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Project Terra Firma

Nick Powe, Chair of the ERUGGp

Presentation to Torbay Council's Overview & Scrutiny

6 May 2026

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Project Terra Firma



Photo credit: Nick Powe


- £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.



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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
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Pride of place, Engagement, Governance and Resilience

- 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



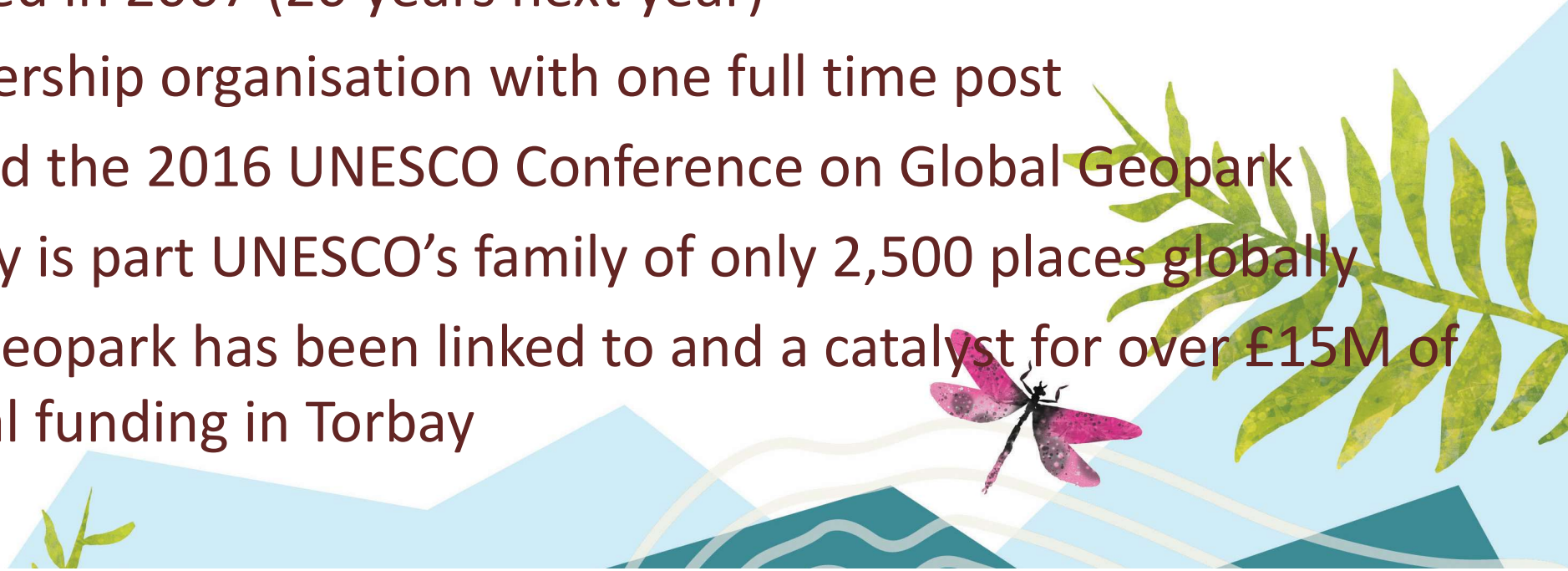


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Highlights

- 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





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Global Geopark



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.

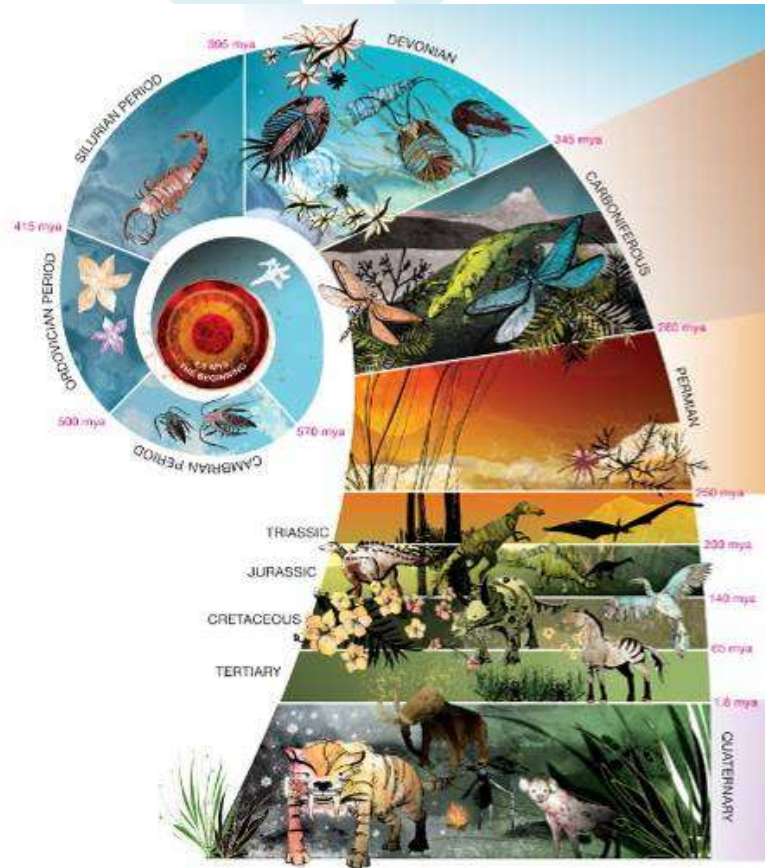




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- **Devonian** – Torquay’s connection
- **Carboniferous** – rock folds and arches
- **Permian** – Creatures older than dinosaurs
- **Quaternary** – Oldest human settlement in Europe





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Global Geopark



245 Geoparks in 51 countries
134 in Europe
10 in UK

Zhijindong Cave UNESCO Global Geopark, PR China

Photo credit: Nick Powe

Berry Head



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Global Geopark

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



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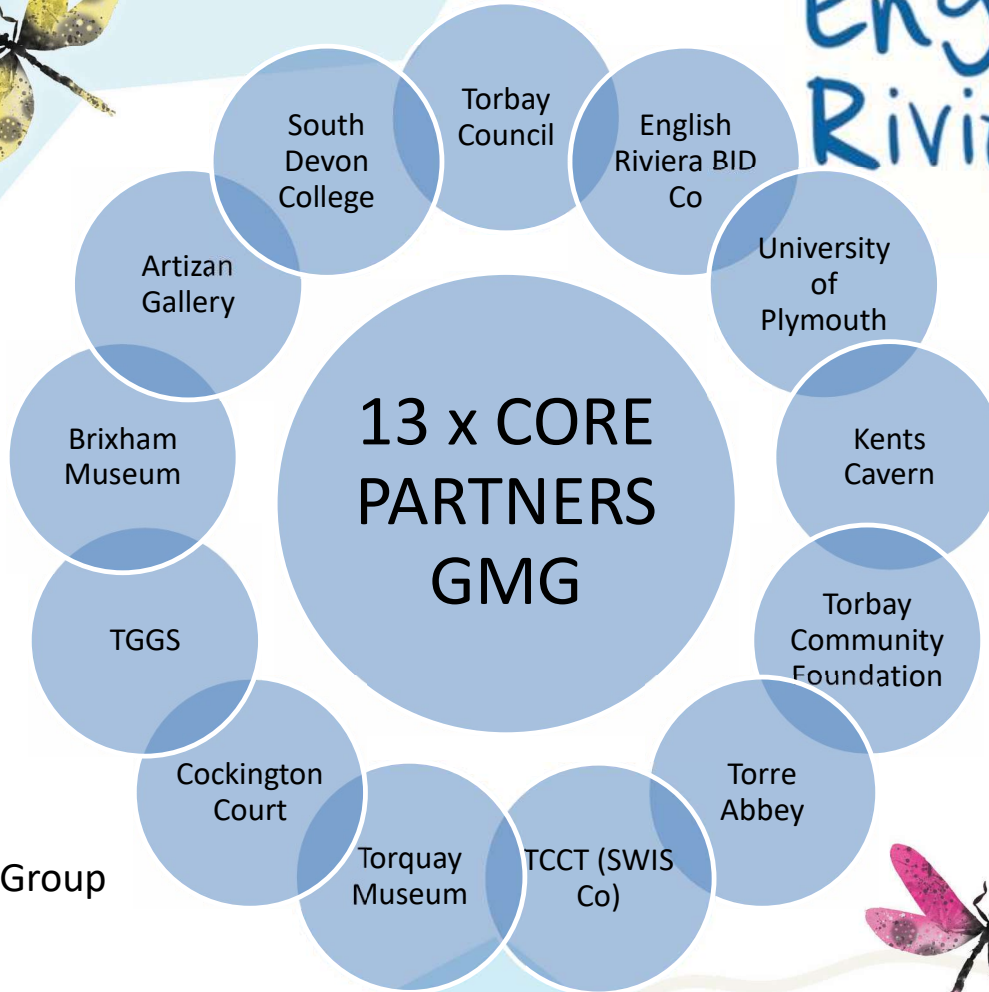
Existing Council Support Structure

- 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

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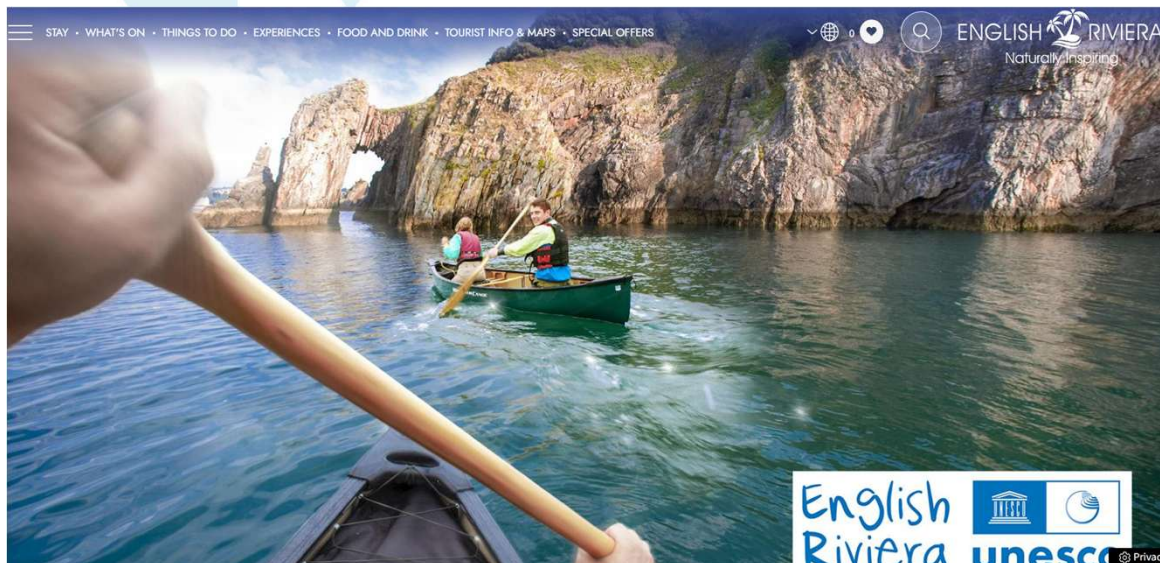
GMG = Geopark Management Group



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Destination Marketing
Englishriviera.co.uk



Photo credit: English Riviera BID Co



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UN Sustainable Development Goals



Championed at Geopark Core partner South Devon College, Paignton



Photo credit: Nick Powe



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Torquay Museum



Photo credit: Nick Powe



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The Oldest human fossil in the UK



Photo Credit: Chris Proctor

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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

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

Commercial

- Offshore Shellfish

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ASSOCIATE
PARTNERS



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ERGO Ltd → Community Interest Company

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



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Social and economic Impact

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



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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



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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
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Photo credits: ERUGGp



Geopark visibility



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Located in

One of Earth's
Extraordinary
Places

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