

Child Friendly Torbay Programme Discovery Day

25th April 2025

Riviera International Conference Centre

9.30am – 2.30pm

DISCOVERY DAY REPORT

Allison Grant, Child Friendly Project Lead



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VERSION CONTROL

| Date | Details | Updated by |
|------------|-----------|------------------------|
| 28/04/2025 | Version 1 | A Grant |
| 08/05/2025 | Version 2 | J Bainbridge / A Grant |

WELCOME AND SCENE-SETTING

Child Friendly Cities & Communities is a UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) programme that works with councils to put children's rights into practice. The programme aims to create cities and communities in the UK where all children - whether they are living in care, using a children's centre, or simply visiting their local library - have a meaningful say in, and truly benefit from, the local decisions, services and spaces that shape their lives.

UNICEF UK provides training based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and supports councils, their partners, and children and young people, as they work together on an ambitious three-to-five year journey towards international recognition as a UNICEF Child Friendly City or Community.

On 25th April Torbay Council hosted its Discovery Day as part of our bid to become a UNICEF Child Friendly Community. Children and young people attended from Shiphay Learning Academy (ages 7 to 10), Oldway Primary School (ages 9 to 10), Mayfield School (age 13), Mayfield College (ages 15 to 17) and some who were educated at home (ages 11 to 13). Professionals from Torbay Council, schools, and partners from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors attended including the Leader of the Council, Torbay's Member of Parliament and several other councillors.

Anne-Marie Bond (Chief Executive) and Cllr Thomas (Leader of the Council) compered the event. They welcomed everyone to join forces with Torbay Council and UNICEF UK at this special event as part of our work towards recognition as a UNICEF Child Friendly Community.


Cllr Thomas and Anne-Marie explained that Torbay is in the 'Discovery' phase of its three-to-five-year programme journey and that a comprehensive assessment of the experiences of children and young people living in Torbay was conducted during the Discovery phase. We gathered insights from 1,860 children and young people (more than 1 in 15 in Torbay). This included 98 participants in online surveys and over 1,752 who took part in Discovery sessions and workshops held in schools and the local community. Additionally, we considered the perspectives of other children and young people through existing broader consultations.


She explained that this is a pivotal moment in the initial Discovery phase, where the Council, partners, the local community, and children and young people have collaborated to understand the experiences of children and young people living in Torbay and to establish our priorities, referred to as 'badges' for this programme. This marks the first stage of the programme.





WARM-UP GAME – What makes a dream community feel child-friendly?

Children, young people and adults were sat in groups at tables and were provided with folders of craft materials. They spent 20 minutes creating something that could make Torbay more child friendly (e.g. play spaces thinking about accessibility for all, green spaces for play and safety with car free zones). Each table was then asked to introduce themselves and explain why this was important to them.

| Table | Descriptions of Creations |
|-------|--|
| 1 | <p>Table 1 created a safe play area, and their priority was all about safety, but they also wanted play spaces. They talked about a play tree that is soft which you can climb but then you don't damage real trees. They had monkey bars with a safety net. There was an age-restricted fun park prioritising younger people. They also had a climbing frame and lots of trees and green spaces with clearly marked entrances and exits for safety.</p>  |
| 2 | <p>Table 2 created an aeroplane and airport near youth clubs. They also created an accessible football pitch and an ice rink. They made a race car place and a pond where people can relax and sit down and they stated that “the one at Victoria Park is filled with shopping trolleys”.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Table 3 wanted more play spaces where ball games were allowed. They wanted an art gallery and a wall to create art on. They designed pedestrian zones for safe travel and an Ice Cream Hub. They wanted friendly decorations at hospital, more attractive car parks, a country park and a petting zoo. They also wanted safer places to crossroads, car free areas, spaces for music and bands to play, a less imposing police station and better links between schools, cadets and clubs.</p> |

| Table | Descriptions of Creations |
|-------|--|
| 4 | <p>Table 4 focussed on nature and creating more green spaces, planting for flowers, more trees, less cutting down trees and more wildflower meadows. Children wanted more sporting facilities and access for sports. The children stated that they felt that the Geopark in Paignton is fantastic but there aren't facilities like this equally across the bay. They thought play parks should be more accessible, and they hope the bay gets 'more connective' and the different towns aren't more isolated. They want to 'Own Torbay', feel proud of it and ensure it is accessible for all children, especially swimming.</p>  |
| 5 | <p>Table 5 made a space place called NASA and combined a telescope and rocket for entertainment and made some mansions and shops and a tree. They had CCTV to make sure children don't 'escape school'. They also wanted electric cars so there were less fumes and low car speeds for safety. They wanted safe spaces, beach and forest walks and good jobs.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Table 6 looked at more affordable places to go and what could be in those spaces, safe spaces, chill out areas, soft areas and being around trusted adults. They created a doorway as they felt everybody should be welcome and not judged. They had ducks and a pond. Natural spaces were important and places to go where young people are accepted like the rugby club and places being maintained. They felt that places need to be accessible, so they created a disabled ramp and wheelchair. The youth cub was purpose built with a reinforced structure. Music was very important to them, and they created a music box.</p> |

| Table | Descriptions of Creations |
|-------|--|
| |  |
| 7 | <p>Table 7 focused on age-restricted parks, climbing frames, sensory parks, a craft area, and parks which were specifically for younger children and another park for teenagers and older people. They made a recycling area with general waste and recycling bins and created litter pickers and were going to make signs to say if there was litter 'pick it up'. They made a water fountain for fun and a blossom tree with a safe area in case you fall – for safer climbing. There is also a rest area so if you get tired you can rest then do whatever you like.</p>  |

Jeni Bainbridge, from UNICEF UK, introduced the shared space agreement for the day, inviting contributions and ideas. The agreement covered a warm welcome for all, voluntary participation, confidentiality, different ways of taking part, photography and respect.

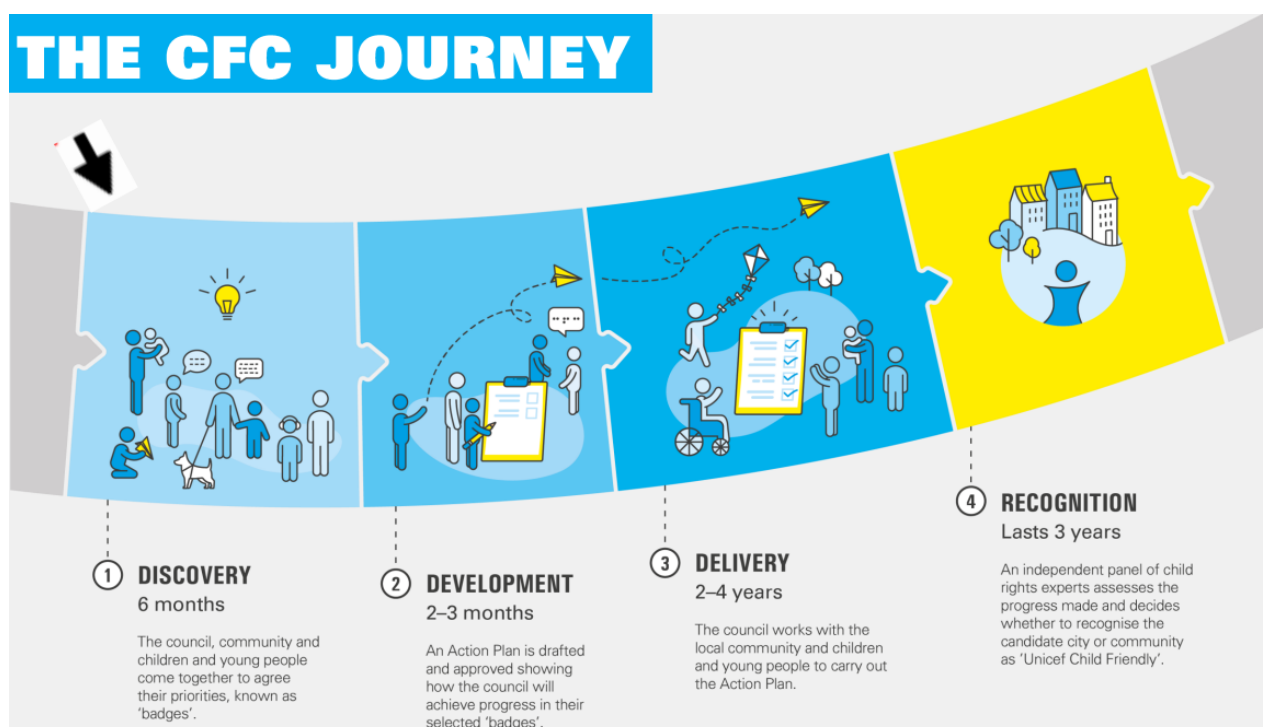
FACTS ABOUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Sarah Handley, from UNICEF UK, explained the state of children's rights - internationally, nationally and regionally. She talked about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – a big list of promises for children in the UK that the UK government has promised to make real for children in the UK. Human rights are an entitlement which all children should have. For example, children in Torbay are promised the right to be protected from being hurt and be healthy, have clean water to drink, have healthy food and a clean safe place to live.

Sarah elaborated on Article 12, which grants children the right to freely express their opinions on matters affecting them, with the expectation that adults will listen and take their views seriously. She noted that globally, children often feel that these promises are not fully realised or experienced.

UNICEF UK supports this initiative through the Child Friendly Cities & Communities programme, collaborating with the council, police, health services, schools, community groups, and children and young people to gain a deep understanding of life in Torbay and to explore ways to make it more child friendly. Many communities across the UK are also on this journey. This programme aims to positively impact children, making them safer, happier, healthier, and ensuring they have equal opportunities to enjoy their rights.

Sarah then outlined the stages of the programme. We are currently in the Discovery Phase, where we are gathering insights into people's perceptions and experiences of Torbay. This information, combined with existing knowledge, will help us identify how to make Torbay more child friendly. We will then develop a detailed plan for the next few years and work together to achieve progress on the priorities, or 'badges,' we have set. Once sufficient progress is made, we can apply to be recognised as a UNICEF Child Friendly Community.



FACTS ABOUT TORBAY

Nancy Meehan, Director of Children's Services provided some factual information, to paint the picture of what it is like for children and young people living in Torbay. This included:

- Torbay's population is closer to the nearest park, public garden and playing field than for the whole of England and comparable areas.
- When surveyed, 31% of the Children's Services workforce did not know about the United National Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). 71% had not attended training.
- 20% of young people aged 8-16 and 23% of 17 to 19 year olds have a 'probable mental disorder'/do not feel well emotionally.
- More parents breastfeed their children in Torbay than nationally or when compared to statistical neighbours.
- 92% of children aged 7 to 11 think there are clean, safe spaces to hang out in Torbay. This decreased to 54% for 11 to 18 year olds.
- 92% of 7 to 11 year olds think Torbay is a good place to grow up. 73% of 11 to 18 year olds. 20% do not.
- Only 68% of 11 to 18 year olds say their rights were respected where they learn compared to 85% at home.

Nancy was then supported by local young people who have been involved in consultations about children's rights and living in Torbay, who we call 'Directors of Change'. They were from Shiphay Learning Academy, Oldway Primary School, Mayfield School and Mayfield College. They told us some of their views (Mayfield College students' quotes were read by Helen Bailey, Associate Assistant Head).



SHIPHAY LEARNING ACADEMY PUPILS TOLD US:

"Some parks are dangerous, with litter, dogs & broken glass and you feel unsafe."

"Buses are too crowded. There is litter and they are dirty. You might feel overwhelmed. I don't feel safe at night."

"We need more support for children with additional needs in schools."

"We don't feel safe in towns – there are homeless people, shouting, loud swearing, litter and it is uncomfortable. Homeless people are ignored – which upsets us."

"There are nice beaches and not much litter."

"There is not enough for young people to do. We need more youth clubs and parks."

"We need more wildlife and nature like walking trails, climbing trees, more benches and more forest."



OLDWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS TOLD US:

"We need more all-weather pitches and skate parks. Some are old and dangerous."

"We need more spaces to play and relax, with better parks and equipment for different age groups."

"Everybody needs to feel welcome in Torbay."

"I think education is important to get jobs, money and a healthy lifestyle."

"We don't feel safe in some parks, they are not friendly, people taking drugs, adults or teenagers taking over – some say 'no dogs, children or ball games'."

"There needs to be more and better shops in our towns, like clothes and games shops."



MAYFIELD COLLEGE AND MAYFIELD SCHOOL STUDENTS TOLD US:

"People with wheelchairs need more support on buses and trains."

"We need more accessible toilets and changing places available for us to be able to access services."

"Lots of places don't have many shops and they are shutting down."

"We sometimes feel discriminated against for having special needs when applying for a job."

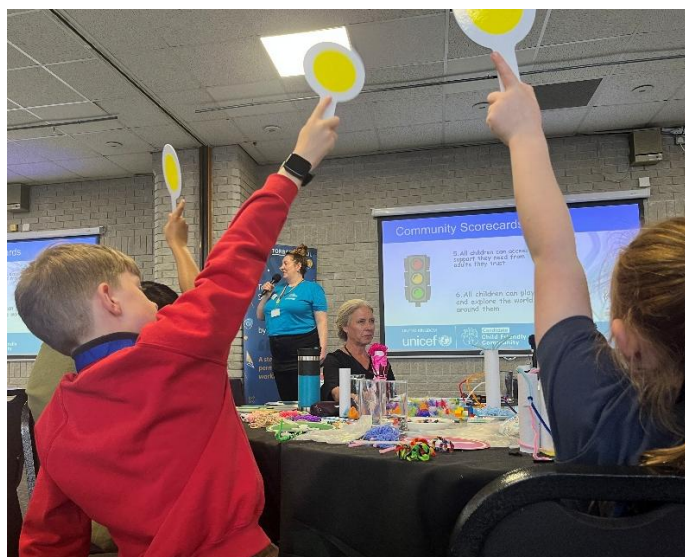
"Buses are too crowded and not disability aware. People think you should move for them but not all disabilities are visual."



Please see the link below to a video featuring a young person from Mayfield College, sharing what matters most to him: <https://youtu.be/8sGPVjO0kHY>.

COMMUNITY SCORECARDS

Jeni facilitated a session voting on responses to various statements about living in Torbay. Participants at each table used voting paddles to express their views: green for agreement, red for disagreement, and yellow if people were unsure or didn't want to vote. Jeni then asked for the reasons behind the votes, and delegates shared their explanations. Table facilitators recorded the results.



Results from tables voting:

| No. | Statement | Agreed | Unsure / In the middle | Disagreed |
|-----|--|--------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | All children are supported to have a say | 15 | 17 | 9 |
| 2 | All children can access child-friendly information about their rights! | 5 | 15 | 22 |
| 3 | All children can access things to support their health and freedom | 6 | 23 | 13 |
| 4 | All children are treated kindly and fairly | 1 | 15 | 22 red 3 yellow/red |
| 5 | All children can access support they need from adults they trust | 5 | 23 | 13 |
| 6 | All children can play and explore the world around them | 5 | 26 | 11 |
| 7 | All children live somewhere clean and safe | | 10 | 32 |
| 8 | All children feel valued and respected | | 13 | 29 |



1. All children are supported to have a say:

15 agreed with this statement (37%). 17 were unsure (41%) and 9 disagreed (22%). Comments included "not all children are supported as some have disabilities" and "children and young people who are educated at home are isolated".

2. All children can access child-friendly information about their rights

5 agreed with this statement (12%). 15 were unsure (36%) and 22 disagreed (52%). Some comments included "people are too shy to ask" and "this could be because adults are not aware of children's rights. It needs to be part of the whole country that children have rights".

3. All children can access things to support their health and freedom

6 agreed with this statement (14%). 23 were unsure or in the middle (55%) and 13 disagreed (31%). Comments included "I chose green because we have lots of hospitals and people with good advice" and "I chose red as people might not make it to hospital if they are too far away".

4. All children are treated kindly and fairly

Only 1 person agreed with this statement (2%). 15 were unsure (36%), 3 were between don't know and disagree (7%) and 22 disagreed (52%). Comments included "it's a lottery. If you are lucky, you get the right support. It's finding the right support in a timely way" and "some people are not wealthy, and some have really nice parents, and some have really mean parents".

5. All children can access support they need from adults they trust

5 people agreed with this statement (12%). 23 were unsure (56%) and 13 disagreed (32%). Comments included "not all children are able to meet people they trust", "sometimes there are adults who are mean and won't help but sometimes there are good parents who help". When asked about adults they trusted, children responded "police, teachers and firefighters can help".

6. All children can play and explore the world around them


5 people agreed with this statement (12%). 26 were unsure or in the middle (62%) and 11 disagreed (26%). Comments included “I think yellow because it depends on the people around us” and “I disagree because a lot of people grow up with parents who don’t help them to see the outside world”. Another comment was “I picked red because a lot of people are scared to go outside because it might not be safe for them where they live”.

7. All children live somewhere clean and safe

Nobody agreed with this statement. 10 were unsure (24%) and 32 disagreed (76%). Comments included “I chose red because some people are homeless and not all children have very good houses and not much food and their parents are poor and they can’t afford anything”. Others disagreed because “not all children have the support that they need and “I chose red because not every child has got access to clean water, clothes and food”.

8. All children feel valued and respected

Nobody agreed with this statement. 13 were unsure or in the middle (31%) and 29 disagreed (69%). Comments included “people might not know what their rights are or might not have trusted adults to help them to enjoy their rights”.



“Not every child has got access to clean water, clothes and food.”

“People might not know what their rights are.”

“A lot of people are scared to go outside because it might not be safe for them.”

“It’s a lottery. If you are lucky you get the right support.”

“Not all children are able to meet people they trust.”

ENERGISER GAME

After a lunch break, Participation Officers Alex Diviney and Sarah Evans led a warm-up activity. Each table was given paper plates and felt-tip pens and asked to place the plate on their head and spend one minute drawing something in Torbay that made them happy. Participants then shared their drawings, which included parks, family, a Ferris wheel, pets, boats, sailing boats, a slide, beach scenes, and fairs.



COMMUNITY MAP PRIDE AND CHALLENGE

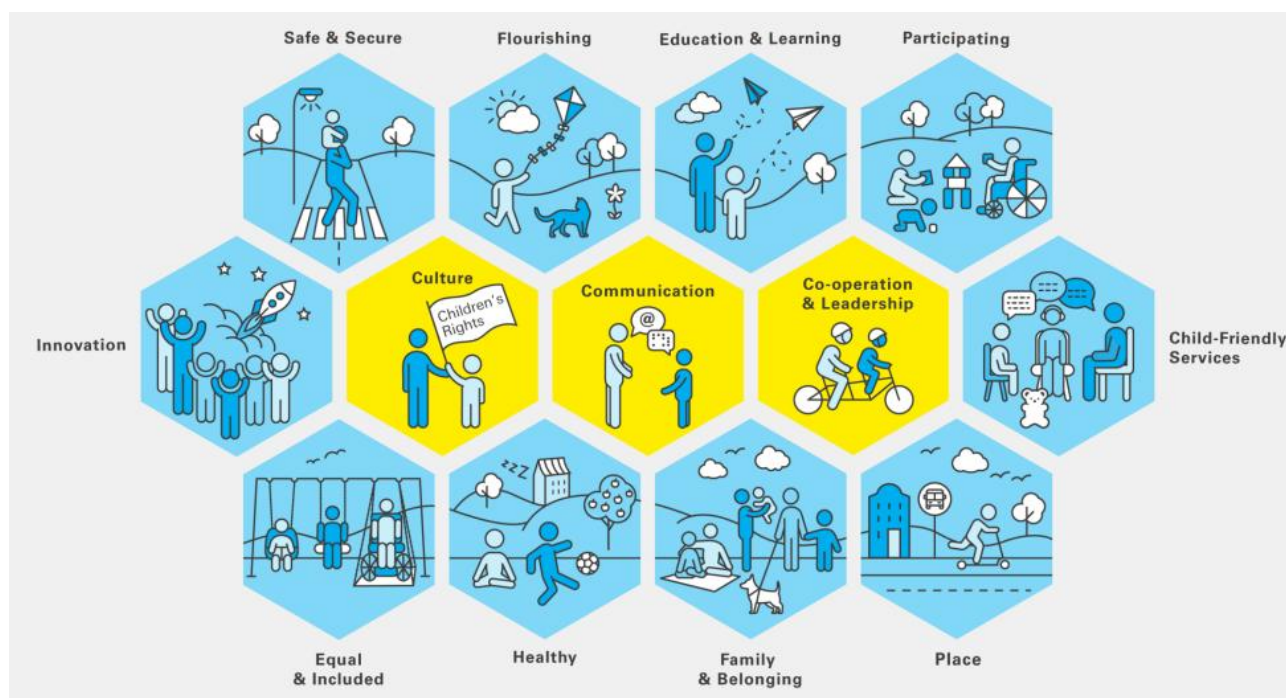
Tables used a large map of Torbay to identify areas of pride (what's great about these areas) and areas of challenge (what needs improvement). They used post-it notes as flags—yellow for strengths and pink for challenges—and wrote specific comments on the flags. The feedback from each table is listed below.

| Table | Yellow Flags (strengths) | Pink Flags (challenges) |
|-------|--|--|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There are lots of parks in Paignton.” • “We have some green land, equal with roads.” • “Aztec swimming pool is fun.” • “You can spend time with family in Torquay town.” • “I go to swimming pools with my family.” • “Cockington river is calm.” • “The library encourages reading and builds imagination.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There are not enough Torquay parks.” • “The hospital – too dark, dirty, makes you feel sad. Medicines are too expensive so you stay poorly as you can’t afford them.” • “There’s not enough disabled access in parks and swimming pools.” • “Lots of people are not being safe on bikes, riding in the middle of the road, wearing black, no lights or safety gear.” • “The bus station is very dirty, loud, overwhelming, noisy and polluted and buses cost a lot.” • “Shops should be cheaper and think about children’s rights to play.” • “I don’t feel safe in the town centre.” |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Cricket Club is good.” • “Parkfield.” • “Hospital – good doctors and nurses.” • “Library – good information.” • “Lots of trains, good train stations.” • “You can take family and friends to the beach.” • “There is family support.” • “Cruise ships.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Skate Park – we get bullied there and we want it to be a safe space.” • “More clothes & games shops & a try before you buy game shop.” • “Play parks – teenagers and drugs.” • “Kids only spaces.” • “Reliable bus services.” • “Types of teaching / classes.” • “Getting good jobs.” • “Going to College.” |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Pubs.” • “Schools are good for sports and some subjects.” • “Youth club.” • “Torbay is a great natural resource.” • “Farms and plants.” • “Access to the coastal paths.” • “Olympic sports facility for multiple sports.” • “More dog-friendly and child-friendly places.” • “Buses.” • “Parks and beaches.” • “Swimming pools child friendly.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Pubs.” • “Doctors are scary.” • “People littering beaches.” • “Lack of options for young people.” • “Not enough ice-cream shops/trucks.” • “Not enough quality shops.” • “Culture of banning young people.” • “CCTV blind spots.” • “Closed shops.” • “Castle Circus.” • “Not enough music venues.” • “Internet to play Minecraft.” • “Victoria park pond is full of shopping trolleys.” • “Need more child-safe play spaces.” |

| Table | Yellow Flags (strengths) | Pink Flags (challenges) |
|-------|--|--|
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “More to see, accessible opportunities.” • “Play Torbay promoting access for children.” • “Parkfield – music, climbing, skate park.” • “Forest school – Play Torbay – for all ages.” • “Sendiass provides services to parents and carers who need legal support.” • “Water sports opportunities.” • “Community energy and Cricketfield gym.” • “Bowling alley – happy, fun times.” • “Occombe Farm.” • “Imagine This Partnership.” • “Library, beach, outdoor spaces.” • “Train of lights.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Shopping centre – either for small children or adults nothing in between.” • “Cinema – loud and dark and people chuck food.” • “The pool is not accessible for home-schooled children.” • “Lack of investment in young people’s future.” • “There are some lovely spaces in the bay – really good outdoor spaces but it sounds like people don’t always feel safe to be there. The theme that keeps coming up is ‘teenagers’ so we need to address the fact that there’s not enough for teenagers to do. They are not scary they are just a bit bored. The Friday youth club at Parkfield is amazing. We need more of that across the bay. Youth services are great!” • “Transport – unreliable, inaccessible, unsafe.” • “Bus station – smelly and ‘squishy’.” |
| Table | Yellow Flags (strengths) | Pink Flags (challenges) |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Swimming.” • “Walks in the woods.” • “Shops – don’t have to wait.” • “Short time to travel.” • “Libraries – lots to read.” • “Beaches – sandy and some quiet.” • “Airshows.” • “Loads of activities – parks, swimming, football.” • “Peaceful beaches – can have fun, in summer – funfair.” • “Cruise ships.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We need affordable access to music – violins are too expensive to buy.” • “We need more solar panels and wind turbines to save energy.” • “Toys should be less expensive.” • “More streetlights in alley ways - people hang around, swear and vape – stop vape shops.” • “More electric cars and less petrol stations.” • “We need to support those who can’t access mainstream school.” • “Reduce waste and littering.” • “Shops closer to Torquay beach.” |
| 6 | Table 6 – merged with other tables for this activity | |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sea.” • “Lots of transport.” • “Green spaces – for sport and trees.” • “The swimming pool.” • “Parks and equipment.” • “Town hall and shops.” • “Farms to grow vegetables.” • “Schools for education.” • “Police to keep safe.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Pollution from buses.” • “Green spots in Torbay for animals.” • “More safety in the parks.” • “Too many cars.” • “More bins – ‘litter pickers’.” • “More play equipment at school.” • “More libraries.” • “Shops open later.” • “Difficult to find places to live.” • “Shops closing down.” |

OVERVIEW OF BADGES AND BADGE VOTING

Sarah from UNICEF UK provided an overview of the CFC programme badge framework. She explained that today we will vote for our top three badges, based on the insights shared and our understanding of Torbay. This information, along with previously gathered evidence, will help us determine our priority areas for the next 2 to 4 years.



Jeni then facilitated badge voting. She asked tables to agree their top 3 badges as a table then individually vote on the badge printouts using the stickers provided. Jeni asked the tables to feed back on how they had voted as a table and then individuals were asked to place their votes in the ballot box provided.



Table votes

Table 1 – safe and secure, equal and included, healthy

Table 2 – safe and secure, healthy, family and belonging

Table 3 – safe and secure, healthy, education and learning

Table 4 – equal and included, child friendly, safe and secure

Table 5 – safe and secure, healthy, place

Table 6 – equal and included, safe and secure, child friendly services

Table 7 – healthy, child friendly services, safe and secure

Table 8 – safe and secure, flourishing, family and belonging

Total votes by table:

Safe and Secure – 8

Healthy – 5

Equal and included – 3

Family and belonging – 2

Child friendly – 2

Education and Learning – 1

Place – 1

Flourishing – 1

Individual votes:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| SAFE & SECURE | 31 |
| HEALTHY | 21 |
| EQUAL & INCLUDED | 16 |
| PLACE | 15 |
| CHILD FRIENDLY SERVICES | 12 |
| EDUCATION & LEARNING | 11 |
| FAMILY & BELONGING | 11 |
| INNOVATION | 10 |
| PARTICIPATION | 5 |
| FLOURISHING | 4 |
| TOTAL VOTES | 136 |

LOGO COMPETITION

Allison announced the launch of a logo design competition for the Child Friendly Torbay programme. Flyers were distributed to attendees and will also be sent to schools, early years providers, and community groups. The flyers feature examples of common logos, and some designed by young people for other areas around the UK taking part in the CFC programme. Entries were to be submitted to Allison Grant by 23rd May. Contact details were in the flyer and emails.

THANK YOU, NEXT STEPS AND CLOSE

Cllr Thomas outlined the next steps, which involve collecting today's feedback along with evidence from surveys, consultations, remote participation packs and national and local data. This information will be used to develop a 'badge rationale,' suggesting the three badges we will focus on for the next 2 to 4 years. This rationale will be submitted to UNICEF UK for approval.

Once the badges are approved, we will appoint badge leads who will create action plans detailing how we will achieve progress on the selected badges. We will then enter the delivery phase, during which the Council will collaborate with the local community and children and young people to implement the action plans over the next 2 to 4 years.

We will apply for recognition as a UNICEF Child Friendly Community once we can demonstrate improvement based on these plans. Cllr Thomas thanked everyone for attending and expressed enthusiasm and senior commitment for working together to put children's rights into action locally in Torbay.



This document can be made available in other languages and formats. For more information, please contact childfriendlytorbay@torbay.gov.uk by email.
