All development proposals should consider the amenity value of trees and their contribution to their immediate and wider setting and the character of the town. An assessment of all trees within the Brixham area would identify those important trees that would warrant formal protection.
- 2.9.4 See "General design guidelines", Section 8.

**L1 Removal of trees** on development sites will be strongly discouraged and tree preservation orders (TPOs) will be encouraged, with agreed landscaping plans as conditions of planning approval where appropriate. It is advised that a proper assessment is carried out on all developments

where there are trees, so as to judge the impact of the construction of new buildings and other site works on the trees to enable any adequate root protection and exclusion zones to be agreed. (See British Standard BS5837:2005.)

See also:

L2 Street trees

L4 Front gardens/areas.

### **3 How history has shaped Brixham**

- 3.0.1 By **1535** Brixham had established itself as a highly successful fishing port, with the low-lying sheltered harbour area being protected by the surrounding Devonian limestone hills. Brixham has three sites of major historical importance: Battery Gardens, Berry Head and Brixham Cavern.
- 3.0.2 The unique geography of Brixham led to its major importance in the defence of the southern coastline of Britain. The site of Battery Gardens was used as a gun battery during the Spanish Armada (**1588**) and was armed in the American War of Independence too because of its ideal, low-level vantage point across Tor Bay.
- 3.0.3 Not only does Battery Gardens boast one of the most panoramic views in the bay, Brixham Battery is also a Scheduled Monument and World War II Coastal Defence Battery, listed by English Heritage and recognised as one of the best preserved of its kind in the UK. The Battery Museum features much of interest from World War II.
- 3.0.4 On **5 November 1688** Prince William of Orange landed in Brixham. Before moving on to Exeter and later to London, his army camped on the high ground around Brixham whilst William went down the hill to a Fisherman's little house. He later went on to be crowned King William III of England. Brixham

commemorated the event 200 years later with a statue of King William on the Strand.

- 3.0.5 By the mid-**1700s** the technique of deep-sea trawling became possible, chiefly because boats were able to sail at greater speeds. Brixham fishermen were in the forefront of this development and were responsible for the spread of trawling to other ports around the coast of Britain. Many new cottages were built on the steep slopes around the harbour to house the fishermen and sailors and their families, who came and settled in Lower Brixham from villages nearby and from other places further afield. The improved turnpike road system helped to open up new markets to the sale of fresh fish and there were about 75 trawlers fishing out of Brixham in **1785**.
- 3.0.6 Brixham was an important Royal Naval victualling and watering station and in **1781** plans were drawn up for a naval reservoir in Brixham where the Town Hall is today. It came into use around **1800**, just in time for ships engaged in the blockade of France to have access to Tor Bay water.
- 3.0.7 In **1793** two forts were erected on Berry Head, built on top of pre-existing Iron Age forts to protect against the threatened invasion by France.
- 3.0.8 In **1803** the fortifications were strengthened with limestone and gun batteries were added to guard the approach to Tor Bay during the Napoleonic Wars. The Royal Navy used Tor Bay as an anchorage during these Wars and it was here on **24<sup>th</sup> July 1815** that a British Man-of-War brought Napoleon as a prisoner on his way to exile.
- 3.0.9 In the **1800s** there was significant development in Brixham. Housing stock was added to Brixham during these years, typically classic Victorian style terraces, which can still be seen throughout the town.
- 3.0.10 In **1809** Berry Head House, now the Berry Head Hotel, was built as a military hospital, preparing for potential casualties of the Napoleonic war, but it was never used as such. It later became the home of Reverend Henry Francis Lyte.

3.0.11 Today on Berry Head the Guardhouse café is located in the guardhouse in Berry Head's Northern Fort and the attached visitor centre has details of the history of Berry Head, its wildlife and its importance today.



*Figure 5: Guardhouse café and visitor centre in Berry Head Fort.*

3.0.12 In **1816** the new District Church of Lower Brixham was finished. It was built as a Chapel of Ease to address the increasing attendances at St Mary's Church due to rising population numbers in Lower Brixham. Reverend Henry Francis Lyte became the Church of England Minister Incumbent in the Lower Brixham Church from **1824** until he died in **1847** in Nice. He is well known for composing "Abide with Me". The hymn became soccer's first anthem and since 1927 has been sung before every FA Cup final.



*Figure 6: All Saints Church Brixham showing the variety of houses surrounding it.*

3.0.13 In **1817** Upham's Shipyard was built. Many of the local trawlers and sailing boats were built in the Yard in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, as Brixham moved towards new fishing practices and modern methods and diesel-driven vessels, traditional boat building waned and the shipyard closed in 1984.



*Figure 7: J. W. & A. Upham's Yard, 1960s with Berry Head Road in the background.*

3.0.14 The area was developed creating the existing Marina with its associated facilities, a public harbour walkway, a new coastguard station and a private housing development with a prime waterfront location (Mooring Reach). Highly visible, this major residential development utilised the terraced form and largely traditional materials that are in harmony with its older surroundings.



*Figure 8: Mooring Reach development.*



*Figure 9: Brixham Marina with Moorings Reach development and the heritage pontoon in the foreground and Brixham Breakwater in the background.*

3.0.15 By **1850** Brixham's fleet was established as the largest Fishery in England with 270 vessels, employing 1,600 seamen. Known as the "Mother of Deep-Sea Fisheries", its boats helped to establish the fishing industries of Hull, Grimsby and Lowestoft. The fishing industry provided local employment for boat builders, sail makers, rope makers and other crafts connected with the marine industry which helped the town to grow.



*Figure 10: Brixham Harbour 1868.*

- 3.0.16 In **1858** Windmill Hill Bone Cavern was excavated by the eminent palaeontologist William Pengelly who unearthed the relics of 22 different species of prehistoric animals. The discovery of man and animals together in cave earth deposits sealed by stalagmite floors "*provided the first professionally accepted evidence for the contemporaneity of man and extinct animal species*".<sup>2</sup>
- 3.0.17 The Bone Cavern is privately owned and no longer open to the public; it was closed in **1977**.
- 3.0.18 In **1863** The British Seaman's Boys' Home was founded by William Gibbs of Tyntesfield near Bristol for the orphan sons of deceased British seamen. It was famous for its bugle and drum marching band which could be seen marching from the Home to All Saints Church most Sundays. It was closed temporarily in 1988 after 125 years and then reopened in 1990 as a Nautical Venture Centre. In 1995 it became the Grenville House Outdoor Education Centre and since 2006 Devon and Torbay Councils have recognised Grenville House as a leading provider of outdoor education in Devon, one of only a handful of establishments holding Category "A" status.
- 3.0.19 There was quite extensive mining in Brixham during this era which was a massive boost to the economy. **Limestone** on the northern flank of the Berry Head promontory was quarried for building stone and for converting to quicklime from at least the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. With the quarry conveniently located on the coastline, stone could be readily transported by sea.
- 3.0.20 Work here ceased in **1969** after the quarry had been worked to the limits of the lease and down to sea level.
- 3.0.21 **Iron ore** was mined at Sharkham Point in open cast cliff top mining, exploiting the **hematite** occurring in the limestone until **1914**. One notable adit remains at beach level and it is possible to find samples of hematite on St Mary's beach

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<sup>2</sup>[www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/)

if the weather and the tide are “right”. The area was used as the Town Tip in the **1950s** and **1960s** and much of the archaeology has been covered over.

- 3.0.22 **Ochre**, discovered in the Furzeham area in **1845**, was a mineral which had massive importance and played a major part in the industrial revolution as it was the first substance in the world that would stop cast iron from rusting. It was used to invent a rust resistant paint which led to huge demand and to the founding of the Torbay Paint Company. The mineral was also painted on the sails of trawlers to protect the canvas from seawater, giving them their characteristic red/brown hue. There is now little evidence of the iron and ochre mines and their significance in shaping Brixham. The Torbay Paint Company closed in **1961**.
- 3.0.23 In **1866**, the “Great Storm” destroyed over 60 ships and 100 lives were lost in one night. As a result of the storm, the people of Exeter raised the funds for Brixham to have her first RNLI lifeboat, the “City of Exeter”. Since then, there has always been an all-weather lifeboat in Brixham, which is manned by volunteer crews from the town.
- 3.0.24 The formation of the Breakwater as a sea defence for Brixham became more important after the storm. The first stone in the Breakwater’s construction had been laid in **1843**, with the original structure stretching to 427 m (1,400 ft) in length until work ceased because of lack of funds. Over the years more structure was added, and in **1916** the Breakwater reached its final length of 0.97 km (0.6 miles) and a lighthouse was erected on the seaward end.
- 3.0.25 In **1868** the short Tor Bay and Brixham railway line to Churston opened to carry passengers and goods (mostly fish to London), which was of great benefit to the fishing industry. Sadly, the station and the line were closed in **1963** as part of the infamous Dr Beeching cuts.
- 3.0.26 In **1892** Torquay was incorporated as a Borough and in **1894** Paignton Urban District Council and Brixham Urban District Council were established under the terms of the Local Government Act 1894. By this time Brixham’s population had

grown to over 8,000 and the settlements were brought together under the Brixham Urban District Council.



*Figure 11: Brixham Railway 1948.*

3.0.27 Semaphore signalling apparatus was used on Berry Head before **1875** and acted as the Lloyds' Signal Station for Tor Bay. In **1906** the Berry Head Lighthouse, an active lighthouse, was built; it was automated and converted to run on acetylene in **1921**. There is also a VOR/DME beacon used for air traffic control in one of the woodland areas on the headland.



*Figure 12: Berry Head Lighthouse – c. 200 ft above sea level.*

- 3.0.28 The outbreak of World War I saw a decline in the fishing industry and halted the prosperity and development of the Victorian era, but after the war conditions improved and housing stock increased throughout the town.
- 3.0.29 In **1943** the outer harbour main slipway and hard area, known as Breakwater Hard, was built by American troops. It is now a rare example of a World War II D-Day landing craft loading ramp. English Heritage listed the hard and slipway, stating that "it was one of the best examples of its kind left in the UK" (grade II listed 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2009).
- 3.0.30 During the war many Belgian people and their vessels came to Brixham to escape the hostilities. They stayed after the end of the war making their homes in Brixham and becoming part of the local community.
- 3.0.31 Immediately post-war, Brixham capitalised on its idyllic location, history and heritage to become a popular holiday destination. Pontins invested heavily in the area, at one time operating five holiday parks. The town also offered an abundance of hotel accommodation and camping sites, with many of the larger properties in town converted to bed & breakfast and guest house businesses.
- 3.0.32 In the **1960s** and **1970s** there were notable changes.
- 3.0.33 The fish quay under the covered market area was moved together with the associated facilities to the front of the Seamen's Mission on Overgang. This changed the harbour dramatically. More improvements and an extension to the Fish Quay and the addition of Southern Quay were completed by **1991**, which provided extra berthing and landing facilities for the fishing fleet.
- 3.0.34 A walkway between the Town and Oxen Cove was created, which linked into the outer harbour pathway as far as the steps up to Battery Gardens and the coastal pathway route to Paignton.

- 3.0.35 The gas works, nearby old cottages and buildings were demolished in the **late 1960s** to make way for a new multi-storey car park which was built in the centre of the town in **1969**. Middle Street was also widened during this period and the fire station and Police station were moved out of the town centre.



*Figure 13: Old Multi-storey car park.*

## **4 What makes Brixham special?**

- 4.0.1 The top five things that people liked about living in Brixham, according to the 2008 "Who Plans Brixham For The Future?" town survey, were the neighbours, the people, the amenities and shops, the natural beauty, and the fact that they had friends and family living in the town.

*"Brixham is special because of its rich history and heritage. I do worry though, that some of its history and warmth will be lost without significant thought about future plans."*

*Chris, 64, Berry Head*

*"Brixham has a unique coastal and countryside landscape, with an amazing history. My family have lived here for many generations so it will always be special to me. I would like it taken care of for the sake of future generations"*

*Kerry, 62, Berry Head*

*"I love Busy Bee's and Jingle Bells on the Quay at Christmas!"*

*Lilly, 3, Furzeham*

*"Brixham is special to me because it is a safe place to bring up my children, and has a friendly, close-knit community."*

*Michele, 37, Town Centre*

*"I love the fact that we have so many small independent retailers in the town. This should be encouraged so that Brixham retains its character and remains different to other small towns."*

*Simone, 39, Summercombe*

## **5 The conservation areas**

- 5.0.1 We are very fortunate that Character Appraisals have been produced for both of Brixham's conservation areas. The work, which covers Higher Brixham and Lower Brixham separately, was undertaken by Hal Bishop from Torbay Council.<sup>3</sup> The Higher Brixham report can be down loaded from the Torbay Council website and makes for interesting reading.
- 5.0.2 Our Heritage is an important asset and should be cared for, for future generations. Development within the conservation areas should be strictly limited and in keeping with the surrounding structures. Any developments in the AONBs should also be strictly limited and be sympathetic to the surroundings, adding value to its AONB status so that the level of enjoyment of the area is not diminished and can still be appreciated by all who visit.
- 5.0.3 There is a great deal of evidence that heritage is not only valuable in its own right, but also as a factor in maintaining and improving the health, economy and cultural well-being of an area and its population.
- 5.0.4 There are approximately 329 Heritage category listings in Brixham, which includes buildings and scheduled monuments. The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) for all listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks and registered parks, gardens and battlefields can be searched online. The

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<sup>3</sup>Higher Brixham Conservation Area Character Appraisal revised May 2011; Brixham Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal revised July 2014(draft), Hal Bishop, BA, MA, Cert Ecol & Cons, IHBC, MIfA.

Heritage List is the only official and up-to-date database of all nationally protected historic buildings and sites in England. Further information can be obtained from: [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/). See the example below:

**List Entry Summary:** This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

**Name:** Prince of Orange statue, list entry Number: 1291780.

**Location:** Prince of Orange statue, The Strand, Brixham.

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

**County:** Devon, District: Torbay, District Type: Unitary Authority, Parish: Brixham.

**Grade:** II, date first listed: 18-Oct-1949.

List entry description and summary of building.

**History:** Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

**Details:** Brixham SX9256SE The Strand, Lower Brixham 1946-1/11/231 (North East side)18/10/49 Prince of Orange Statue, GV II. White marble statue on a granite pedestal and plinth. 1888-9. by W & T Wills of London. Figure of William, Prince of Orange, right foot forward with left hand on chest, right hand holding large feathered hat; dressed in heavy overcoat and thigh boots.

Plinth with 2 steps. Pedestal with moulded cap and base. On its SW face the incised inscription: WILLIAM PRINCE OF ORANGE, AFTERWARDS WILLIAM III, KING OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND, LANDED NEAR THIS SPOT 5TH NOVEMBER 1688 AND ISSUED HIS FAMOUS DECLARATION

"THE LIBERTIES OF ENGLAND AND THE PROTESTANT RELIGION I WILL MAINTAIN". Beneath this is the sculptor's name.

On the south-east face is the inscription: ERECTED BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION AND DEDICATED TO THE TOWN OF BRIXHAM. FOUNDATION STONE LAID 5TH NOVBR 1888, BY HIS EXCELLENCY COUNT DE BYLANDT. UNVEILED 5TH NOVEMBER 1889.

On the north-west face is the inscription: ENGELANDS VRIJHEID DOOR ORANJE HERSTELD. Old photographs show that the land on which the statue stands originally projected into the harbour and was protected by an iron railing.

**National Grid Reference:** SX 92577 56227

**Selected sources:** Books and journals Gregory, C., Brixham in Devon, (1896–63).

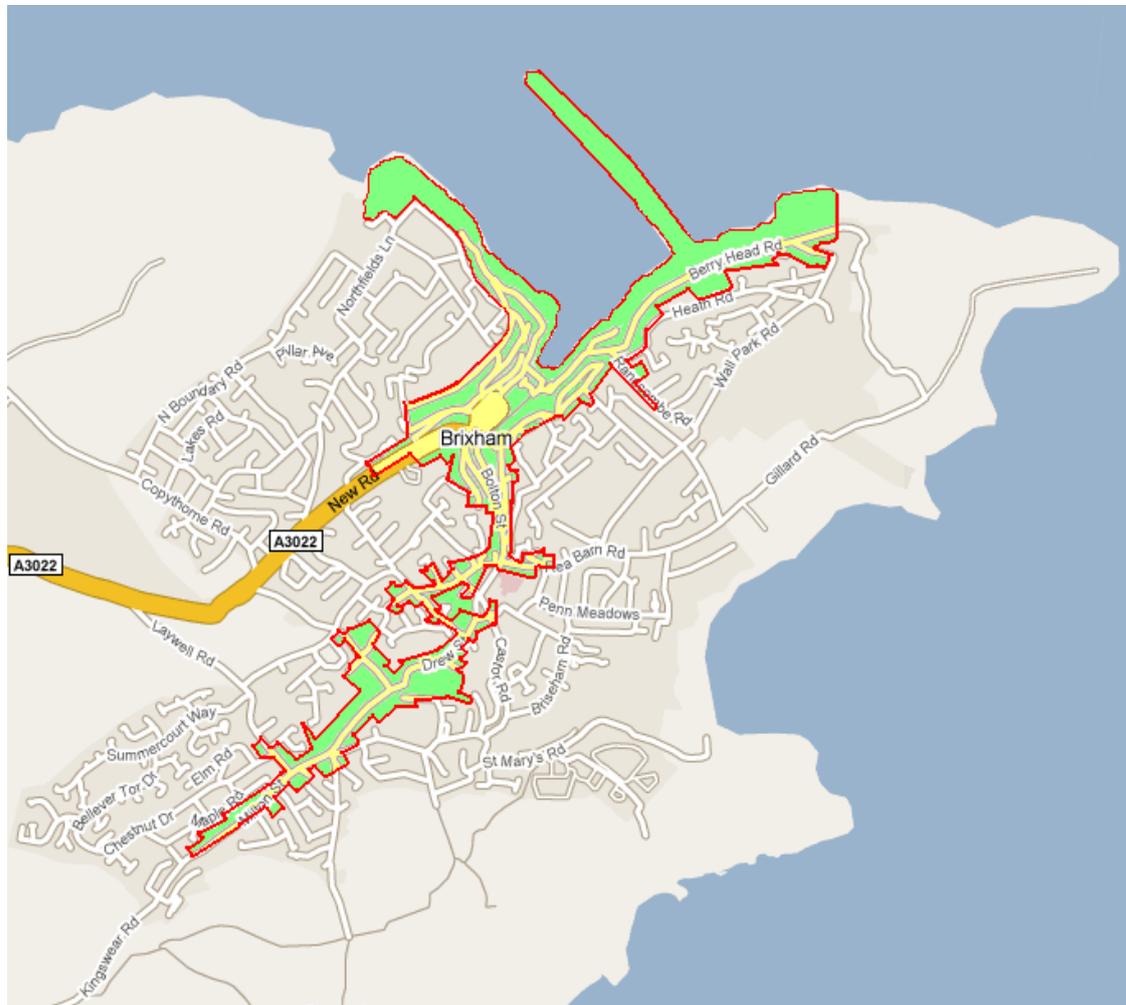


*Figure 14: Prince of Orange Statue, The Strand Brixham.*

## **5.1 Conservation guidance**

- 5.1.1 Historic England is also a good source to discover current guidance on building regulations in conservation areas and maintaining listed buildings. Working on older buildings may require extra types of planning conditions.
- 5.1.2 The introduction of the Enterprise and Regulatory Act 2013 brought changes to the way listed building consent is granted. The new provisions in the Act make the existing listed building consent system more efficient and effective.
- 5.1.3 The need for planning permission applies to all buildings. For older buildings, it may be needed in addition to other forms of permissions. Listed Building Consent will be needed for all work to a listed building that involves alterations, extensions or demolition that will affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. This applies to all types of work and to all parts of the building that is covered by the listing.
- 5.1.4 Some conservation areas are subject to special controls when protection of particular building features, such as doors or windows, is required. These are called "Article 4 Directions" and they restrict work that would normally not need planning permission, such as replacing a window with one of similar design. It is advisable to check first with the local authority Conservation Officer whether or not consent will be needed for what is being planned and find out whether ideas need to be adapted to make them more likely to succeed. This simple step could save a lot of time and money.
- 5.1.5 It is concerning that Brixham Town conservation area continues to appear on Heritage England's at risk register (2015) due to serious detrimental changes that have occurred in past decades, such as unsympathetic alterations to buildings and the urban environment, poorly designed dormer windows, the loss of original doors, windows and shop fronts, and the use of inappropriate

materials. Many of these changes are minor taken in isolation, but when added together they amount to serious damage to the historic integrity of a conservation area.



*Figure 15: Conservation areas of the town were first designated in March 1976 and cover the harbour area and town centre and from Bolton Cross up through Higher Brixham and Milton Street towards Kingswear.*

5.1.6 **Traditional materials.** Original historic materials are unique and make a major contribution to the character and significance of a building. However, no material remains in perfect condition, and even the most durable material will need to be repaired. It is recommended that traditional building materials and methods are used where ever possible, although modern technology and materials can sometimes help keep more of the original material; expert advice is strongly recommended in such cases to ensure compatibility.

- 5.1.7 It is important to protect Brixham's built environment and its historic heritage assets, to prevent and reverse damage that is being done by the addition of features which are harmful and detrimental to the special character of the townscape, especially in the conservation areas.
- 5.1.8 Poor replacement windows in uPVC and a large number of oversize, and often "over-sailing", dormers can be seen. Dormer windows are a common feature in Brixham as they can be a cost-effective way of providing additional accommodation. However, it is important to appreciate that not all properties are suitable for this form of roof extension. Dormers, roof lights and solar panels can (individually and cumulatively) have a significant effect on the appearance of a property or area and their design needs careful consideration.
- 5.1.9 More attention should be paid to Brixham's heritage assets not only to ensure they are properly maintained, but also to review them so as to build them into our tourism offering. Tourism plus Heritage is becoming increasingly popular and the economy would benefit. This could also be applied to our standing as a UNESCO Geopark. Our heritage assets are currently not being utilised to their full potential.
- 5.1.10 It could well be that the time has come to adopt an "Article 4 Direction" for the town centre conservation area to have any hope of bringing about improvement. In view of the proposed town centre regeneration plan this would help to lay down good guidelines for the development.
- 5.1.11 Carrying out unauthorised works to a listed building is a criminal offence and individuals can be prosecuted. Also, a planning authority can insist that all work carried out without consent is reversed. It is sensible to talk to the local planning authority before any work is carried out to a listed building, as an owner will have trouble selling a property which has not been granted "Listed Building Consent" for work undertaken.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Historic England Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management, Advice Note 1, page 19.

5.1.12 See “General design guidelines”, Section 8

**Q3 Roofscape.** Variety in roofscape as the buildings step down the hillsides is a key characteristic of Brixham. Roofscapes appropriate to the location and visibility of the development within the town will be required. Additions to roofs will be of a scale and proportion appropriate to the essential character of the neighbouring townscape.

**BD3 Roof design.** The shape and pitch of the roof on any new development throughout the town should be considered in terms of its visibility and contribution to the quality of the roofscape of the town. In addition, for the historic core and the conservation area, the roof design should generally reflect those of the properties nearby.

See also:

Q1 Visibility

Q2 Scale of development

L5 Materials of hard landscaping

L6 Landscape design.

## **6 Brixham’s main issues**

### **6.1 Housing need**

6.1.1 Torbay’s Housing Strategy 2012–2030 is to enable the provision and choice of homes where people can thrive. This will help the local economy by offering security and settled homes for longer, promoting health and well-being and reducing the impact on the environment. The aim is to help communities to recognise and tackle the inequality faced by families and the vulnerable.

6.1.2 The availability of affordable housing for young people and key workers to purchase remains one of the main issues in Brixham. Current house prices are

not affordable to people on low incomes, which means that the demand for housing to rent is high.

6.1.3 Torbay Council is committed to providing high-quality housing for people who are unable to access or afford market housing, which means providing homes for local people at an affordable rent, and also low-cost home ownership properties, which are kept at below market value in perpetuity. There are two main categories of Affordable Housing:

- **Homes for rent (social rented).** Social rented housing includes dwellings owned and managed by a Registered Provider (formerly known as Housing Associations). Properties are let with rent levels that are set nationally.
- **Intermediate housing.** Is provided at costs above social rented levels but below market prices. It includes shared equity schemes, low-cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

6.1.4 In Torbay, "Devon Home Choice", a "Choice Based Lettings" scheme, is operated. Council or housing association homes which become vacant are advertised on their website and applicants on the housing register can "bid" for properties they are interested in. Each property is allocated to the bidder in the greatest level of housing need. It is a much more open, transparent and customer-based approach to the letting of homes.

6.1.5 Most Housing Association homes in this area are for renting.

## **6.2 New homes**

6.2.1 The mix of building design and methods of construction used throughout the town makes it difficult to dictate design styles for specific areas. A primary consideration should be the scale of any proposed building. Scale is the relative dimensions and proportions of the elements of buildings compared with each other, and with other buildings nearby and the surrounding environment. Brixham has buildings in a wide variety of sizes and it is important that the scale of any new building suits its surroundings. Scale relates not only to a building,

but also to the space between it and its neighbours. New buildings should have the same impression of space around them as the existing surrounding buildings.

6.2.2 See "General design guidelines", Section 8

**BD2 Architectural treatment.** New development will be of high quality, raising the standard of architectural treatment and respecting the qualities of its surroundings, such as scale, style, materials and attention to detail.

Innovative designs and the contemporary interpretation of traditional design and construction will be welcomed; they will be to the highest standards and be complementary to their context.

See also:

S1 Land use

BD4 Materials

BD6 Ancillary facilities

L6 Landscape design

G1 Building styles.

6.2.3 New streets/roads created on new development sites and named by residents of the town through Brixham Town Council would ensure that the heritage and history of the town is acknowledged and made more relevant by being linked with new developments.

6.2.4 When completed modern buildings or site layouts are seen not to be in keeping with their surroundings these should not be regarded as "set precedents". They should be acknowledged as "unsuitable developments" and as atypical building design in that area, and further similar development will be strongly discouraged.



*Figure 16: A sympathetic well-designed example of a Mews development in Pump Street off Fore Street.*

### **6.3 Cemetery**

6.3.1 Torbay Council makes provision for cemeteries across Torbay through its Bereavement Services department. There is a need for a Cemetery in Brixham and this has been acknowledged by Torbay Council and Brixham Town Council.

6.3.2 Torbay Council support the principle of “green burial” and it is considered essential that the cemeteries are so designed and managed to minimise their environmental impact. Planting of native species and the creation of meadows can enhance a cemetery’s value as a wildlife habitat whilst retaining the dignity of its prime function.

6.3.3 Brixham Town Council is continuing to work towards making cemetery provision in Brixham a reality in the future, as such provision is seen as an intrinsic part of a viable community. The work is ongoing.

### **6.4 Provision of employment**

6.4.1 Facilities to encourage employment for those living in the town are seen as a vital part of making a viable community as more local jobs will generate income and improve the economy. Groups from the Brixham Peninsula Neighbourhood

Forum have been meeting since 2012 to discuss issues and ideas on how best this can be achieved and there have been surveys and public consultations too. Survey results put boat building and repair as the main type of business that would benefit Brixham (58%), closely followed by provision of small business workspace units (54%). It is important to support and enhance traditional employment and skills, and encourage employment that offers apprenticeships.

- 6.4.2 Marine-related industry jobs have increased as a result of the completion of the new Fish Market and it is hoped that Oxen Cove plans will provide more marine-related employment on the harbour estate. The development of a Northern Arm is considered a priority.
- 6.4.3 There is now a very successful Work Hub (Seaworks) located within the grade II listed Town Hall built in 1886 by GS Bridgman of Torquay. Desk spaces, offices and other facilities are provided, which are reasonably priced and flexible to use. Superfast Broadband provision and mobile phone coverage of the town could be better and this would also help local businesses and attract new employment to our area.
- 6.4.4 A valuable report has been prepared for the Brixham Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan which identifies many of the sites currently used for industrial/warehousing/production in the plan area. It looks at the constraints and identifies where other employment/industrial sites could be located, and also lists the currently available/unoccupied units.
- 6.4.5 The building and opening of the "South Devon Highway" is expected to bring lasting economic benefits and new jobs to Torbay.

## **6.5 Road infrastructure**

- 6.5.1 The major road route into the South West from the rest of the UK is the M5. This motorway is linked to Newton Abbot by dual carriageway (A38/A380) and now the new South Devon Highway links Newton Abbot to Torbay. This major new road was opened to traffic in December 2015. It is expected to bring

lasting economic benefits to South Devon and Torbay leading to the creation of nearly 8,000 jobs in South Devon, with around 3,500 of these in Torbay.

- 6.5.2 The new road has realigned the junction at the bottom of Hamelin Way so that access to the Western Corridor (A390), known as the Ring Road, is speedier after a short 10-minute journey from Newton Abbot. However, there are now 12 sets of traffic lights to Windy Corner, which restricts the flow of traffic along the western corridor, leading to severe congestion and greater CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.



*Figure 17: Windy Corner junction, a major cause of present day traffic congestion.*

- 6.5.3 The A3022 is the only main access route into Brixham and also to Kingswear (via the A379), which at the current time have a combined population of over 18,000 people.
- 6.5.4 To meet the assessed need for new homes over the plan period (2012–2030), 683 dwellings have been identified which will lead to an even greater increase in local road traffic.
- 6.5.5 Solutions to these serious problems will need to be found and priority given to implementing them.

6.5.6 See "General design guidelines", Section 8.

**MT4 Traffic effects of development.** Assessment of the impact of increased traffic resulting from new developments, in terms of the effect on traffic flows generally within, throughout and on the approaches to Brixham, will be important in helping to resolve this issue.

**MT5 Park and Ride.** A plan to enhance and further develop the Park and Ride and its immediate area, to create an appropriate gateway to Brixham, would be welcomed. Signage, information available for visitors to the facilities in Brixham and the provision of the usual tourist facilities will be necessary.

## 6.6 Town centre parking

6.6.1 The existing conflict between buses and vehicles exiting the town centre car park is long overdue for a solution. Parking provision for any new developments should be adequate for modern trends where ever possible and not just to meet minimum current legislation requirements. Increased parking provision and a coach drop-off and pick-up point in a town centre location is seen by businesses in the town as a very necessary requirement to help boost the town economy.

6.6.2 It is hoped that current town centre regeneration plans will provide solutions to much of what is unsatisfactory in this area and lead to outcomes we will be proud of. These should enhance the conservation area by using design and materials that reinforce the pattern and character of the heritage features we already have, so as to ensure renovated or new builds are in keeping with their place and surroundings.

6.6.3 See "General design guidelines", Section 8.

**LS1 Development brief.** A development brief will be prepared for all large-scale development sites, notably the town centre and car park area, the Harbour area, Oxen Cove and Freshwater Quarry.

**Q1 Visibility.** Any development will be considered in relation to its visibility from both within and from outside the town, so that it is appropriate to its location. Brixham lies in and on a series of valleys and hills, with both inland view ridges and seaward views incorporating the natural amphitheatre of the harbour. The views and vistas of the surrounding countryside, the key landmarks of the town and the sea are important and must be respected.

See also:

Q2 Scale of development

MT1 Legibility, signage and pedestrian crossings

MT2 Town centre "shared space"

MT3 Parking resulting from new development

BD6 Ancillary facilities.



*Figure 18: Brixham central car parking area, with the bus terminus in the background on the right, marked out by the up-turned white funnels. The buildings to the left border Fore Street which has a steep green cliff background before more terraces reach up to the skyline.*

## **6.7 Cleanliness of the town and harbour**

- 6.7.1 TOR2 is a ground-breaking joint partnership between Torbay Council and Kier Group, which is responsible for delivering a wide range of essential front-line services to the residents of Torbay.
- 6.7.2 The services provided by TOR2 on behalf of Torbay Council include waste and recycling collections; the maintenance of highways, grounds, parks, car parks, buildings and the council's vehicle fleet; street and beach cleansing; and out of hours call centre support.
- 6.7.3 The joint venture company was formed in April 2010 and took over responsibility for services in July 2010. The partners have agreed a 10-year contract. The delivery of a wide range of services through a single private partner in a joint venture with a local authority is a truly innovative solution designed to drive service improvements and value for residents – doing more for less.
- 6.7.4 The town is hoping that an unfinished successful trial of solar powered rubbish collection bins (known as Big Belly Bins) will lead to their permanent introduction in the near future. Seagull numbers have increased over recent years and the birds make themselves a nuisance rummaging in the collection bins, scattering the contents which is a potential health hazard, and in some instances their opportunist behaviour towards food is alarming to holiday visitors. Dealing with the vast amounts of rubbish generated in the summer is a problem, and keeping the town well-presented and looking cared for is a number-one priority.
- 6.7.5 Floral displays enhance the look of the town during the summer months and for several years now Brixham has been entered in the Britain in Bloom contest, winning on many occasions. "Pride in Brixham" are a voluntary group who work hard to keep the town centre and harbour area looking its best, and they care for many of the floral displays and garden features around the harbour side and town centre. Their work is very much appreciated by the town's people and much admired by our visitors, and in 2016 they were awarded several trophies.

## **7 Townscape analysis**

### **7.1 Brixham town centre**

- 7.1.1 This area is defined as the former creek area infilled in the 18<sup>th</sup> century between Middle and Fore Streets (which is the main commercial area), the 19<sup>th</sup> century waterfront and harbour installations to the east (the piers, the former market house on the Strand) and the earlier buildings on the Quay stretching round to Overgang, as well as the step-ways rising from both sides (such as Temperance, Overgang, Shidders and others).
- 7.1.2 This conservation area covers 50 ha (125 acres); its landward perimeter is 6½ km, with 2½ km against the sea (excluding the lengths of all piers). It contains 133 heritage category listings extending over 190 separate properties as well as other specific features, such as boundary walls, gates and entrances. All are designated grade II or grade II\*, and three scheduled monuments lie within or adjacent to the conservation area.
- 7.1.3 The area has a very irregular shape with long arms embracing Battery Gardens on the north and Berry Head Road on the east; on the south the Bolton Street area adjoins the Higher Brixham conservation area at the Burton Street, Greenwood Road and Rea Barn Road junction, the traditional line between Higher Brixham and Lower Brixham Quay. Brixham town's designated area is more than just single runs of streets, as houses also range up the valley slopes and terraces are quarried out of its sides (see the green shaded area in Figure 15).
- 7.1.4 Despite the distinctive topography, the boundaries of the character areas are not clear cut.
- 7.1.5 The town occupies the infilled creek and is delineated by the quarry faces of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century town on the south side. Furzeham slopes down towards the central area so that Church Hill East and Higher Street form the dividing line between Furzeham and the town. King Street, North View and Ranscombe form a compact area on the upper slopes on the south side of the harbour with Temperance Steps forming a convenient boundary between it and the infilled

central area. All areas, with the exception of the long northern and eastern arms, contain buildings from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century but there is no clear chronological cohesion within the areas, although there are distinct urban blocks within them.

7.1.6 The buildings in Fore Street are mixed, with three-storey terraces with shops on to the street and residential or businesses above.

7.1.7 The roadscape is two colour to mark the lack of pavement area, but the type of flat surface overall is not wearing well and in wet weather it can be hazardous.

7.1.8 Fore Street is the primary retail trading centre of Brixham with Middle Street, The Quay, The Strand and lower Bolton Street all contributing to a major part of the town's economy. More individual, unique small shops should be encouraged and retained within this area to not only please the tourist visitor but also to attract more locally based shoppers. The general economic situation has unfortunately led to small business closures, and charity shops and cafes have increased to fill some of the gaps.



*Figure 19: Fore Street has one-way traffic and is pedestrianised 10 am until 10 pm.*

7.1.9 All Brixham traders should be encouraged to address conservation issues when planning any changes to their businesses, both internally and externally. Advice should be given to stress that addressing conservation issues is part of any planning process and should be given a high priority; financial inducement incentives may be possible.

7.1.10 The Town Centre Redevelopment Site is an opportunity for change and the separate proposed Town Centre Master Plan document gives information and details on the thinking behind this initial plan.

7.1.11 See “General design guidelines”, Section 8.

**BD4 Materials.** Building materials will respect the traditional character of Brixham and the immediate context of the development in particular. For example, white or colour wash finish over stone, or natural limestone are prevalent in many parts of the historic core and conservation areas and the use of such locally sourced, reclaimed or recycled materials, or appropriate modern alternatives, for new development will be encouraged. Elsewhere the addition of more contemporary materials would be appropriate. Materials should be sourced locally where possible.

**BD5 Shop fronts:** Where traditional shop fronts remain in the historic areas of town, they will be retained and any alterations should incorporate traditional elements and materials. Where the traditional shop front has already been removed, the replacement of appropriate shop fronts should be encouraged, so that they contribute to the character of the area and building in terms of their scale and style. New shop fronts should also contribute to the character of the area in terms of their scale and style.

See also:

L3 Boundaries

L7 Public realm

L8 Lighting.

## 7.2 Bolton Street and Mount Pleasant

- 7.2.1 Bolton Street links the medieval Domesday village of Higher Brixham with the town centre at Bolton Cross; it is set in a narrow valley whose former streams fed both the corn mill and the 18<sup>th</sup> century Naval Reservoir. The west side is largely commercial but the east side has some good 19<sup>th</sup> century and earlier residential buildings, a number listed, set above street level and enclosed by railings. Later 19<sup>th</sup> century streets run parallel up the valley sides with some larger late Victorian/Edwardian seaside villas on Parkham Hill. Mount Pleasant includes the scheduled monument of Brixham Cavern, where public access was via No. 107.
- 7.2.2 There is little opportunity for new housing development of any kind in this area. There may be the possibility of infill in garden plots on the Parkham Hill side or infill on the steep slopes between Bolton Street and Mount Pleasant.

- 7.2.3 See "General design guidelines", Section 8.

**Q4 Infill development and building** in gardens must respect the character and appearance of the area and not be detrimental to the overall quality and amenity of the neighbourhood.

**BD1 Building lines.** In areas where a clear historic building line has been established, new development will generally be expected to follow the existing line of development, whether it is along the back edge of the pavement or set back.

**S7 Building refurbishment.** The energy-efficient refurbishment of existing properties in a manner appropriate to their quality and historic origins will be encouraged.

## 7.3 Berry Head Road

- 7.3.1 This character area includes Moorings Reach, the largest late 20<sup>th</sup> century development in the conservation area on the site of the former shipbuilding yards, and then extends eastwards from the King Street/Ranscombe Road

junction along Berry Head Road to include the breakwater, D-Day embarkation ramps, Shoalstone Pool and the Coastguard Cottages. The prehistoric scheduled monument of Ash Hole Cavern lies on, but outside, the designated boundary. The eccentric Edwardian Villa of Wolborough House and a few others lie above the coast road.



*Figure 20: The coastguard cottages on the seaward side of Berry Head Road.*

- 7.3.2 The cottages were built in 1889 of squared rock-faced limestone with slate roofs and stone stacks. They have projecting gabled front porches with chamfered copings and kneelers with decorative panels and the porches house opposing front doors. To the east opposite the Victoria Road junction the detached former Coastguard Station, No. 12, comes first, followed by the 10-cottage group Nos. 14–32 (designed as linked pairs). No. 34 at the far end with its double doors was the Coastguard Rescue Station and includes walls, piers and railings. Like the coastguard station it has been converted to residential. No. 26 was the home of James Callaghan 1914–22, but has a later front garage

7.3.3 extension which breaks the rhythm and uniformity of the linked pairs. The rescue station located here, a long way from the inner harbour, had excellent views and access to open water and the houses retain, like many former buildings in Brixham, a strong maritime link to the working 19<sup>th</sup> century town.<sup>5</sup>

7.3.4 See “General design guidelines”, Section 8.

**S6 Building refurbishment.** The energy-efficient refurbishment of existing properties in a manner appropriate to their quality and historic origins will be encouraged.

**Q4 Infill development and building** in gardens must respect the character and appearance of the area and not be detrimental to the overall quality and amenity of the neighbourhood.

See also:

S2 Building design

S3 Construction technology

BD4 Materials.

## 7.4 New Road area

7.4.1 The New Road area includes the rising slopes of Lower and Higher Manor Roads and part of South Furzeham Road on the plateau edge. The civic centre of the town lies at its east end with a very good group of buildings: the town and market halls, library and museum. The area, like Bolton Street, is a narrow valley with steep sides; there are good buildings groups on the north side, including the Rock Bank pair in Higher Manor Road which are Brixham’s largest houses, set in grounds that would not be out of place in Torquay’s Warberries or Lincombes.

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<sup>5</sup> *Brixham Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal*. Architectural and Historic Qualities. Page 72, para. 4.4.117. Hal Bishop, BA, MA, Cert Ecol & Cons, IHBC, MIfA. Revised 2014.



*Figure 21: Brixham Town Hall and Scala Market Hall at Bolton Cross, with the tower of All Saints Church in the background.*

7.4.2 New Road is the main arterial road into the town centre of Brixham. It carries the majority of vehicles that need to access the fish quay and the several industrial estates, and brings tourists into the town.



*Figure 22: New Road leading out of Brixham.*

- 7.4.3 There is a wide mix of development in this area ranging from blocks of flats to a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century modernist butterfly roof icon house designed by Mervyn Seal. There are some older properties in large gardens and some with a distinctive villa and gable roof built form.
- 7.4.4 New Road has commercial enterprises, the job centre, a doctors' surgery, two churches, dentists, several bed & breakfast and guest house businesses and a pub along a seemingly residential road leading out to the town boundary at Monksbridge Road and the Toll House. Housing in the streets off New Road consists of mostly modern estates of bungalows, and houses are terraced, semi-detached and detached. Any recent development on New Road itself would largely be infill and as there is only one open space in the area the integrity of this space will not be compromised.
- 7.4.5 What characterises Brixham Town, even more than Higher Brixham, is the near universal use of stucco or rendered finish. A few large and prominent buildings show exposed stone: the Town Hall; All Saints Church; the former warehouse complex off The Strand and New Quay Lane off Yachtside Court; the hall of the former National School, now the Salvation Army Citadel on Bolton Street; and the splendid high terrace group of 1–17 Rae Barn Road.
- 7.4.6 An even smaller number use brick of which the prominent examples are: the former police station, now the Museum at Bolton Cross; the former hall on Cavern Road; and the Late Victorian/Edwardian shop groups on Fore Street.

7.4.7 See "General design guidelines", Section 8.

**Q4 Infill development and building** in gardens must respect the character and appearance of the area and not be detrimental to the overall quality and amenity of the neighbourhood.

See also:

Q2 Scale of development.

## 7.5 Furzeham

- 7.5.1 This area extends north from the flat centre and harbour, and rises up the northern slopes to the plateau where the railway arrived in the 1860s, so is defined by early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century development. All Saints, the new Church of the period, is the most prominent building. The narrow streets are linked by typical series of step-ways set with cream-coloured pavers. On the northeast side, three terraces on or close to North Furzeham Road look out to sea rather than inland. Furzeham Gardens and the early houses of Bella Vista Road lie outside the designated area but are important visual and architectural elements of the townscape here, and should be considered for formal inclusion within it.



*Figure 23: Roof top view from Furzeham over Brixham outer harbour with the Marina and Breakwater in the background.*



*Figure 24: Bella Vista Road houses with many dormers and the Middle Green, Furzeham.*

- 7.5.2 In this area there is little scope for large-scale development. The houses have been built on the steep hillsides overlooking the harbour and looking out to sea, with small narrow lanes and access by steps to many of the older tucked away terraced cottages. The cliff face supports green vegetation which coats much of this area between the terraces of housing.



*Figure 25: Furzeham terraces overlooking Oxen Cove and the outer harbour.*

- 7.5.3 No development should impact on the open space of Furzeham Green which is protected. It consists of three component parts, Higher, Middle and Lower Green. Higher Green accommodates a children's playground, tennis courts and a bowling green, and is used by Furzeham Primary School. Nearby there are also two statutory allotment gardens.
- 7.5.4 The Middle Green is bordered with a cul de sac of more recent two-storey houses and there are many terraces in Furzeham from Victorian times which are mostly rendered brightly coloured and where the houses open straight on to the street. The Lower Green too is bordered by terraced properties, many of which have a dormer extension with flat roof and they overlook the harbour area below them. There is a mix of detached and semi-detached properties, some later modern houses and bungalows along the Higher Green as well as Furzeham Primary School and Nursery.

7.5.5 See "General design guidelines", Section 8.

**S6 Building refurbishment.** The energy-efficient refurbishment of existing properties in a manner appropriate to their quality and historic origins will be encouraged.

**L5 Materials of hard landscaping** should be of high quality and reflect the character of adjoining buildings and areas.

See also

Q2 Scale of development

L4 Front gardens/areas

BD1 Building lines.



*Figure 26: Typical style of terraced housing in North Furzeham Road showing roof-top dormer extensions.*

## **7.6 Battery Gardens and Oxen Cove**

7.6.1 This northernmost character area is mainly a section of part-open, part-wooded coast and is atypical of the conservation area as a whole and of any other in Torbay. It is dominated by the 1940 Coastal Defence Battery at Battery Gardens

at the north end overlooking Fishcombe Cove and all of Torbay, and the site of the previous Astra Zeneca Environmental Laboratories at the bottom of a former quarry, Freshwater Quarry. The character area is an extension of the original conservation area designated in September 1999 in order to protect Battery Gardens. However, the gardens, whose military significance dates first from 1779 and was much expanded in 1940 with an integrated gunnery and searchlight complex, was scheduled in March 2002.

- 7.6.2 There are no residential buildings in the sub-area, and as scheduling offers the highest category of heritage protection it could be argued that the conservation area no longer need stretch to include Battery Gardens, and that the designated boundaries be withdrawn to remove it, but then Furzeham Gardens and some of the Bella Vista Road houses could be included.<sup>6</sup>

## **7.7 Copythorne and Lindthorpe Way area, Pillar Avenue and North Boundary Road**

- 7.7.1 This area consists of a mix of modern bungalows, terraced, as well as semi-detached and detached, and some older houses, a small industrial estate, a row of shops and a local pub. If development is to take place here modern style designs would be acceptable in this more recently developed area of the town. In the immediate vicinity, open spaces are lacking and better play space facilities are needed.
- 7.7.2 The interface between the town and the surrounding countryside mostly follows the lines of former hedgerow field boundaries which pre-dated the expansion of the town. These have generally remained as the boundaries between each new development and the open countryside. Many of the properties which border the urban edge on North Boundary Road, the Brixham/Churston boundary, are bungalows of distinctive design, rendered and colourfully painted with low walls or low hedging fronting their properties.

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<sup>6</sup>*Brixham Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal*. Plan form and character areas. Page 15, para 3-9. Hal Bishop, BA, MA, Cert Ecol & Cons, IHBC, MIfA. Revised 2014.



*Figure 27: North Boundary Road (the rear of these bungalows marks the green Brixham/Churston boundary).*

7.7.3 These bungalows are occupied by people who value the views out of the rear of their properties over the open green fields and adjoining countryside towards Churston.



*Figure 28: Looking towards the Brixham/Churston boundary where the properties on North Boundary Road are highly visible.*

7.7.4 There is little scope for large-scale development in the area as it is surrounded by green spaces and the Brixham/Churston boundary.

7.7.5 See “General design guidelines”, Section 8.

**BD2 Architectural treatment.** New development will be of high quality, raising the standard of architectural treatment and respecting the qualities of its surroundings, such as scale, style, materials and attention to detail.

Innovative designs and the contemporary interpretation of traditional design and construction will be welcomed; they will be to the highest standards and be complementary to their context.

**G2 Innovative design.** A contemporary design approach using modern materials will be encouraged, provided that local distinctiveness and character are respected and enhanced.

See also:

BD6 Ancillary facilities

MT6 Pedestrian and cycle routes.



*Figure 29: Cricket Club Housing Development 2010 on the site of the former Cricket ground.*

- 7.7.6 The nearby Cumber estate has mainly linked bungalows with gardens at the front and enclosed paved areas with little garden at the rear and some have garage spaces set apart in blocks.
- 7.7.7 The Pillar Avenue and neighbouring development has a different character with terraces of two-storey houses with small front gardens and a higher density of built housing.



*Figure 30: The Cumber Bungalows are very similar in design with large window frontages and the build density is high.*

- 7.7.8 The 1960s saw the closure of the railway branch line into Brixham and some of this housing is on previously owned railway estate. The Copythorne and Lindthorpe areas were developed on steep side roads off New Road with mainly low level brick built bungalows, many detached, often part tiled, and with a tiled roof. These were well-spaced, with adequate gardens front and rear.
- 7.7.9 There is a wide variety in the style of houses with a fair number of modern detached individual style properties as well as some older detached properties.



*Figure 31: The bungalow style found in this area with red brick and render finish. The properties rise up steeply from the pavements as well as being on a steep hill.*

## **7.8 St Mary's, Higher Brixham**

- 7.8.1 The special quality of Higher Brixham's townscape is the result of the historic street pattern of development, first established in the late Saxon, pre-Conquest period, and integrated into the medieval landscape of strip fields. This survived 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century ribbon development and infilling up to the re-organisation of the landscape following World War II.
- 7.8.2 The most distinctive characteristic of the conservation area is the variety in the building types and forms, making it the most diverse of all the Torbay conservation areas. The large number of listed buildings is indicative of the importance of the built environment and the historic street pattern. There is a greater number of listed buildings here than in any comparable urban area in Torbay and a large number of houses pre-date 1860.
- 7.8.3 From pre-Conquest times, Brixham was two distinct settlements: the lower settlement Brixham Quay and Higher Brixham with its Domesday manor and St Mary's parish church. It was an agricultural community long before the fishing industry took over as the primary economic enterprise and lower Brixham Quay became the larger town.

- 7.8.4 The two Brixham conservation areas, Higher Brixham and Brixham Town, adjoin each other forming a designated area stretching 3.5 km from Milton Street to Shoalstone. The actual Higher Brixham conservation area covers 50 acres but because of the meandering nature of the boundary it has a perimeter of over 7 km. It covers the area of the early settlement: Milton Street, lower Summer Lane, the junction with Southdown Hill and Upton Manor Road, Horsepool Street up to Greenover Road, Baker's Hill, as far as Stoneacre (the former Vicarage), Drew Street, Knick Knack Lane and Burton Street with an extension to lower Rea Barn Road. Gattery Lane and Guzzle Down mark the upper boundary of Higher Brixham whilst Burton Street and Great Gate the lower one.
- 7.8.5 Milton Street lies west of the parish church and Drew Street north and east of it; there is a distinct change of alignment where the two streets meet. These main roads (a bus route) are part of the "local distributor route network". This through route connects the southern part of the town to the A379 Paignton to Kingswear road at Hillhead.
- 7.8.6 There are spectacular views driving down the tree-lined winding narrow road from Hillhead to Brixham, of the sea to the right, the sloping green fields on either side and then the distant view of Brixham, the harbour and Tor Bay in the valley bottom.
- 7.8.7 Brixham housing development starts on the left at Elizabeth Avenue with an older estate of social housing, although some houses are now privately owned, some semi-detached houses and also some shorter terraces too, with long moderate sized back gardens, all of which are very similar except where home owners have added extra touches to their properties.
- 7.8.8 The road opposite on the right of the main road is more recent, leading up the hillside to Ocean View Drive. This development is very different, consisting of semi-detached housing on the lower level road, with steps down to small front gardens, and at the back small rear gardens with rough ground and bushes. Beyond the gardens is a narrow service lane and a boundary wall dropping

down to the main road, which has no pavement along this stretch. On the road further up the hillside there is a long row of two-storey flats with garages underneath and views looking out across the valley to Summercombe.

7.8.9 The main road continues, descending through high limestone walls topped with hedges/trees fronting individual houses. Mixed ribbon development exists along this narrow winding main road and there are strong visual contrasts leading to a highly varied street scene. Car parking is on-street with residents keeping voluntarily to one side of the road in the stretches where the yellow lines are absent. Few of the older properties fronting this main route have garages.

7.8.10 The early development remains significantly unaltered, including overall frontage detail, spatial arrangement, roof profiles, stacks and original chimney pots, and specifically, the intricacy of detail and range of materials used. This includes slate-hanging, roof slate-plastering, decorative stucco moulding, and the imaginative use of natural stone and brick combinations which characterise much of the development that took place between the early 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Much period detail has survived, such as original sash windows with glazing bars, cast-iron railings and items of street furniture, panelled doors and reveals.

7.8.11 See "General design guidelines", Section 8.

**S6 Building refurbishment.** The energy-efficient refurbishment of existing properties in a manner appropriate to their quality and historic origins will be encouraged.

**BD1 Building lines.** In areas where a clear historic building line has been established, new development will generally be expected to follow the existing line of development, whether it is along the back edge of the pavement or set back.



*Figure 32: Upper Milton Street, showing the high Devonian limestone walls — rubble-built walls are typical of much of this part of Brixham where they act as boundaries and terraces; the mature hedges above add to the sense of enclosure.*

- 7.8.12 20<sup>th</sup> century housing development is set back from the main road on new side roads that stretch up the green hillsides of the valley, which runs southwest to northeast. Milton Street, which extends west from the parish church, is a good example of terraced housing, with narrow plots perpendicular to the axis of the main street with houses fronting the street. Many had land and orchards behind the houses which later provided the building land for the 20<sup>th</sup> century development of Higher Brixham.
- 7.8.13 The historic core of Higher Brixham was Drew Street, Milton Street, Horsepool Street and Baker's Hill with the "square" in front of the church. Horsepool Street runs downhill from the St Mary's Square junction and then uphill to join the route north and west to Churston Ferrers. Before the growth of lower Brixham and the building of New Road in the 1820s, Horsepool Street was the main route out of Brixham.
- 7.8.14 The tower of St Mary's parish church is visible from many locations. It is the third to have been on the site (which was an ancient Celtic burial ground). The original wooden Saxon church was replaced by a stone Norman church that was, in its turn, built over in about 1360.



*Figure 33: St Mary's Church, Higher Brixham.*

- 7.8.15 Many important townspeople are buried in the churchyard, which is very large and contains some of the mature and beautiful examples of both deciduous and evergreen trees found in Higher Brixham. The importance of individual trees within the streetscape of the conservation area is highlighted by many examples of individual specimen trees located in private gardens.
- 7.8.16 St Mary's Park is a large and important open space (c. 7 acres) adjoining the southern edge of the conservation area immediately south of the churchyard, and is bordered by trees. There are tennis courts, a bowling green, a football pitch area, an exercise trail, a wild flower meadow in summer which is much admired and a children's playground.
- 7.8.17 The conservation area proper is largely devoid of green space, apart from private gardens, many of which are contained or concealed by high, mostly limestone walls.
- 7.8.18 Adjoining the conservation area, but outside the designated boundaries, are allotment gardens which are entered off Drew Street.



*Figure 34: Wild flower meadow, St Mary's park.*

7.8.19 A number of buildings in Higher Brixham outside the conservation area are of historic significance. Gentry houses were built as villas in landscaped grounds with drives such as Laywell House in Summer Lane, Laywell Cottage (Aylmer), Kings Barton and also the very different 1930s modern movement house "Suncourt" in Park Avenue.



*Figure 36: The Melville Aubin designed Sunpark, a 1930s art deco property in Park Avenue.*

- 7.8.20 Upton Manor off Upton Manor Road was built in 1768. There have been changes to the original building but it is still a dwelling in large grounds.
- 7.8.21 Set within a garden and hidden behind high walls on two sides, Aylmer (originally Laywell Cottage) is one of the Gillard Cottages Orneés; the gothic-revival windows are typical hallmarks. The superbly restored trellised veranda unhappily looks out onto the house's immediate surroundings: an ugly sea of tarmac.
- 7.8.22 The building material in the conservation area is overwhelmingly the local limestone or shale, but it is usually stuccoed or rendered over. The high boundary and terrace walls, and the lower garden walls all use this material in a variety of ways and are much less likely to be rendered. Some stone on buildings has been intentionally exposed, or left exposed after repair.



*Figure 35: Aylmer, originally Laywell Cottage.*

- 7.8.23 The revised 2<sup>nd</sup> edition County series map (published 1906) showed that there had been very little change in some parts of Higher Brixham over the previous 40 years. This was different to the northern and eastern parts of the conservation area nearer to Lower Brixham. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century it became more urban in character because it had grown to accommodate its increasing population.

- 7.8.24 Edwardian urban terraces appeared on frontages formerly unoccupied by buildings or as replacements for much older buildings. Burton Street, Rea Barn Road and Roseacre Terraces were built in this period, whilst on the opposite side of Rea Barn Road detached houses in large one-sixth acre plots were built.
- 7.8.25 The urban block of Burton Street (east), Doctors Road and Greenwood Road form an irregular triangular shape. They were developed during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and are a testament to the often-unrecognised skills of the Edwardian developer/builder. The house plots were adapted to fit the medieval land boundaries, the change in levels and the differing aspects. Subtle changes were made to the basic two-storey terrace plan form of full-height canted bays, with doors to the side, enclosed by low walls and high pyramidal-capped gate piers. This adapted plan was applied to 22 houses on Burton Street, 6 on Doctors Road and 20 on Greenwood Road. The block created has a strong sense of pattern and rhythm. Residents have picked up on this with the colour variations to cornices and cills, gate piers and copings, but not, alas, to joinery and glazing. The Greenwood Road houses are a larger version of this type with a better aspect.



*Figure 37: Roseacre Cottage dated 1836 half-terraced into the hill.*



*Figure 38: The terraces of Rea Barn Road.*



*Figure 39: Cadgwith House, Rea Barn Road, one of the Edwardian detached houses in large grounds on the south side of the road and the best one, with projecting bays to the east and south to make the most of the aspect.*



*Figure 40: The Greenwood Road terraces with No. 1, the prominent three-storey building, on the corner with Burton Street at the Great Gate junction. It is an important landmark for both the Higher Brixham and Brixham Town conservation areas as this is where the historic settlement boundaries met. Today it is a doctors' surgery.*

7.8.26 There are only two thatched houses in Higher Brixham; they face each other on Milton Street at the bottom of Southdown Hill.



*Figure 41: Hearthstone is a large through-passage early post-medieval thatched house now sub-divided. High hedges and trees above high walls enclose the lower house from public view. Wall, arch and chimney are all in local stone; the walls are in cob and stone.*



*Figure 42: The early 19<sup>th</sup> century Challeycroft in Milton Street has an unusual plan form being a type of early semi-detached dwelling, with an extra storey and originally a single central common entry. It is now a single home.*

7.8.27 There are no working farms in the conservation area today, but many are still in use as residences having been converted and their land developed.



*Figure 43: Greenover Farm, Horsepool Street (historically Hill Farm), which is rather grander than Higher Brixham's other 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouses, although it has the same through passage plan, and later side wings. With trees in full leaf there is a fine sense of enclosure.*

7.8.28 Two long-established public houses west of the church “square” in Drew Street almost face each other.



*Figure 44: The Bell Inn.*

7.8.29 To the south, The Bell Inn has a formidable late 18<sup>th</sup> century Georgian frontage over three floors, with large tri-partite sash windows and an imposing pilastered door entry with an entablature over.



*Figure 45: The Watermans Arms.*

- 7.8.30 The Watermans Arms, Drew Street on the corner with Horsepool Street is earlier, probably late 17<sup>th</sup> century but remodelled in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The small multipaned windows are from the earlier period, whilst the large single pane ones to the right of the door are from the later period. Both still have their adjacent yards and outbuildings.
- 7.8.31 **The post-1945 expansion.** This period of development in Higher Brixham required new streets and much land. The OS National Grid survey, revised in 1968 (southwest) and 1972 (northeast), showed the new Higher Brixham with large access roads mostly cutting across existing field boundaries. These new developments increased over the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially around, but outside the conservation area and by the infilling of spaces either side of Milton Street itself. To the southwest were Chestnut Drive, Cedar Way, Elm Road, Pine Close, Laywell Close, Eden Park, Weston Close and Burton Villa Close. To the east were Milton Park, Southdown Avenue, Quentin Avenue, Follafield Road, Golden Close and Barnfield Road.
- 7.8.32 The new developments to the east were built on a network of roads off two single roads off Milton Street, which linked in to Southdown Hill. They consist mostly of bungalows, detached and semi-detached two- to three-bedroomed properties, with moderate gardens front and back, which were built on the steep hillsides. Because of the slope many were built with garages below the main building. Further up the hillside are some later terraces of housing looking out across the valley.
- 7.8.33 The developments to the southwest were located off newly built Chestnut Drive which runs behind and parallel to Milton Street, and mostly on the other side of the brook which runs down the valley. Again, there is a mix of bungalows, semi-detached, detached and also linked. At the head of the valley there is a school and community centre with a small green recreation area. There is a mix of housing, some dense social housing but also more spaced out private housing.

## **7.9 Summercombe**

- 7.9.1 Chestnut Drive links into the Summercombe development at the top of the valley by becoming Bellever Tor Drive which leads to Summercourt Way and the main development at Summercombe. This area of Higher Brixham was developed in the 1970s. The main road, the steep Summercourt Way, leads off Summer Lane up to the very top of the hillside. There are side roads leading off to the left; one of these is Bellever Tor Drive which connects to Chestnut Drive and is the local bus route. There are roads off to the right too, one of which leads to a row of shops, which face on to Summercourt Way. There is a supermarket, a local branch surgery for a Paignton Vets and an award-winning fish and chip shop.
- 7.9.2 This lower section has a mix of housing with small terraces adjacent to the shops, but on the left there are distinctive individual well-spaced bungalows, detached and semi-detached, leading up the hillside. The higher reaches have more individual buildings in larger plots and private gardens. The whole Summercombe area has a very open spacious feel to the development as there are green edges to frontages rather than walls to the majority of properties, but landscaping with shrubs has been widely used to provide privacy as well.
- 7.9.3 There is a well-used public open green space area on the left towards the top of the hill which is accessed from Summercourt Way and from Bellever Tor Drive. It is a play area for the local children, a dog walking area and a place to sit and take in the panoramic views, across the valley to the far side of Milton Street and Raddicombe, downhill to lower Brixham and the town, and then across Tor Bay and out to sea and beyond.
- 7.9.4 The far end of Summercourt Way marks the green boundary with Brixham and Churston, which continues down the outskirts of the development, along Mathill Road and down Monksbridge to New Road.



*Figure 46: An example of bungalows at the upper end of Summercombe looking out over Torbay. The properties are mostly rendered with coloured tiled roof and an open frontage.*

7.9.5 **General comment.** Buildings in the Higher Brixham conservation area have lost a very high proportion of period joinery, timber-sash windows and panelled doors, and overwhelmingly this has been replaced by uPVC. This type of replacement poses the greatest single threat to the integrity of both our conservation areas.

7.9.6 Features that detract from the special character and appeal of this historic area are listed below so that developers of any new building or renovation undertaken in the conservation areas are mindful of them. Similar mistakes can then be avoided and the latest conservation guidelines followed closely:

- the use of inappropriate materials to repair or modify listed buildings, particularly where uPVC has replaced original wooden sash windows and doors
- the loss of other distinctive architectural features such as window surrounds, cornices and canopies

- the loss of natural roofing slate, replaced with artificial substitutes
- poor quality and unimaginative signage
- hedges, Devon banks and trees on proposed development sites needlessly destroyed rather than being conserved.

7.9.7 Any new development in St Mary's, Higher Brixham is likely to be infill rather than large-scale development because of the lack of development land.

7.9.8 See "General design guidelines", Section 8.

**Q4 Infill development and building** in gardens must respect the character and appearance of the area and not be detrimental to the overall quality and amenity of the neighbourhood.

**L5 Materials of hard landscaping** should be of high quality and reflect the character of adjoining buildings and areas.

See also:

Q1 Visibility

L6 Landscape design

Q5 Parking

BD4 Materials

G1 Building styles

L3 Boundaries.

## **7.10 Rea Barn Road, Ranscombe Road and Penn Meadows**

7.10.1 The Enterprise Estate is located off the bottom of Rea Barn Road against the quarry side and there are several modern light industrial units which provide local employment. The road leads uphill past the older cottages and fine three-

storey Edwardian terrace before coming to the Police Station together with the Church of England Primary School, Brixham College, the Admiral Swimming Centre and the Rugby Club, which are all found quite close together. There is a mix of modern houses built on the site of the old paint testing fields to the left overlooking the Police Station. Older larger detached properties in large gardens line the opposite side of the hill before a long section with semi-detached and short terraced, mostly rendered, houses forks right into Gillard Road. The Penn Meadows housing estate occupies the sloping valley sides with Penn Meadows in the centre valley bottom leading down to the rear of the Cottage Hospital and the Ambulance Station, and side roads leading off to the rest of the estate.



*Figure 47: Rea Barn Road with Burton Square at the bottom of the hill.*

7.10.2 Off Penn meadows there are also some smaller industrial units too, set amongst the housing. The houses are varied, with red brick, white- and coloured-rendered small terraces and maisonette terraces, as well as semi-detached housing and bungalows. More recently a section of modern houses was built at the top of Penn Meadows on the outskirts of the Holiday camp in Mudstone Lane, which overlooks St Mary's Bay.

7.10.3 There is also a designated village green called Wishings Field at the top of Penn Meadows. The residents were successful in protecting the open space from development and have a much-needed play area and dog walking field. There are public open spaces in the form of playing fields, sports grounds, parkland and the coastal path nearby. Development along the coastal fringe will not be considered as this is an AONB and is part of the infrastructure that supports the local bat colonies.

## 7.11 Sharkham Village

7.11.1 Sharkham Village is a more recent development, built on the hilly site of a former holiday camp. The houses are modern, with many different designs and sizes set out in terraces, with garage space underneath some of them. There is a green communal area in the centre of the development with playground equipment. The landscaping is good with mature trees preserved, and maintained gardens with shrubs, sculptures and green spaces. The final stage of the development is under way and the three-storey terraces have garage space underneath. There is a large green sloping meadow at the rear of this latest stage, with public footpaths leading down to St Marys Bay and the coastal footpath from Kingswear leading to Berry Head. The seaward coastal views are very special.



*Figure 48: Development at Sharkham Village.*

7.11.2 See "General design guidelines", Section 8.

**LS2 Variety of house types.** A variety of house types and sizes will be provided appropriate to the setting and character of the local area.

**LS3 Grouping of houses.** Groups of houses should be arranged in a manner appropriate to the locality, whether it is in a structured street layout or in a more organic arrangement to form variety and the appearance of natural growth.

See also:

S2 Building design

S3 Construction technology.

## 7.12 Harbour area

7.12.1 The harbour area of Brixham is renowned for being quaint and picturesque as well as being a busy working fishing port, with modern fishing industry demands. Lower Brixham is characterised by dense development. The early settlement was confined to the steep limestone slopes with narrow winding streets, criss-crossed by flights of steps, which surrounded the old harbour which extended up the valley bottom to what we know today as Bolton Cross. The flat land in the valley bottom was then reclaimed and built over.

7.12.2 The terraced houses in short or long rows characterise the building form of the 19<sup>th</sup> century town, whether clustered around the harbour and stepped up the slopes or ranged up the former river valleys as in Higher Brixham; Victorian in the main, the effect is picturesque, rather than a 19<sup>th</sup>-century uniformity. New housing development in the harbour area will be difficult, because as well as being a conservation area there is very limited space available. Dwellings that are approved will need to reflect the qualities of the surrounding terraced houses and uphold all current conservation measures.

- 7.12.3 The fishing industry attracts tourists and the requirements of both these industries should be considered when any infrastructure improvements are planned in the harbour area. Changes which enable tourists to view the working of the fishing harbour and market area more easily would be welcomed. The fish market tours, which take place in the summer months, have proved very popular and book up quickly.
- 7.12.4 Navigation along the quay can be hazardous for both pedestrians and vehicles on a busy working day and any measures which would enable this issue to be resolved would benefit the worker, the tourist and the resident in this part of the town. A pedestrian crossing on the Quay in the vicinity of the old Fish Market and on the Strand would address road safety and enable pedestrians to cross the road more easily.



*Figure 49: The Quay area of Brixham Harbour showing the tightly packed cottages and the variety of colourful buildings rising steeply up to the skyline in this conservation area. The tower of All Saints Church can be seen in the background on the skyline to the left.*

- 7.12.5 The town receives a large number of tourists via the Brixham/Torquay Ferry link which plays a vital part in the economy of Brixham. Local residents also like to use the ferry to cross the Bay and this all has a significant impact on helping to reduce carbon emissions, car usage and parking demand in Brixham.



*Figure 50: Brixham inner harbour showing the terraces of colourful cottages lining King Street on the left with the steep hillside behind and more terraces of cottages on the narrow roads linked by steep steps reaching up to the skyline.*



*Figure 51: The quayside showing part of the old fish market to the left and the colourful densely packed terraces of cottages on the hillside.*

7.12.6 See “General design guidelines”, Section 8.

**LS1 Development brief.** A development brief will be prepared for all large-scale development sites, notably the town centre car park area, the Harbour area, Oxen Cove and Freshwater Quarry.

**BD5 Shop fronts.** Where traditional shop fronts remain in the historic areas of town, they will be retained and any alterations should incorporate traditional elements and materials. Where the traditional shop front has already been removed, the replacement with appropriate shop fronts should be encouraged, so that they contribute to the character of the area and building in terms of their scale and style. New shop fronts should also contribute to the character of the area in terms of their scale and style.

See also:

G1 Building styles

S1 Sustainable drainage systems

S4 Materials.



Figure 52: Torbay Lifeboat "The Alec and Christina Dykes" based in Brixham Harbour.

### **7.13 Conclusion**

- 7.13.1 In a town wholly enclosed by and partly contained within an AONB, Brixham needs to pursue what Gordon Cullen, in his book *Townscape*, calls “The Art of the Environment”.<sup>7</sup>
- 7.13.2 This concerns itself with the right relationship between buildings, spaces, trees and other features, creating a pleasant place for people to live. It is not just some esoteric concept to be analysed and defined by experts, it is at the very heart of good planning. The people of Brixham, by their responses to the Town Plan workshop, showed that they understand this, and manifested a desire that the “Art of the Environment” should be put into practice in any future development of the town. It is not enough to make narrow ad-hoc decisions on individual planning applications, but these should all be viewed in relation to their neighbours, the preservation of the essential character of the town and its unique place in our AONB.
- 7.13.3 New development should avoid the destruction of the mix of buildings and open spaces which have emerged over the last 400 years or more to give Brixham its character and make it “special”!
- 7.13.4 Over the centuries, fishing has played a major role in job creation and as a result the town’s economy has benefited from the industry. In order to secure the future prosperity of the town, it is crucial that the industry is supported. It is also necessary to create alternative full-time employment opportunities, including those that attract higher salaries, to meet the needs of residents and sustain the town’s regeneration.
- 7.13.5 The important contribution made by tourism to the economy of Brixham cannot be underestimated; therefore, it is imperative that existing tourist facilities are protected and enhanced and new opportunities are encouraged.
- 7.13.6 It is recognised that buyers looking for a holiday home (non-letting) in Brixham pose a problem that affects the town’s vitality and the viability of local

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<sup>7</sup> Gordon Cullen. *Townscape*. Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1961.

businesses. This is why it is hoped that new developments will include an adequate supply of affordable housing of the size and type that allows local first-time buyers to remain in their home town. The provision of affordable housing is detailed in the Policies Document. From the design guidance perspective, the “General Design Guidelines” apply equally high standards to affordable housing and to open market housing.



*Figure 53: View towards Brixham Breakwater from Battery Gardens.*

- 7.13.7 Preservation of the essential character of the town is paramount, but Brixham will continue to welcome good design, interesting variety, the use of sustainable construction techniques and traditional materials in any new or renovated buildings.
- 7.13.8 It is proposed that a group continues to operate with the aim of monitoring, revising and updating the effectiveness of this Design Statement and the Neighbourhood Plan. It should encourage partnership working between residents, the Town Council, Brixham Future and Developers to improve the quality, design, construction and sustainability of any proposed projects.

## **8 General design guidelines**

### **8.1 Introduction**

8.1.1 This section identifies design guidelines for Brixham that should be considered for any new development within the town, whether it is a repair, refurbishment, regeneration or development project. The guidelines identify a range of features of the built and natural environment that are important if the intrinsic character of Brixham is to be maintained and enhanced. The purpose of the guidelines is to safeguard local character and to encourage sensitive, high-quality design where new development occurs, through a process of development guidance and control. As such, its purpose is to manage change and to encourage regeneration and enhancement, and not to prevent it.

8.1.2 Not all guidelines will be applicable for all developments, but all should be reviewed and considered for applicability to a particular project.

8.1.3 The design guidelines are grouped into the following categories:

- quality of the environment  
landscape (soft and hard)
- building design
- sustainability
- transport and movement
- large-scale development
- general development.

8.1.4 Please note that the term “development” used below relates to all repair, refurbishment, regeneration or development projects.

## 8.2 Quality of the environment

**Q1 Visibility.** Any development will be considered in relation to its visibility from both within and from outside the town, so that it is appropriate to its location. Brixham lies in and on a series of valleys and hills, with both inland view ridges and seaward views incorporating the natural amphitheatre of the harbour. The views and vistas of the surrounding countryside, the key landmarks of the town and the sea are important and must be respected.

**Q2 Scale of development.** Any development should be substantially of the same or lesser scale, height and mass of adjacent buildings, unless proposed as a key feature or landmark, to ensure a consistent street scene. Variation in height is acceptable, as it is a characteristic of Brixham, but the overall heights should be respectful of those of adjoining and nearby buildings.

**Q3 Roofscape:** Variety in roofscape as the buildings step down the hillsides is a key characteristic of Brixham. Roofscapes appropriate to the location and visibility of the development within the town will be required. Additions to roofs will be of a scale and proportion appropriate to the essential character of the neighbouring townscape.

**Q4 Infill development and building** in gardens must respect the character and appearance of the area and not be detrimental to the overall quality and amenity of the neighbourhood.

**Q5 Parking.** Intrusive car parking must be avoided, as it can lower the quality of the street scene. Positive encouragement for undercroft parking will be supported in new developments where feasible.

## 8.3 Landscape (soft and hard)

**L1 Removal of trees** on development sites will be strongly discouraged and tree preservation orders (TPOs) will be rigorously enforced, with agreed landscaping plans as conditions of planning approval where appropriate. It

is advised that a proper assessment is carried out on all developments where there are trees, so as to judge the impact of the construction of new buildings and other site works on the trees to enable adequate root protection and exclusion zones to be agreed. (See British Standard BS5837:2005.)

- L2 Street trees.** Consideration should also be given to the planting of more trees within the public realm, particularly where new streets are being created.
- L3 Boundaries.** New boundaries and changes to existing boundaries, both between properties and to the street, should make close reference to the traditional treatment of similar boundaries in the locality, such as height, material, planting species and style. They should be of high quality and be appropriately durable or maintainable.
- L4 Front gardens/areas.** Any development should not result in frontages being dominated by hard surfacing and parked cars. The conversion of front gardens to hard surfaced areas should be avoided where possible. The area of hard landscaping should be minimised to enable soft landscaping to dominate and reduce the potential of flooding from water run-off.
- L5 Materials of hard landscaping** should be of high quality and reflect the character of adjoining buildings and areas.
- L6 Landscape design.** New development should have a quality landscape scheme, which incorporates new tree planting and retains as many of the natural landscape features as possible. The hard and soft landscape design should successfully integrate the development into the local environment.
- L7 Public realm.** High-quality, public realm materials, street furniture and signage will be required to reflect the special character of Brixham.

**L8 Lighting.** Street lighting furniture should be of a quality appropriate to the area it is located within. Lighting should be designed to minimise light spillage and to have the minimum brightness and period of illumination necessary for its location and purpose. Energy-efficient lighting should be used where possible in preference to conventional external lighting.

#### **8.4 Building design**

**BD1 Building lines.** In areas where a clear historic building line has been established, new development will generally be expected to follow the existing line of development, whether it is along the back edge of the pavement or set back.

**BD2 Architectural treatment.** New development will be of high quality, raising the standard of architectural treatment and respecting the qualities of its surroundings, such as scale, style, materials and attention to detail.

Innovative designs and the contemporary interpretation of traditional design and construction will be welcomed; they will be to the highest standards and be complementary to their context.

**BD3 Roof design.** The shape and pitch of the roof on any new development throughout the town should be considered in terms of its visibility and contribution to the quality of the roofscape of the town. In addition, for the historic core and the conservation area, the roof design should generally reflect those of the properties nearby.

**BD4 Materials.** Building materials will respect the traditional character of Brixham and the immediate context of the development in particular. For example, white or colour wash finish over stone, or natural limestone are prevalent in many parts of the historic core and conservation areas and the use of such locally sourced, reclaimed or recycled materials, or appropriate modern alternatives, for new development will be encouraged. Elsewhere the addition of more contemporary materials would be appropriate. Materials should be sourced locally where possible.

**BD5 Shop fronts.** Where traditional shop fronts remain in the historic areas of town, they will be retained and any alterations should incorporate traditional elements and materials. Where the traditional shop front has already been removed, the replacement with appropriate shop fronts should be encouraged, so that they contribute to the character of the area and building in terms of their scale and style. New shop fronts should also contribute to the character of the area in terms of their scale and style.

**BD6 Ancillary facilities.** Refuse and recycling facilities, car and cycle parking should be sufficient for the development and must not dominate the street scene.

## 8.5 Sustainability

**S1 Sustainable drainage systems.** Environmentally friendly water drainage systems should be promoted.

**S2 Building design.** Buildings should be designed to respond intelligently to the climate through siting, orientation and form, benefiting users and reducing overall energy bills and running costs.

**S3 Construction technology.** The choice of construction technology should help reduce energy dependency over a building's lifetime.

**S4 Materials.** The materials proposed should be carefully considered as some are harmful to the environment, others benign and a few have positive inputs. Regard should be given to locally sourced materials that reduce transport costs and help to contribute to local identity.

**S5 Building refurbishment.** The energy-efficient refurbishment of existing properties in a manner appropriate to their quality and historic origins will be encouraged.

## 8.6 Movement and transport

**MT1 Legibility, signage and pedestrian crossings.** Provision of improved signage within the town centre together with pedestrian routes, will

improve the visitor experience and help residents too. A pedestrian friendly town centre will need formal crossing facilities throughout the town, situated where pedestrians routinely cross roads.

**MT2 Town centre “shared space”.** Consideration will be given to creating a “shared space” in the redeveloped Town Centre area. The establishment of a low-speed, less-regulated environment based on social protocols can promote safety, improve traffic flow and enhance civility, as well as create an improved street environment.

**MT3 Parking resulting from new development.** The impact of any increased car parking resulting from new developments should be assessed in terms of its effect on townscape character. Car parking restrictions and alternative forms of accessing transport should be considered to limit the number of car parking spaces required. Undercroft car parking should also be considered as part of any future development proposals.

**MT4 Traffic effects of development.** Assessment of the impact of increased traffic resulting from new developments, in terms of the effect on traffic flows generally within, throughout and on the approaches to Brixham, will be important in helping to resolve this issue.

**MT5 Park and Ride.** A plan to enhance and further develop the Park and Ride and its immediate area, to create an appropriate gateway to Brixham, would be welcomed. Signage, information available for visitors to the facilities in Brixham and the provision of the usual tourist facilities will be necessary.

**MT6 Pedestrian and cycle routes.** Opportunities to create more safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists will be pursued in all new development proposals to encourage walking and cycling.

## 8.7 Large-scale development

**LS1 Development brief.** A development brief will be prepared for all large-scale development sites, notably the town centre car park area, the Harbour area, Oxen Cove and Freshwater Quarry.

**LS2 Variety of house types.** A variety of house types and sizes will be provided appropriate to the setting and character of the local area.

**LS3 Grouping of houses.** Groups of houses should be arranged in a manner appropriate to the locality, whether it is in a structured street layout or in a more organic arrangement to form variety and the appearance of natural growth.

## 8.8 General development

**G1 Building styles.** The style of building should be sympathetic with and complementary to the older buildings of the town; fussy combinations with too many details and inappropriate use of styles foreign to the town are to be avoided.

**G2 Innovative design.** A contemporary design approach using modern materials will be encouraged, provided that local distinctiveness and character are respected and enhanced.

**G3 Demonstrating design quality.** Proposals for development should demonstrate how they relate satisfactorily to the site and its surroundings and respond to the design guidelines set out in this design statement.

## 9 Acknowledgements

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