

Clerk: Governance Support  
Telephone: 01803 207013  
E-mail address: [governance.support@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:governance.support@torbay.gov.uk)  
Date: Thursday, 14 May 2026

Governance Support  
Town Hall  
Castle Circus  
Torquay  
TQ1 3DR

Dear Member

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - WEDNESDAY, 6 MAY 2026**

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the Wednesday, 6 May 2026 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

<b>Agenda No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Page</b>
7.	<b>Terra Firma - English Riviera Geopark Review</b> Presentation	(Pages 3 - 30)

Yours sincerely

Governance Support  
Clerk

This page is intentionally left blank



English  
Riviera



# Project Terra Firma

Nick Powe, Chair of the ERUGGp

Presentation to Torbay Council's Overview & Scrutiny

6 May 2026





English  
Riviera



unesco  
Global Geopark

## Project Terra Firma

- £250,000 grant from NLHF
- Managed by ERGO Ltd (volunteer)
- Runs June 2024 – March 2027
- Will strengthen foundations of the ERUGGp to achieve a more resilient organisation with clear roadmap and delivery structure, robust business model and effective leadership for a 20+ year vision.



Page 4

Photo credit: Nick Powe





English  
Riviera



## Terra Firma outcomes

- Governance, Revenue Resilience and Value modelling
- Website and social media development
- Education and engagement through toolkits
- Volunteering activities (with Geopark Partners)
- Fundraising
  - Strategic Delivery Role
  - Education and engagement officer
  - Volunteer coordinator





English  
Riviera



# Pride of place, Engagement, Governance and Resilience

Page 6

- Governance and accountability
- Value for Money and Economic Impact
- Financial sustainability
- Deliverability and capacity
- Strategic fit and opportunity cost

Through new corporate vehicle  
CIC – Community Interest Company





English  
Riviera



unesco  
Global Geopark

## Highlights

- Formed in 2007 (20 years next year)
- Partnership organisation with one full time post
- Hosted the 2016 UNESCO Conference on Global Geopark
- Torbay is part UNESCO's family of only 2,500 places globally
- The Geopark has been linked to and a catalyst for over £15M of capital funding in Torbay





English  
Riviera



unesco  
Global Geopark

Page 8



*Photo credit: Nick Powe*

Torbay, the English Riviera, is recognized for its internationally significant geological heritage and landscapes. The remit of the Geopark and its partners is to care for and promote the connection between this extraordinary geological heritage, the natural environment and the rich cultural heritage of the area, through community engagement and regenerative tourism.



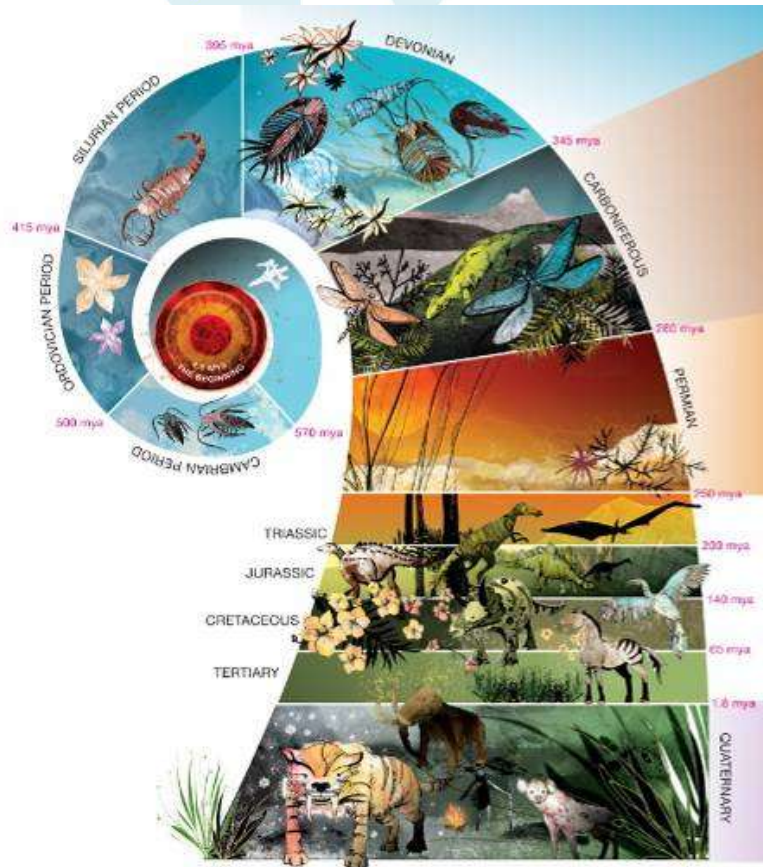


English  
Riviera



unesco  
Global Geopark

Page 9



- **Devonian** – Torquay’s connection
- **Carboniferous** – rock folds and arches
- **Permian** – Creatures older than dinosaurs
- **Quaternary** – Oldest human settlement in Europe





English  
Riviera



**unesco**  
Global Geopark



Page 10

245 Geoparks in 51 countries  
134 in Europe  
10 in UK

Zhijindong Cave UNESCO Global Geopark, PR China

Photo credit: Nick Powe

Berry Head



**unesco**  
Global Geopark





English  
Riviera



## Six UNESCO sites in Devon – higher than any other county

- World Heritage
  - Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape
  - Jurassic Coast - Dorset and East Devon Coast
- Biosphere Reserves
  - North Devon
- Creative Cities
  - Exeter City of Literature
- Memory of the World
  - Exeter Cathedral's Exeter Book of Anglo-Saxon Poetry
- UNESCO Global Geopark
  - English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark - Torbay





English  
Riviera



## Existing Council Support Structure

Page 12

- Geopark Coordinator
  - a Council employee.
- Fractional Support
  - 20% Senior Project Officer time
  - 20% Marketing Officer time
  - Admin support for GMG
- Facilities and Operational Support
  - Workspace, access to Council IT systems, support services and internal advice where appropriate.
- Financial Support
  - An annual grant to ERGO Ltd



# English Riviera



**unesco**  
Global Geopark



GMG = Geopark Management Group



English  
Riviera



unesco  
Global Geopark

Destination Marketing  
Englishriviera.co.uk

Page 14

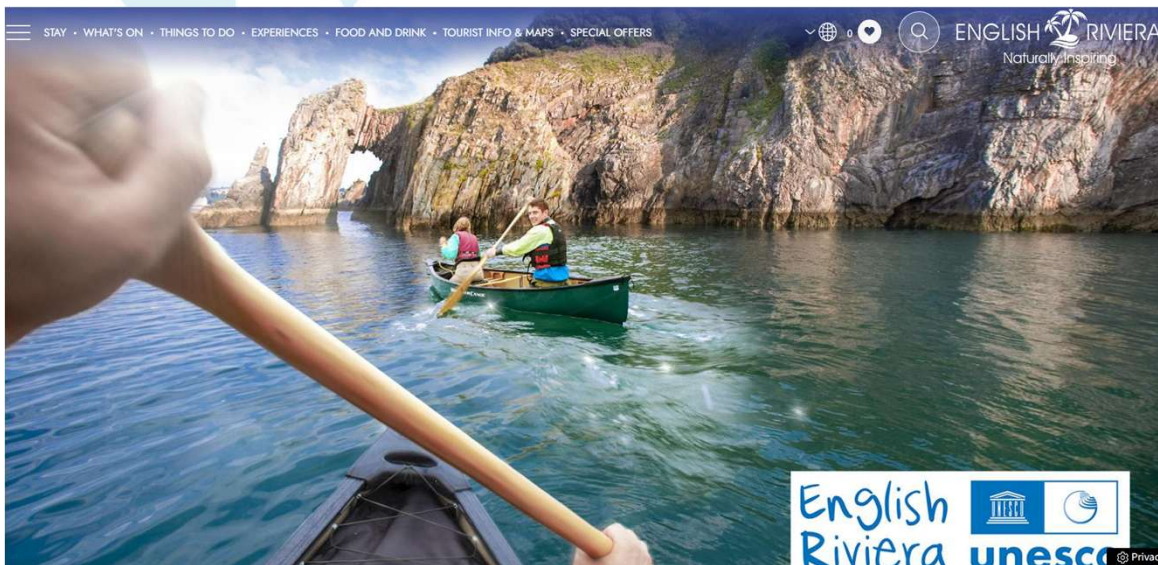


Photo credit: English Riviera BID Co





English  
Riviera



unesco  
Global Geopark

# UN Sustainable Development Goals



Championed at Geopark Core partner South Devon College, Paignton



Photo credit: Nick Powe



English  
Riviera



unesco  
Global Geopark

Torquay Museum

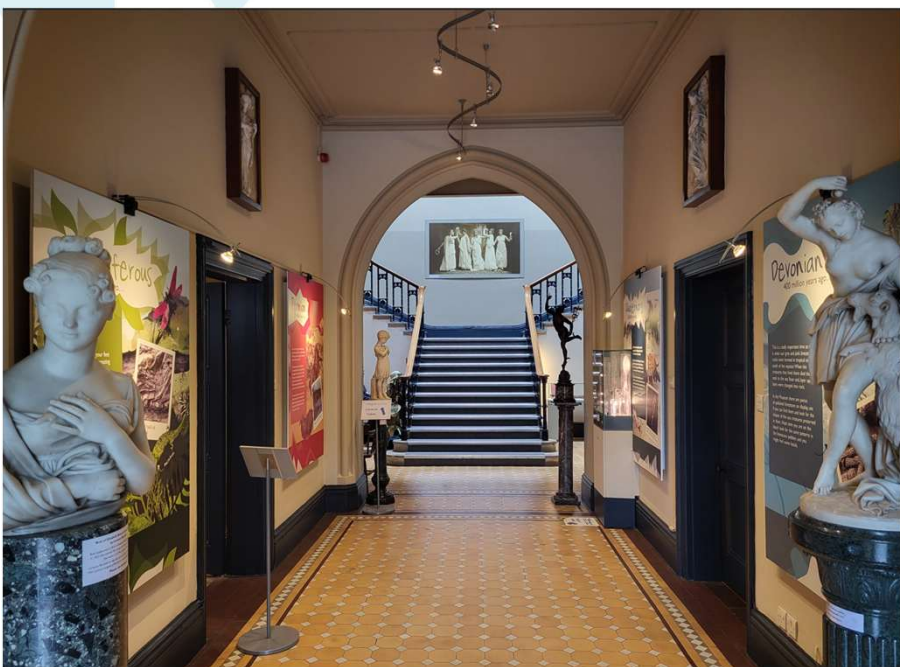


Photo credit: Nick Powe



English  
Riviera



unesco  
Global Geopark

## The Oldest human fossil in the UK



*Photo Credit: Chris Proctor*

# English Riviera



**unesco**  
Global Geopark

Page 18

## Performance & Creative Arts

- Artizan Gallery
- Door Step Arts
- Palace Theatre
- Tonic Creative
- Filament CIC

## Community

- Play Torbay
- Shoalstone Pool
- Talebrazers
- Groundwork
- National Coastwatch Institution
- Peoples Parkfield

## Climate & Environment

- Torbay Cleaner Coasts
- Torbay Climate Action
- Seal Project
- SOAK Lifestyle
- Cove Discovery

27 X  
ASSOCIATE  
PARTNERS

## Commercial

- Offshore Shellfish

## Experiences

- Babbacombe Cliff Railway
- Sea Kayak Torbay
- Reach Outdoors
- Unique Devon Tours
- Agatha Christie Festival
- Nicola Bianca Yoga
- Solid Rock Coasteering
- ER Walking Tours
- Guardhouse Cafe
- Pilgrim Heritage Foundation



English  
Riviera



**unesco**  
Global Geopark

Page 19



Photo credit: Nick Powe





# English Riviera



**unesco**  
Global Geopark

Page 20



*Photo credit: Nick Powe*





English  
Riviera



**unesco**  
Global Geopark

Page 21



Photo credit: English Riviera BID Co



Photo English Riviera BID Co



# English Riviera



Photo credit: English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark





English  
Riviera



unesco  
Global Geopark

Page 23



Photo credit: Nick Powe



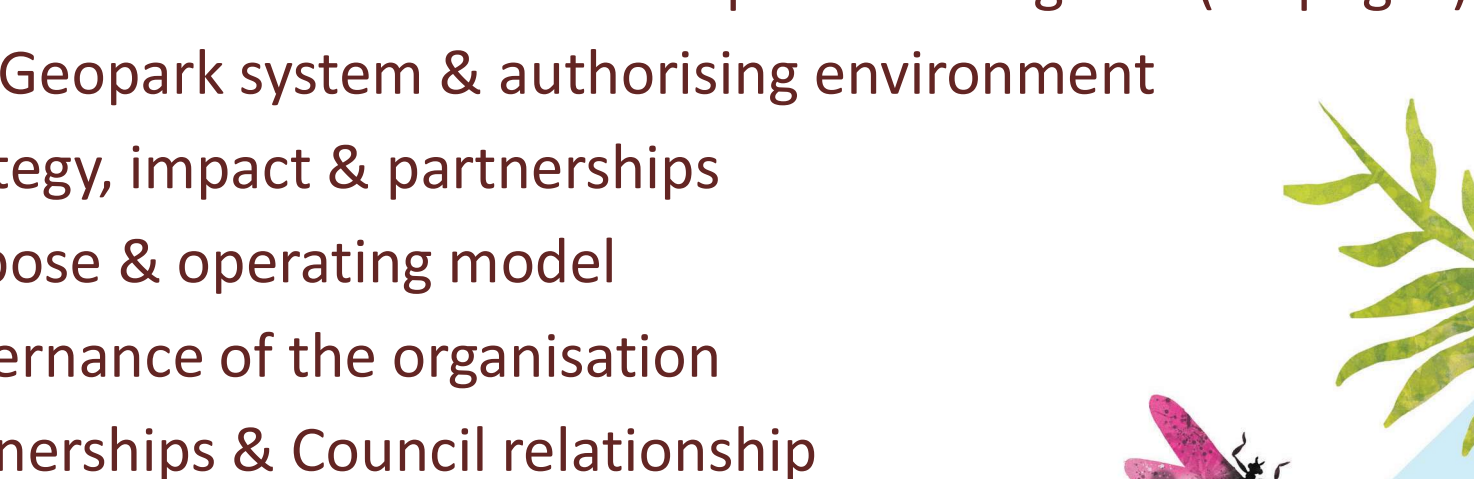


English  
Riviera



## ERGO Ltd → Community Interest Company

Page 24

- CIC Governance Handbook – Comprehensive guide (70 pages)
  - The Geopark system & authorising environment
  - Strategy, impact & partnerships
  - Purpose & operating model
  - Governance of the organisation
  - Partnerships & Council relationship
- 



English  
Riviera



# Social and economic Impact

Page 25

- Primary impact (the Geopark's core purpose):
  - Pride in Place
  - Protection & Access
  - Education
- Secondary impacts (arising from that core role):
  - Funding & Partnerships
  - Sustainable Tourism



English  
Riviera



unesco

Global Geopark

## Transitioning to new CIC

- Strategic Delivery Role to support
  - 2-3 years 2027 - 2030
  - Funding - Heritage Places? Corporate ESG investment?
- Recruitment of new board and chair
  - 5-7 directors
  - Diversity of skills, decision-making, good governance
  - Working in partnership to support Torbay's Place priorities
- Council continued support is critical



English  
Riviera



## Risks

- Loss of status
  - Next UNESCO revalidation 2027 (4-years)
  - Regenerative strategies
    - Tourism, Marine Users, Green Infrastructure, Climate Action, Heritage
  - Scientific and education programmes
  - Visibility – TCCT → SWISCo



Photo credits: ERUGGp



# Geopark visibility

English  
Riviera



**unesco**  
Global Geopark

