

Towards Torbay's  
New Economy:

# Economic Regeneration Strategy



TORBAY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY





---

# Contents

---

<b>Foreword.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1 Torbay Today: The Context for Economic Regeneration .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 Analysis of Local Economic Data .....	5
1.2 Relationship to the Current Local and Regional Strategic Framework.....	9
1.3 Sectoral Analysis .....	10
1.4 Key Cross Cutting Issues .....	14
1.5 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis .....	15
<b>2 The Vision for Regeneration in Torbay.....</b>	<b>17</b>
2.1 Addressing the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats .....	17
2.2 A Vision for the Torbay Economy in 2016 .....	19
<b>3 An Economic Strategy: The Framework for Action .....</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1 Strategy Framework: An Integrated Approach .....	20
3.2 A Strategy Framework of Themes and Priorities.....	21
3.3 Theme One: Repositioning the Visitor Offer and the Leisure Economy .....	22
3.4 Theme Two: Increasing Value and Improving Economic Performance of Key Sectors .....	25
3.5 Theme Three: Encourage Appropriate Diversification of the Economic Base .....	27
3.6 Theme Four: Business and Infrastructure Support for Economic Growth.....	28
3.7 Theme Five: Develop Skills and Learning Opportunities .....	31
3.8 Theme Six: Community Support for a Higher Quality of Life.....	32
<b>Annex1 Project and Funding Programme.....</b>	<b>36</b>

## Foreword

---

Welcome to Torbay's Regeneration Strategy which sets out our vision to drive forward Torbay's economic prosperity.

The strategy has been prepared and developed by Torbay Council's regeneration arm, the Torbay Development Agency, in consultation with local businesses, residents and partners.

Our strategy sets out a clear way forward by building on the Bay's strengths to improve economic prosperity, give us prosperous communities with a higher quality of life and improved access to jobs

We recognise that Torbay has some distinctive assets and opportunities. Our people and beautiful location are our greatest resource but there are difficult challenges ahead. The need for economic regeneration is supported by a host of statistics and national indicators that predict low paid work and little prospects for the future unless something is done about it.

Torbay's economy is now the number one priority for the area. This commitment is reflected, not only in this strategy but also in the new Community Plan "Turning the Tide" which has economic prosperity at its heart.

We want Torbay to be a place that is truly open for business encouraging investment, new ideas and a 'can do' entrepreneurial culture. With recent developments such as Beacon Quay, multi-million pound funding for a new fish market in Brixham and new workspace at South Devon College and Lymington Road we are already well on our way but the challenge now is to maintain this momentum.

This strategy which will be reviewed to take into account any changes of view or new opportunities. It represents an important turning point in achieving our goals for the future and transforming Torbay for its residents, visitors and future generations.

Les Burnett  
Chairman,  
Torbay Development Agency Ltd

Nick Bye  
Elected Mayor  
Torbay Council

# 1 Torbay Today: The Context for Economic Regeneration

---

## 1.1 Analysis of Local Economic Data

The sections below provide a summary of the Torbay economy. The full analysis is available as a separate document.

### 1.1.1 General Introduction to Torbay

Torbay has an outstanding environment and setting, including 22 miles of coastline, which have shaped its economic and social development over time. The three major towns are all located on the coast and the local economy has historically focused on tourism, fishing and some manufacturing activities, supported by retail and public sector activities. The Torbay economy has a relatively narrow focus and is dependent on these few key sectors. Tourism is the dominant sector and is closely related to the other major sectors such as retail.

However these key industrial sectors have experienced increased pressure and declining fortunes in recent years. As a result, the Torbay economy has experienced gross value added (GVA) growth of 2.4% per annum between 1995 and 2003, which is approximately half the growth experienced at national and regional levels. Employment growth has averaged 1.9% per annum in the ten years to 2004, lower than the national average and significantly lower than the regional and county averages.

Torbay's GVA per head figure was £10,208 in 2003, which has fallen to 63% of the national average. This ratio has fallen in each of the last seven years and Torbay has the lowest GVA per head figure of all county and unitary authorities in the South West, having been surpassed by Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly in the latest data. Torbay now has the 9th lowest GVA per head figure of all county and unitary authorities in the UK. This is a major concern for the local economy, particularly as the situation is becoming worse over time. GVA per head has increased by 1.8% per annum between 1995 and 2003, the slowest rate of growth of all county and unitary authorities in the UK.

This economic regeneration strategy represents an opportunity for Torbay to set out local priorities, based on local competitive strengths and locational advantages. It is important that the strategy finds ways of capitalising on Torbay's environment and location in such a way that will enable it to compete in the modern economy.

### 1.1.2 Population and Demographics

Taken as a whole Torbay is the 2nd largest conurbation to the South West of Bristol and the population increases by more than 50% in the summer season with the large influx of tourists. Table 2.1 below shows the relatively high proportion of elderly people and relatively low proportion of ABs. The population is becoming increasingly aged due to a net inflow of older people, who view Torbay as an attractive place for retirement.

Table 2.1: Population Structure, 2001

Age Group	Torbay	South West	England and Wales
0-14	16.8%	17.8%	18.9%
15-64	60.6%	63.5%	65.1%
65-79	15.3%	13.4%	11.8%
80+	7.3%	5.2%	4.2%
Socio-Economic Group			
AB - Higher and intermediate managerial/administrative/professional	15.7%	21.2%	22.0%
C1 - Supervisory clerical junior managerial/administrative/professional	33.0%	31.4%	29.7%
C2 - Skilled manual workers	15.8%	16.2%	15.1%
D - Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers	18.5%	16.0%	17.2%
E - On state benefit unemployed lowest grade workers	17.1%	15.2%	16.1%

Source: Census Statistics, 2001, ONS

### 1.1.3 Labour Market

Table 2.2 presents a summary of key labour market statistics, showing relatively high unemployment, part-time and self-employment, and low employment growth.

Table 2.2: Summary of Labour Market Statistics, 2003

	Torbay	South West	GB
Unemployment: Claimant count as % of working age population (Dec 2005)	2.6%	1.4%	2.4%
Self employment as % of economically active population	12.6%	11.0%	9.0%
Employment growth (1998-2003)	3.5%	12.0%	6.5%
Full-time employment	55.4%	63.4%	68.1%
Part-time employment	44.6%	36.6%	31.9%
Employment by occupation			
Managers/Senior officials	13.2%	14.3%	14.6%
Professional	9.1%	11.7%	12.1%
Associate Professional & Technical	12.4%	13.7%	13.8%
Admin & Secretarial	11.9%	12.5%	13.0%
Skilled Trades	12.6%	12.5%	11.4%
Personal Services	10.8%	8.0%	7.5%
Sales & Customer Service	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%
Process Plant & Machine Operatives	7.1%	6.8%	7.7%
Elementary Occupations	14.9%	12.2%	11.8%

Source: ONS/NOMIS, 2003 except where stated.

Table 2.3 presents data on qualification attainment levels and shows Torbay has a relatively high proportion of people with unknown or no qualifications and a significantly lower proportion of people qualified to degree level or above.

Table 2.3: Qualification Attainment Level, 2001

Qualification Attainment Level	Brixham	Paignton	Torquay	Torbay	South West	GB
No qualifications or unknown	41.3%	40.1%	37.5%	39.1%	33.4%	36.0%
Lower level qualifications	44.0%	48.0%	48.3%	47.4%	47.8%	44.2%
Higher level qualifications	14.7%	12.0%	14.2%	13.5%	18.8%	19.8%

Source: Census Statistics, 2001, ONS

### 1.1.4 Worklessness

Worklessness is a key issue in Torbay, with relatively high economic inactivity; a high proportion of retired people and the highest proportion of benefits claimants in the South West (see Table 2.4). The issues of seasonal, part-time and low wage employment are contributory factors but the high proportion of Incapacity Benefit (IB) claimants is a particular concern, with more than one in ten people of working age claiming IB in Torbay. The issue of worklessness is a significant problem in Roundham-with-Hyde and Tormohun wards in particular, but also in Ellacombe, Blatchcombe and Watcombe.

Table 2.4: Benefit Claimants, November 2005

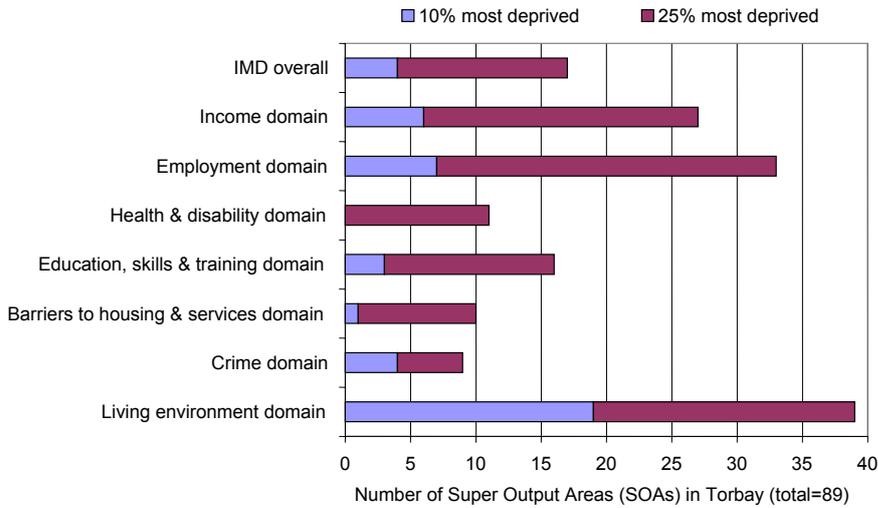
	All Benefits	
	Number of claimants	% of working age population
England and Wales	4,744,205	14.9%
South West	358,395	12.2%
Torbay	13,995	19.2%
Plymouth	26,025	17.4%
Bristol	38,465	15.8%
Bournemouth	14,875	15.2%
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	43,860	15.0%
North Somerset	13,330	12.0%
Devon	48,500	11.9%
Swindon	13,465	11.9%
Somerset	32,955	11.3%
Poole	8,985	11.1%
Dorset	23,475	10.8%
Gloucestershire	35,730	10.5%
Bath and North East Somerset	9,375	9.0%
Wiltshire	22,325	8.5%
South Gloucestershire	13,035	8.5%

Source: Department for Work and Pensions, 2005

### 1.1.5 Deprivation

Torbay has relatively high levels of multiple deprivation and is ranked as the 94th most deprived local authority in England, out of a total of 354, according to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Revised Indices of Deprivation 2004. Figure 2.1 presents Torbay's performance against the seven domains, and shows how many of Torbay's 89 super output areas (SOAs) are amongst the most deprived in England.

Figure 2.1: Number of Super Output Areas Ranked Most Deprived in Torbay



Source: ODPM, Revised Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), 2004

Torbay performs particularly poorly in terms of living environment deprivation and has relatively high income and employment deprivation, which reflect the high economic inactivity and benefits claimants within Torbay, together with low levels of household income. It is interesting to note that some SOAs in Torbay face multiple issues of deprivation and are consistently ranked in the top 10% most deprived SOAs in England against a number of the different domains. The most deprived SOAs are regularly located in the same wards, and particularly in Tormohun, Ellacombe, and Roundham with Hyde.

### 1.1.6 Wages and Incomes

Torbay suffers from relatively low levels of wages, incomes and output as many of the major sectors in Torbay are relatively low value, low wage industries, including tourism, retail, and social care, with relatively high levels of seasonal and part-time employment. Torbay's GVA per head figure has fallen to 63% of the national average. Torbay now has the lowest GVA per head of all county and unitary authorities in the South West and the 9th lowest in the UK.

### 1.1.7 Structure of the Economy

The Torbay economy is geared heavily towards services, particularly distribution, hotels and restaurants, and the public sector.

Table 2.5: Employment by Main Industries, Torbay, 2003

Industrial Sector	Torbay	South West	GB
Manufacturing	8.0%	12.5%	12.6%
Construction	5.0%	4.4%	4.4%
Services	86.3%	81.1%	81.4%
Distribution, hotels & restaurants	35.8%	27.4%	24.7%
Transport & communications	2.4%	4.7%	6.0%
Finance, IT & other business services	11.1%	17.3%	19.8%
Public administration, education & health	32.3%	27.2%	25.8%
Other services	4.7%	4.6%	5.2%
Tourism related	16.6%	9.0%	8.1%

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, NOMIS, 2003

## 1.2 Relationship to the Current Local and Regional Strategic Framework

This strategy is based on the TDA Ltd vision, strategic objectives and goals and will underpin TDA activities in the future.

The vision is 'to stimulate the development of a prosperous economy and create increased employment in Torbay for a more sustainable future', and TDA goals and activities aim to achieve this vision through the following economic principles:

- To reduce overall levels of unemployment;
- To increase the value of employment by the creation of higher value jobs;
- To build on core sector strengths such as tourism, fishing, electronics, medical;
- To exploit knowledge-based opportunities as far as possible via the stimulation of an improved business aware culture and by the exposure of young people to commercial life;
- To create and stimulate new indigenous companies and to promote the high growth of existing companies;
- To attract appropriate and sustainable inward investment.
- These objectives clearly highlight the strategic focus required to develop a more prosperous economy for Torbay and are included as key priorities within this Framework. It is important that this Framework is closely aligned and consistent with other plans adopted by local and regional partners. The Regional Economic Strategy sets out the industry sectors which SWRDA expects to contribute particularly to regional growth and the measures that, will be taken to support them. The eight sectors include Advanced Engineering, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Marine, Food and Drink, Tourism, Creative Industries, Environmental Technologies, and Biomedical. Some of these sectors have significant representation in Torbay and offer favourable conditions for contributing to growth, and most are identified as priority sectors for this Framework. The Themes and Priorities of this Framework also link closely with the regional priorities of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) strategic objectives of creating: successful and competitive businesses; strong and inclusive communities; an effective and confident region.

There are a number of existing local strategies of relevance to the economic regeneration and development of Torbay. This Framework draws together and builds on these strategies to create a single Framework to underpin the future activities of the TDA. These local strategies include a range of objectives and initiatives, which are closely aligned with this Framework, and aim to create a more prosperous Torbay economy by: creating more and better jobs through stimulation

of new businesses and promotion of growth of existing companies; regenerating Torbay's towns and communities; making Torbay a high-quality year-round destination for visitors; improving access to Torbay.

A review of each of the following strategies is provided as part of the separate evidence base:

- Torbay Community Plan
- Adopted Torbay Local Plan and Torbay Local Development Framework
- Torbay Tourism Strategy
- Torbay Marine Strategy
- Torbay Culture Strategy
- Regional Economic Strategy
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Devon Structure Plan
- Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Strategic Area Review
- Strategies for other local authorities in South Devon

### 1.3 Sectoral Analysis

The development of strategic objectives and priorities requires a thorough, evidence-based understanding of the local economy of Torbay, including current sectoral performance and the identification of potential growth sectors, competitive advantages, and key cross-cutting issues. It is this understanding of the current performance, strengths and weaknesses that provides the platform upon which to build for the future.

#### 1.3.1 Identifying Priority Sectors

This strategy identifies a series of priority sectors of particular economic importance and opportunity, which gain competitive advantages from being located in Torbay. The following criteria were used to identify and prioritise sectors in Torbay:

- **Size and critical mass.** The largest industries, in absolute terms, are likely to be of greatest importance to the local economy and priority sectors are likely to have a certain critical mass.
- **Local concentrations.** Location quotients can be used to identify industries that are concentrated in the Torbay economy. High LQs imply local competitive advantage
- **Recent growth.** Growth rates will help to identify sectors that are performing well locally, and offer scope for future growth. By comparing local and national growth rates, it can be ascertained whether growth reflects wider trends or specific local conditions.
- **Growth opportunities.** Future growth prospects are also important – and may point to opportunities in sectors that are yet to emerge as locally important.
- **Wages, skills and career opportunities.** The extent to which sectors are able to offer secure employment opportunities, with decent wages, and to promote skills development.
- **Fit with regional priority sectors.** There are clear benefits in identifying Torbay's scope to contribute to the development of regional priority sectors, and to benefit from regional sector development initiatives.

- **Fit with local strategies and initiatives.** The ability of sector development to complement and add value to existing strategies is important.
- **Scope for entrepreneurship.** Opportunities for sector development to enhance entrepreneurship by increasing new business formation and survival rates are important.
- **Ability of Torbay Economic Regeneration Framework to add value.** There is clearly only merit in prioritising sectors for which there is some scope for economic development efforts to add value and influence future development.

The full, detailed sector analysis of the Torbay economy is presented in the accompanying evidence base document. Based on this analysis, eight priority sectors were identified for development in Torbay:

Tourism and leisure;

- Retail;
- Advanced engineering;
- Fishing;
- Marine;
- Environmental/Marine Science;
- Health and Social Care;
- Other Value Added Manufacturing.

The analysis suggests the importance of devoting energy to improving the fortunes of major existing sectors. Opportunities to diversify the economy by developing new, knowledge based and high value added activities are relatively small in scale and few in number, but should nevertheless be pursued where they do exist. With no easy wins and few easily identified growth opportunities, it is suggested that diversification of the economy will depend on broad-based efforts to enhance business activity more than the exploitation of sectoral opportunities.

This strategy has scope to influence the overall development of the majority of these priority sectors. There is more limited scope with the health and social care sector because most of the activities are driven by national policies and budgets. However the strategy does have some scope to influence the development of the higher-value research and development opportunities that exist in this sector.

The following table profiles the eight priority sectors based on the findings of the sector analysis and consultations with public and private sector representatives of these eight sectors.

Table 2.7: Overview of Priority Sectors in Torbay

Sector	Overview	Key Issues / Challenges
Tourism and Leisure	Torbay's economy has historically been, and remains, heavily dependent upon the tourism and leisure sector. The size of the tourism industry is notoriously difficult to quantify because of the interrelations with other industries. South West Tourism estimates that tourism expenditure in Torbay totalled £398m in 2003 and employed 13,388 people, supporting 25% of employment in Torbay. Although Torbay has suffered declining visitor numbers and bed nights in recent years, this decline now appears to have stabilised but Torbay's core customer base has an increasingly aging and less wealthy profile, and this lack of higher expenditure has	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some negative visitor perceptions of Torbay being old-fashioned, run down, and down market.</li> <li>• The outdated nature and lack of quality of much of the accommodation stock and visitor facilities in Torbay and lack of a branded hotel.</li> <li>• The need to engage the private sector in the development and implementation of tourism strategies.</li> <li>• The aging and less wealthy profile of visitors.</li> <li>• Lack of new / innovative tourism</li> </ul>

Sector	Overview	Key Issues / Challenges
	<p>stified investment.</p> <p>Despite the maturity of the tourism industry in Torbay, future growth is forecast and there is significant underexploited potential, particularly regarding opportunities in the marine leisure sector.</p> <p>Tourism is also identified as a priority sector in the Regional Economic Strategy (RES).</p>	<p>businesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport issues – especially traffic congestion, but also poor rail links and perceptions regarding car parking.</li> <li>• Increasing competition from other resorts and destinations both within the UK and overseas.</li> </ul>
Retail	<p>Retail activities employ more than 7,000 people in Torbay. The retail sector is growing and is of considerable importance to Torbay's economy. The retail sector is an LSC priority sector, fits with local strategies and is intrinsically linked to the tourism sector.</p> <p>Retail also supports large numbers of small, independent businesses, has relatively low barriers to entry, and therefore offers opportunities for new business formation and growth. There are opportunities to develop the sector and attract new retailers to Torbay in line with plans to increase the quality of the tourism product in Torbay.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing competition from new shopping developments in Exeter and Plymouth.</li> <li>• Torbay's location, transport issues and the limited size of existing retail premises provide barriers to attracting major retailers.</li> <li>• There is a conflict between the retailers that fit the local demographics and those that will attract more affluent visitors.</li> <li>• Visitor numbers are down – negative impacts on retail.</li> <li>• Torquay town centre is disadvantaged by having a very linear shape and no focal point.</li> <li>• Most retail jobs are part-time, low skilled and low wage.</li> </ul>
Advanced Engineering	<p>Advanced engineering is dominated by the electronics sub-sector in Torbay – the largest manufacturing sector in Torbay. Employers in the sector offer relatively high wages and good career opportunities.</p> <p>Advanced engineering is a regional priority sector, giving scope for Torbay to contribute to and benefit from regional sector development initiatives and clustering opportunities.</p> <p>Despite the closure of Nortel and job losses elsewhere in the sector, Torbay has developed a concentration of engineering-based manufacturing operations of considerable economic importance to the local economy, suggesting a local competitive advantage, a pool of skilled labour and opportunities for further development in this sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitivity to variations in the global economy, which have a major impact on the decisions of multi-national companies.</li> <li>• Low cost competition from Asia Pacific and Eastern Europe, causing some firms to consider relocating manufacturing operations.</li> <li>• Transport links and the peripherality of Torbay as a business location – impact upon travel times and transportation costs.</li> <li>• Relatively weak relationships between businesses and under-developed supply chains.</li> </ul>
Fishing	<p>The fishing industry remains important to Torbay, particularly in Brixham - the largest fishing port in England and Wales in terms of volume and value. Torbay Council estimate there are 375 full-time fishermen and a total of 2,500 jobs which are dependent upon the fishing industry in Torbay.</p> <p>Despite declining employment, the fishing industry remains significant, not only in terms of the direct value it adds to the local economy, but because of strong cultural heritage and links with tourism. The regeneration plans for Brixham will help to promote links between fishing and tourism.</p> <p>Processing, marketing and catering activities to add value to local fish offer strong prospects, given that Brixham fish is arguably underdeveloped as a brand. Recreational fishing also offers growth prospects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The industry has experienced a gradual decline over time in line with national trends and as a result of pressures from European legislation.</li> <li>• The fish market in Brixham is in critical need of investment.</li> <li>• The declining image of the fishing sector raises concerns about long-term employment opportunities and may be a barrier to recruitment.</li> </ul>
Marine	<p>Marine industries in Torbay comprise a number of smaller companies involved in a variety of industries connected with the sea, from marine engineering, to port operations, to marine leisure.</p> <p>The sector is estimated to employ approximately 665 people in 125 marine businesses in Torbay.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Torbay faces competition from the growing marine leisure sector in South Hams, Plymouth and Weymouth.</li> <li>• Development of the marine engineering sector will be restricted by the conflicting land use with the tourism industry.</li> </ul>

Sector	Overview	Key Issues / Challenges
	<p>This is considered under-developed in Torbay considering Torbay's coastal location, the quality of the marine environment, and the strong maritime heritage. This suggests potential growth prospects, particularly linked to growth in marine leisure and provision of waterside premises.</p>	
Environmental/ Marine Science	<p>Astra Zeneca is the key company in the environmental/marine science sector and is a significant, relatively large employer in Torbay. This sector employs 119 people and is under-represented in Torbay relative to the national average, although the sector is forecast to grow. The environmental and marine sectors are both identified as regional priority sectors and, more generally, knowledge-based industries fit well with regional and local strategies. The high quality of life in Torbay, and access to good quality sea water, are likely to appeal to these knowledge-based businesses specialising in marine research and development. There is an opportunity to develop these activities in Torbay – linked to the development of a wider regional marine science cluster. This is a high wage sector with significant career opportunities and potential to develop links with South Devon College to address skills gaps/shortages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities to develop new businesses in this area are likely to be small in scale and few in number.</li> <li>• The lack of a knowledge base (except for Astra Zeneca) and the current unavailability of relevant courses at South Devon College are likely to provide barriers to the development of this sector in Torbay.</li> <li>• Concentrations of clustered activity elsewhere in South Devon, particularly in Plymouth, will provide significant competition to Torbay in attracting businesses.</li> </ul>
Health and Social Care	<p>The health and social care sector employs some 9,000 people in Torbay – approximately 20% of all employees. This sector is growing and is of considerable importance to Torbay's economy, with strong growth forecast to continue. Torbay has a relatively high concentration of health and social care institutions as a result of its aged and aging local population, with high health and social care demands. The scale of the sector, variety of skill levels and range of new developments mean that there are a wide range of career opportunities. Torbay has a pool of highly skilled, qualified labour, which is expected to increase with links to the Peninsula Medical School. There are opportunities to develop knowledge-based research and development activities, particularly associated with the hospital.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public sector health services are largely dependent on health policy but the strategy does have some scope to influence the development of higher-value research and development opportunities.</li> </ul>
Other Value Added Manufacturing	<p>In Torbay this sector comprises concentrations in the manufacture of plastic products (particularly UPVC windows, doors, etc) and food and drink (particularly meat, bread and biscuits). Together these activities employ some 1,450 people, accounting for almost one third of total manufacturing output in Torbay, and are growing steadily over time. Torbay possesses existing supply chains and a workforce with relevant skills, which suggests that Torbay's locational disadvantages are less significant in this sector. There are specific opportunities to create high-value added services within the food and drink sector including high quality retail food, and specific marketing activities to encourage local sourcing of produce, including Brixham fish.</p>	<p>Skills gaps in manufacturing activities in Torbay, particularly for technical staff, and basic skills needs at operator level. The peripherality and poor transport access of Torbay, relative to other local concentrations in this sector, provides a threat to Torbay's ability to attract and retain businesses. Although growth of the total food and drink sector has been stable, the performance of individual sub-sectors has been very unstable and can vary greatly from year to year. Employment in rubber and plastics manufacture is forecast to decline over time.</p>

## **1.4 Key Cross Cutting Issues**

### **1.4.1 Low levels of successful entrepreneurship**

Data on business start-ups and VAT registrations suggest that Torbay appears to generate healthy numbers of business start-ups but has a poor track record in growing these into successful and significant-sized businesses. The problem is linked to a lack of innovation and low rates of productivity and GVA per head which keeps many businesses below the VAT threshold, particularly with much entrepreneurial activity taking place in tourism and retail sectors. Furthermore, many businesses in these sectors are making a deliberate choice to operate beneath the VAT threshold. It is therefore important to diversify the local economy and increase levels of entrepreneurship outside of these core sectors. Enhancing business support and improving general economic conditions, tackling deprivation and stimulating growth across the economy would help to improve the conditions for business survival and growth.

### **1.4.2 Business Support Issues**

Business support was reported, through consultations with key stakeholders, to have been poor in Torbay due to fragmented and poor delivery. Torbay was perceived to have a low priority status within the region, lacking presence from the key players, with much of the provision being co-ordinated from outside of Torbay. Improvements have been achieved as a result of Torbay Development Agency (TDA) intervention, although there is still potential for further improvements in local access to business support and provision of incubation and managed workspace facilities to assist successful entrepreneurship in Torbay. The establishment of the Torbay Business Bureau (TBB) has brought business support agencies under a single umbrella, which is felt to have improved the service offer by establishing a structured delivery mechanism and integrating the efforts of the individual agencies, thereby reducing the duplication and confusion caused to businesses from having multiple support agencies. The TBB is a partnership of Business Link, Enterprise South Devon and TDA, together with key local partners including the Tourism Skills Network, South Devon College and Jobcentre Plus.

### **1.4.3 Shortage of sites and premises**

Torbay's current industrial base is generally oriented towards industrial workshop premises, and the TDA have identified a shortage of suitable premises, which is undermining the growth potential of local industries. In addition, the provision of specialist employment space oriented towards professionals is also in relatively short supply. However if Torbay is to attract knowledge-based businesses, it must be able to provide appropriate sites and premises of high quality. It is therefore important to achieve an acceptable balance between the provision of employment land appropriate for high value knowledge-based industries, and the provision of employment land appropriate for existing office and industrial workshop premises, to avoid restricting the growth potential of existing businesses in Torbay.

### **1.4.4 Image issues**

Torbay faces a number of issues concerning its image. The Torbay Tourism Strategy 2005-2015 suggests that some visitors perceive Torbay as being old-fashioned, run down, and down market, which is likely to be a major reason for the increasingly aging and less wealthy profile of visitors. Key local stakeholders consulted during this study suggested that there are also issues regarding Torbay's image amongst the business community, many of whom perceive Torbay as having poor opportunities for business because of the poor transport links, low economic growth and low skills levels.

While the quality of life is high, external and internal perceptions of Torbay are often negative and key stakeholders reported a lack of civic pride amongst local residents. Reasons for this reflect

the urban environment, a perceived lack of vibrancy and energy, and a perception that Torbay does not capitalise on the assets that it does have. If perceptions are low, this is partly because the best aspects of Torbay are not well promoted.

#### **1.4.5 Skills issues**

Torbay is disadvantaged compared to Plymouth, Exeter and other university locations by not having a centre for intellectual capital. This causes a significant net export of young people who tend not to return due to a lack of appropriate employment prospects, causing a relative shortage of people with higher level qualifications in Torbay. Another issue is that too many of the firms operating within Torbay are in low value, low wage, low output sectors. Therefore, Torbay must look to raise the skills of its workforce to meet existing and future skills development needs and help new and existing businesses to prosper, and to produce more sophisticated, higher value goods and services.

Connectivity needs to be promoted through the development of working relationships between educational establishments and businesses in the local economy, but also relationships with each other and the wider community. This is important to increase the currently low rates of uptake amongst many local employers and ensure provision is relevant to the needs of local businesses.

#### **1.4.6 Business Engagement**

There is a general feeling amongst many key local stakeholders that there is currently a lack of engagement of the business community (particularly larger businesses) in forums and public/private partnerships. It has been reported that many businesses have pulled out of the public debate due to frustration with a lack of progress in the past, and also perceived over-emphasis on the tourism industry.

#### **1.4.7 Transport issues**

Torbay suffers from its peripheral location combined with severe traffic congestion particularly during the peak summer months. Commuting is commonplace throughout South Devon, placing further demands on the major routes linking Torbay, Teignbridge, South Hams, Exeter and Plymouth. Torbay's transport infrastructure is also disadvantaged by the Bay itself, which effectively restricts vehicular access to the three towns to just 180 degrees. The congestion on the major routes into Torbay, on the Ring Road and in the town centres themselves can create difficulties in travelling into Torbay and between the three towns. The construction of the South Devon Link Road, improvements to the Ring Road, and provision of a park and ride facility are seen as necessary solutions to these problems. Furthermore, although Torbay is linked to the national rail network, it is disadvantaged by not being located on the main line itself.

These transport and access issues are perceived to restrict trade and inward investment, and create barriers to new businesses considering locating in Torbay, whilst also restricting the number of visitors to Torbay. However, while transport issues are a concern for all sectors, there would be merit in concentrating on less transport intensive activities, such as knowledge-based activities, local services, and low volume, high value manufacturing.

### **1.5 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis**

Based on the analysis of the Torbay economy a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis has been prepared to shape the development of the strategic objectives. A SWOT Summary is presented in Table 2.8.

Table 2.8 SWOT

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place, environment, quality of life and leisure opportunities</li> <li>• High awareness of Torbay as a visitor destination and of the English Riviera brand</li> <li>• South Devon College – First class technical college</li> <li>• Some high value activity in hi-tech engineering, health, environmental</li> <li>• Some underexploited skills in hi-tech manufacturing following the Nortel and Bookham Technology redundancies</li> <li>• A number of significant employers (Bookham Technology, AVX, Astra Zeneca, Epwin Group, Cavanna Homes)</li> <li>• Sectoral strengths in tourism, fishing and some manufacturing operations</li> <li>• Proximity to Dartmoor and surrounding Areas of Natural Beauty</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing over-reliance on few key, declining and low value industries</li> <li>• Poor growth performance and a lack of presence in growth markets</li> <li>• Low GVA per head</li> <li>• Outdated tourism product / lack of innovation</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge base</li> <li>• Lack of entrepreneurship despite small business focus</li> <li>• Peripherality and transport links – in particular the A380 linking Torbay and Newton Abbot, and the Western Corridor of the Ring Road</li> <li>• Aging population, lack of vibrancy and difficulty of retaining talent</li> <li>• Low skill levels – particularly higher level skills</li> <li>• Widespread deprivation and worklessness</li> <li>• Some lack of quality in the urban environment</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reposition, modernise and update tourism to take advantage of growth opportunities</li> <li>• Add value to key sectors</li> <li>• Build on existing pockets of high value/knowledge-based activity - particularly in hi-tech engineering, health, environmental and marine science sectors</li> <li>• Strengthen role of South Devon College to support business growth and skills development</li> <li>• Benefit from increased leisure spending – especially marine leisure and outdoor leisure</li> <li>• Attract businesses / individuals motivated by quality of life, environment, leisure opportunities</li> <li>• Encourage business start-up, growth and relocation by offering suitable sites and premises</li> <li>• Further enhance quality of life opportunities through higher quality housing</li> <li>• Use of ICT to overcome locational disadvantages</li> <li>• Torbay's aging population – will have an increasing role to play in the labour market and provide a growing market for Torbay's products and services</li> <li>• Centre of excellence for marine leisure activities</li> <li>• Casino – provides opportunity to secure many new, high value jobs, whilst stimulating the local tourism industry.</li> <li>• Language schools – attract additional overseas visitors by targeting students families for return visits.</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further declines in key sectors</li> <li>• Further employment loss through increased global competition</li> <li>• Increased retail and visitor competition from surrounding regional centres</li> <li>• Inability to diversify / failure to position economy to exploit growth markets</li> <li>• Failure to develop skills required to exploit key opportunities</li> <li>• Loss of funding for economic development (e.g. Objective 2, SRB)</li> <li>• Further stagnation caused by aging / inactive population</li> <li>• Inability to improve transport infrastructure</li> <li>• Inability to take forward key schemes</li> <li>• Fragmentation of initiatives / failure to develop an holistic, integrated approach</li> <li>• Availability of skilled workers so that firms in the study area grow and stay</li> </ul>

---

## 2 The Vision for Regeneration in Torbay

---

### 2.1 Addressing the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The analysis of the preceding evidence base suggests that tackling these SWOT issues requires action to address five key aspects of Torbay's economic performance:

- Supporting and bringing new approaches to existing key sectors of the economy, whilst .....
- Diversifying into new activities, and .....
- Ensuring growth in value added in existing and new sectors, through .....
- Promoting greater innovation and growth of successful businesses, whilst ensuring .....
- Benefits are distributed across the population as a whole

Each of these is examined further below.

#### 2.1.1 Improve economic performance of key sectors

The key sectors in Torbay are of such significance to the local economy that adding value and achieving growth in these sectors needs to be central to the strategy, particularly in the short term. Torbay must build on and improve the economic performance of these core sectors, which include:

- Tourism
- Manufacturing
- Fishing
- Retail
- Healthcare

#### 2.1.2 Diversify the economic base by identifying and developing new growth opportunities

In the longer term Torbay needs to diversify its economic base and reduce the current over-reliance on low-value sectors. Diversification of the local economy needs to be encouraged by facilitating the development of a variety of manufacturing and service activities, through:

- the provision of sites and premises of appropriate size, type and location
- developing appropriate skills in the local workforce
- improving access to Torbay
- attracting appropriate and sustainable inward investment.

It is important to stimulate the creation and development of businesses offering improved job opportunities, particularly full-time, sustainable and high value jobs to help overcome the problems associated with the core sectors.

Sectoral analysis suggests there are few strong opportunities or easy wins and Torbay should encourage business growth across the economy as a whole. However there are opportunities to build on sectors in which Torbay already has a small presence because these sectors have shown an ability to survive with the peripherality, transport and other issues that exist in Torbay. There are also opportunities to benefit from existing supply chains and skills in the local workforce. Sectors with the potential for diversification in which Torbay already has a presence

include high technology electronics, environmental sciences, marine industries and the manufacture of plastic products.

There are also opportunities to strengthen links and increase co-operation with adjacent local economies. Teignbridge and South Hams are stronger economies in terms of economic growth but share many similarities with the Torbay economy. There is potential to exploit these synergies and individual competitive advantages to maximise the opportunities and benefits to each economy by working more closely.

### **2.1.3 Raise GVA per head by encouraging economic growth, especially in higher value activities**

The poor performance of Torbay in terms of GVA per head highlights the need to increase the value of employment through the creation of higher value jobs and the encouragement of economic growth.

Torbay needs to raise the level of GVA per head across all sectors as well as seeking to exploit higher value and knowledge based opportunities. There are some opportunities to encourage higher value added activity in Torbay through the exploitation of high value opportunities where they arise, for example:

- the potential to develop environmental marine science activity, building on the presence of Astra Zeneca and linked to the development of a wider regional cluster
- the potential to build upon the local high technology electronics base and develop links with similar activities within the region

Knowledge-based industries have potential to fit well with Torbay and are desirable, since, as well as offering opportunities to raise value added and international competitiveness, they are likely to be less disadvantaged by the logistical issues inherent in Torbay's location, and to benefit from quality of life advantages which are likely to be highly valued by knowledge-based employees.

### **2.1.4 Encourage entrepreneurship and innovation**

Torbay appears to generate healthy numbers of business start-ups but has a poor track record in growing these into successful and significant-sized businesses.

New business survival and growth rates need to be supported by appropriate business support, skills development and targeted investment in communications, sites and premises, including managed workspace and incubation facilities. Business support measures and organisations should help to stimulate a more entrepreneurial culture, whilst facilitating the creation of new businesses and the high growth of appropriate existing businesses.

The problem is linked to low rates of productivity and GVA per head which keeps many businesses below the VAT threshold and is a further reason for low incomes and deprivation in the local economy. One of the means of increasing entrepreneurship and the success of business start-ups may be by encouraging entrepreneurial individuals and businesses to relocate to the area, attracted by the quality of life Torbay can offer.

Successful and growing entrepreneurial activity is also likely to be being restricted by Torbay's low skill levels and inability to retain intellectual capital. Entrepreneurial activity could therefore be encouraged through the development of working relationships between South Devon College, schools and the business community in order to enhance the perceived opportunities for young people in the Torbay area, and increase the retention of young intellectual capital.

### **2.1.5 Ensure population as a whole benefits**

It is important to promote economic inclusion to ensure that opportunities are available to all Torbay residents and this framework should encourage work to enable those currently without such opportunities can access the support and training required. The provision of flexible and pro-active support to community groups will enable them to play a positive part in the regeneration of Torbay.

Torbay suffers from widespread deprivation and social enterprise and social inclusion should be encouraged to ensure that the benefits of economic regeneration are experienced by the whole Torbay population and that these benefits help to overcome issues of deprivation.

## **2.2 A Vision for the Torbay Economy in 2016**

The creation of a sustainable economic vision for Torbay must address these five issues and the summary of the strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats. In addition the stakeholder consultations have emphasised the need to position the area, by 2016, to cope with, and benefit from, the rapid economic and social change which it will undergo. Torbay Council has recently reviewed its own vision for the future and has emphasised the need for "Economic Prosperity – A Shared Sense of Purpose". The vision which is expected to emerge from this is thus a statement of where stakeholders would wish to see the economy of the area by 2016. It expresses the ambitions for the prosperity of the area but is also realistic that this will require a step change in attitudes in the area.

Above all therefore, the Economic Vision is underpinned by the idea of "change". Overwhelmingly, stakeholders have recognised the need for and benefits of change and that coming to terms with this should be the main driver of the vision. They expect this change to provide the opportunity, resources and processes to stimulate a step change in Torbay's role and place within the region.

The vision is for the sustainable development of the Torbay Economy which by 2016 will:

1. Meet the changes and challenges to the existing economy by strengthening the ability of existing keystone sectors to adapt and prosper and by encouraging diversification to meet new opportunities,
2. Equip and support businesses to be more innovative and entrepreneurial and the work force to be better educated and skilled to take up changing opportunities, and
3. Ensure that all members of the Torbay community contribute to and share in the benefits of economic change.

## **3 An Economic Strategy: The Framework for Action**

---

### **3.1 Strategy Framework: An Integrated Approach**

The objective of the economic vision laid out in the preceding section is to build a high quality of life for all of Torbay's residents and a prosperous standard of living for the people of Torbay. This in turn will be led by businesses that demonstrate regional, national and international excellence and a workforce which is skilled, productive and employed and institutions which are efficient and purposive. This vision is also based on realising the strengths and opportunities and removing or reducing the impacts of weaknesses and threats identified in the SWOT analysis.

To achieve these objectives, an economic regeneration strategy must integrate action to:

- prioritise and support business investment and competitiveness (the "demand side"), with
- action to support and provide human capital and infrastructure (the "supply side")

It is envisaged that the strategy will build demand side strengths directly by:

- Prioritising target sectors with local comparative advantages and strong growth and investment potential;
- Supporting innovation and competitiveness in existing firms;
- Encouraging the growth of nascent and emerging businesses in the "knowledge-based industries";
- Making determined efforts to raise value added in the priority sectors;
- Encouraging and supporting entrepreneurship and the growth of small and medium size enterprises.
- These direct measures will be supported and connected by supply side action to:
- Provide sites and premises of appropriate size, quality and location to match economic growth needs. It is crucial to economic development in Torbay that the right type of land and accommodation is available. Employment land proposals must provide good quality, conveniently located business accommodation;
- Secure private sector investment to raise the quality of the tourism infrastructure in Torbay. There is a need to ensure that the right incentives are in place to encourage key firms to come to the area and good aftercare is also essential to cater to the expansion needs of existing businesses;
- Provide business support and skills development initiatives to support business formation and growth;
- Upskill the local workforce, in all sectors; provide specific courses for some of the sectors which the area would like to become known for, e.g. Environmental/marine science and promote vocational training in the future to address the current lack of skilled and qualified workers;
- It is essential that the infrastructure is in place to improve the connectivity of Torbay regionally, nationally and internationally and ease congestion within the area. The strategy will support efforts to improve transport and communications infrastructure by implementing vital intra- and inter-regional transport and digital telecommunication improvements;
- Improve the image and "brand" of Torbay to attract investment and improve the perception of the quality of life for existing and new residents, the workforce and visitors. An attractive environment and interesting and lively town centres are essential in order to attract people

and firms to the area. This is particularly the case for more highly skilled people who would contribute to the higher-value added economy.

### 3.2 A Strategy Framework of Themes and Priorities

The Strategy to deliver this vision is presented in six themes. Each theme is described in the following sections and for each theme a number of priorities for action under the theme are summarised. These themes and priorities make up the Strategy – Table 5.1

As Figure 3.1 suggests, these themes have been selected as the most effective means for delivering the level of change required by the vision for Torbay in 2016. Specifically the themes:

- Respond to the SWOT analysis by minimising weaknesses and threats by, for example addressing gaps in skill levels and addressing land and infrastructure threats, and by building on strengths and opportunities such as the unique marine heritage, the quality of the natural environment and changing patterns of investment and expenditure.
- Build on the evidence base on the current structure, status and directions in the local economy summarised in Section 2 and detailed further in the appendices. In particular the strategy themes address the priority sectors and cross cutting issues which, the evidence suggests, are either constraining the development of the Torbay economy or present new opportunities for the future. Without repeating the analysis, the preamble to each theme draws on the evidence to justify the various priorities for action recommended.

These themes and priorities comprise a strategy framework which will be delivered through an Action Plan delivered through the existing delivery agencies in the area. It is proposed that the strategy is supported in the first three years by a short-term action plan of targeted actions including retargeting of existing initiatives and new initiatives.

Table 5.1: Strategy Themes and Priorities

Strategy Themes	Theme Priorities
<b>Theme One:</b> Repositioning the Visitor Offer and the Leisure Economy	P1.1 – Redirecting Torbay's tourism offer for greater value to the economy P1.2 – Maritime Leisure – Leading the way P1.3 – Investing in leisure for visitors and residents P1.4 – Securing the potential of Torbay's culture and heritage P1.5 – Marketing Torbay to visitors and residents P1.7 – Capturing the Value of "Third-Age" investment and expenditure P1.7 – Improving Torbay's retail offer
<b>Theme Two:</b> Increasing Value and Improving Economic Performance of Key Sectors	P2.1 – Hi tech manufacturing P2.2 – Healthcare P2.3 - Fishing P2.4 – Marine P2.5 – Other high value-added manufacturing
<b>Theme Three:</b> Encourage Appropriate Diversification of the Economic Base	P3.1 – Encourage successful entrepreneurship and innovation P3.2 – Develop environmental/marine science sector P3.3 – Develop other high value, knowledge-based sectors P3.4 – Encourage businesses with seasonal demand for labour in winter months
<b>Theme Four:</b> Business and Infrastructure Support for Economic Growth	P4.1 – Provision of a transport system that secures good access to jobs and markets, and convenient access for visitors P4.2 – Develop and promote ICT infrastructure P4.3 – Establish an effective partnership between statutory bodies and the business community, to ensure that key priorities for the business environment are addressed

	<p>P4.4 – Improve provision/co-ordination of business support                  P4.5 – Provision of appropriate employment land                  P4.6 – Strengthen links with South Hams and Teignbridge                  P4.7 – Attract appropriate and sustainable inward investment</p>
<p><b>Theme Five:</b>                  Develop Skills and Learning Opportunities</p>	<p>P5.1 – Improve learning provision in Torbay                  P5.2 – Establish and fill unmet training requirements in established sectors in Torbay                  P5.3 – Increase skill levels/skills development opportunities within Torbay                  P5.4 – Develop closer collaboration between training providers and business to address skills issues and change perceptions of the tourism sector</p>
<p><b>Theme Six:</b>                  Community Support for a Higher Quality of Life</p>	<p>P6.1 – Gearing up the social economy                  P6.2 – Improving security, health and social care                  P6.3 – Promoting social inclusion and addressing worklessness                  P6.4 – Regenerating key community areas in the three towns</p>

### 3.3 Theme One: Repositioning the Visitor Offer and the Leisure Economy

The overall vision for this strategy emphasises the need for changes in attitudes to the way in which Torbay has “earned its living” in the past. This is nowhere more important than in the area’s visitor and leisure sector which has long been the cornerstone of the economy. The strategy study already notes that, although the size of the tourism industry is notoriously difficult to quantify, South West Tourism estimates that tourism expenditure in Torbay totalled £398m in 2003 and employed 13,388 people, supporting 25% of employment in Torbay.

However, Torbay is the only district in Devon to have experienced a decline in bed nights during the last decade and there are growing concerns that any further decline will affect the viability of many tourism businesses within Torbay. Recent performance in Torbay has been mixed with declining employment in hotels and amusement parks but employment growth in bars, restaurants, shops and leisure and recreation activities. This decline now appears to have stabilised, and further growth in tourism in Devon and Cornwall is projected but Torbay’s core customer base has an increasingly aging and less wealthy profile. This lack of higher expenditure has stifled investment and this is the core concern that the strategy must tackle.

Despite the maturity of the tourism industry in Torbay there is significant underexploited potential, particularly regarding opportunities in the marine leisure sector. Torbay needs to maximise opportunities to build new markets with real volume and value potential for the future as the tourism market in Devon and Cornwall continues to grow. Torbay has the potential to benefit from this growth but in the sector – which supports large numbers of small businesses and has relatively low barriers to entry with low investment levels – attitudes have been slow to change.

The most important change which the strategy seeks to respond to is the need to attract a much broader base and longer season of visitors including those coming for short breaks, business visitors and, particularly, to attract those visiting with a specific activity, leisure or other specialist purpose. Secondly the market needs to recognise that “visitors” now include second homers with an alternative leisure based lifestyle on weekends and short breaks, retirees in earlier and more active retirement with multiple homes which may be a source of income and those seeking a business, second - or retirement home or a lifestyle investment location. Those who make up the visitor and leisure sector market now range through a continuous spectrum of tourists, visitors, investors, retirees, multiple homers and residents seeking the leisure lifestyle opportunities which Torbay can provide.

The analysis also shows that the retail sector continues to grow and, together with bars and restaurants, Torbay’s three town centres and specialist shopping areas make an important contribution to the visitor offer. The recent Torbay Retail Study however shows that there is a growing threat to the strength of high value comparison and specialist shopping in Torquay, and in Paignton and Brixham, from new retail development in Exeter, Plymouth and Newton Abbot.

Even to maintain a “constant market share” in these centres investment in new floorspace and improvements in the existing shopping environment are required, such investments would be well supported by raising skill levels in existing employees as well as educating potential new entrants of the opportunities available within the retail trade.

This theme therefore identifies a range of eight interlinked priorities which make up an important agenda for change in this ever widening sector.

## Priorities

- **P1.1 – Redirecting Torbay’s tourism offer for greater value to the economy:** A first priority for the strategy will be to recognise the need for a new direction in Torbay’s tourism offer to attract a much broader base and longer season of visitors including those coming for short breaks, business visitors and, particularly, to attract those visiting with a specific activity, leisure or other specialist purpose. This will require closer integration in the provision of facilities for, and marketing to, residents as well as tourists. This approach will build on the priorities of the recent 2005 -15 Tourism Strategy’s intention to “ensuring the tourism product and associated marketing is developed to meet the needs of market segments” but should also be reflected in other leisure, cultural and economic regeneration plans and policies.
- **P1.2 – Maritime Leisure – Leading the way:** In attracting visitors who come to participate in a specific leisure or other specialist activities, Torbay has a significant comparative advantage over many destinations in the quality of its environment for marine leisure activities. Torbay is a major centre for marine leisure – sailing, diving and other watersports and has an important maritime heritage which has been the basis for festivals and events. There has been a steady growth in the demand for marine leisure facilities and further growth is expected in preparation for a potential surge in interest following the 2012 Olympic Games. This lead will also meet the growth in demand from residents – both full-time and second homers – many of whom have been attracted to live in – or returned to - Torbay because of the maritime lifestyle opportunities.

The strategy will lead its repositioning of Torbay’s tourism offer by promoting and supporting the development of new maritime leisure facilities including a significant expansion of marina provision; a Maritime Leisure Centre of Excellence to support a wide range of sailing, boating, canoeing, surfing, windsurfing, diving and angling etc. and additional marine service capacity and facilities. Marketing, festivals and events will take an important lead from the area’s maritime heritage with improved infrastructure for, and delivery of, maritime events. More maritime events will be attracted - such as the Tall Ships Race, Powerboat Championships, Sailing Championships, and Heritage Events with the complementary potential of Brixham and Torquay as host ports for competing, exhibiting and visiting vessels. This would be accompanied by better marketing of maritime events with better timetable organisation and prior planning.

- **P1.3 – Investing in leisure for visitors and residents:** Torbay has other significant potential to provide attractive leisure and recreation opportunities for both visitors and residents. Further exploitation and development of these can enhance the visitor offer providing activity based rather than location based tourism. In the urban areas the strategy will seek to develop more wet weather tourist facilities and develop a regionally significant tourist attraction based on an existing major facility such as the Zoo or Quaywest or a new attraction such as a large casino, which encourages people to return. The returning potential associated with Paignton Zoo and Living Coasts, for example can be maximised by more joint marketing and the development of other facilities with this environmental theme – for example the opportunity for Kent's Cavern to be a base for 'hands-on' exploration, and learning/studying stays. This should be part of marketing Torbay together with the surrounding environment and activities and attractions such as Dartmoor. Accordingly the

strategy supports the bid for 'Geopark' status for Torbay which complements the environmental theme strongly. The strategy will also support plans for a casino development to attract higher spending visitors and provide a destination link with maritime and other event developments, business visitors and wider marketing of local golf courses to target the affluent 50+ resident and visitor market.

- **P1.4 – Securing the Potential of Torbay's culture and heritage:** Much of the above maritime, environmental and other leisure development opportunities are based around Torbay's unique maritime and coastal heritage. The key priorities of the present Torbay Cultural Strategy "Chill Out" aim to give culture a higher profile and to celebrate Torbay's cultural successes. This strategy fully recognises that the culture and heritage of Torbay are areas that contribute strongly to the economy and that can be cultivated for further growth. These priorities link closely with some of the objectives of this Framework through proposed developments in sports and leisure activities - leisure marine activities in particular. The focus should be on the maritime heritage, culture and the arts and sports and supporting the agreed Culture and Heritage strategies which seek to capture the economic benefits of those two areas. The investment in Torre Abbey currently being undertaken by the Council is a good example of the link between the areas heritage and tourism attractions. In Priority 3.3 of this strategy the growth of creative industries is recognised as a sector that Torbay is well placed to benefit from. The environmental theme explored above in P1.4 is an example of how the natural heritage can be used and the development of other themed events and attractions i.e. around horticulture is supported.
- **P1.5 – Marketing Torbay to visitors and residents** - Stakeholders have emphasised that it is the change agenda itself and the commitment to making it happen which should lead a change of visitor and investor image for the area. The visitor and lifestyle brand advocated by this strategy now requires greater dissemination not only to potential visitors themselves but also for property development marketing purposes, to inward investors, to those seeking a business, second- or retirement home or a lifestyle investment location. This form of targeted "place marketing" will ensure infrastructure is in place to develop and sell products and packages to maximise visitor spend and increase 'off-season' visitors, develop the day visitor market and maximise the potential of local tourist and the visiting friends and relatives (VFR) market. However This approach would also change Torbay's image by increasingly marketing Torbay as a high quality destination publicising quality restaurants with Michelin stars, Brixham fish and as "the place to come and do business." The approach might assign "brand champions" to market and drive up quality improvements across the industry. This should also include ensuring that the large influx of foreign visitors to Torbay's language schools each year are welcomed and encouraged to return to the area with their families.
- **P1.6 – Capturing the Value of "Third-Age" investment and expenditure:** This theme, deliberately seeks to encourage the attraction and participation of the increasing numbers, disposable income and footloose investment of the retired and active "third-age" resident. Patterns of social change suggest that more older people may relocate to Torbay – including the semi-retired - attracted by a better lifestyle in Torbay. It is these groups who already support the recent growth in the restaurant and construction maintenance sectors and economic policies should exploit high demand for employment related to this group and their relatively high disposable income including that for gardeners, electricians, builders, carpenters, decorators and those in the wider formal and informal care sectors.
- **P1.7 – Improving Torbay's retail offer:** The retail sector has been a significant growth sector in Torbay and shopping is intrinsically linked to the tourism industry. There are threats to the status of centres in Torquay, Paignton and Brixham from the growth of competing regional centres but there are considerable opportunities to raise the quality of the retail offer and attract new retailers to Torbay in line with plans to increase the quality of the tourism

product. The strategy therefore strongly supports plans to invest in the development and regeneration of each of the three town centres in Torbay in order to maintain the market share which they have been losing and to significantly increase the quality of the retail offer to both visitors and locals. The strategy supports action in each of the town centres to:

- Add more than 20,000sq m of comparison and specialist retail floorspace in Torquay by 2016, primarily in high quality mixed use developments on key regeneration sites such as the Strand, Market Street and adjacent to the Pavilion. The quality of Torquay's retail offer needs promoting nationally to maintain its profile to shoppers and to attract investment by multiples and quality independent and niche retailers.
- In Paignton limited investment is needed in additional comparison shopping capacity but more is required to modernise and improve the performance and appearance of the existing centre – building on the approach and success of the HERS scheme at Winner Street – at Victoria Square and the Crossways Centre and more visitor oriented quality mixed use development at Station Lane.
- The Brixham Regeneration programme should be used to support the quality of the retail offer in Brixham through the development of up to 2,500 sq.m of quality convenience and 5,000 sq.m of comparison and niche shopping at the Town Centre Car Park site and by providing a stronger retail and dining link for both visitors and locals through The Lanes area.

Over the past two years new Government legislation has introduced Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to the UK. These BIDs have been introduced in over 30 locations in the UK so far with the improvement of retailing in a location typically one of the drivers. BIDs can also be appropriate to industrial estates. Typical benefits include heavier marketing, increased footfall, higher levels of investment in the shopping area and a return on the businesses investment. They are not universally appropriate but this strategy supports an exploration of the demand for and potential of Business Improvement Districts for parts of Torbay.

### **3.4 Theme Two: Increasing Value and Improving Economic Performance of Key Sectors**

The earlier analysis has highlighted the relatively narrow focus of the Torbay economy, which is dependent upon a few, key sectors. This strategy therefore needs to add value and encourage growth in these core sectors, particularly in the short terms.

Historically, economic development in Torbay has followed with the development of land and has been restricted due to the lack of available land. While this strategy also recommends the development of employment land as part of a range of measures to help generate economic development, it is most important to identify the approaches necessary to increase productivity of existing sectors, businesses and sites within the Torbay economy. The strategy priorities for this theme therefore identify the significance and approach to support for five key sectors. Two other existing priority sectors – tourism and retailing - are addressed in other themes.

#### **Priorities**

- **P2.1 – Hi tech manufacturing:** As discussed above, the high tech manufacturing sector in Torquay is dominated by opto-electronics engineering. Consultations with the sector suggest that a pool of under-exploited skilled labour still exists (from the previous redundancies at Nortel and Bookham Technology), providing a potential skills base for new businesses or existing businesses with growth potential. However, this pool is diminishing as good, young people will leave to find employment opportunities elsewhere, while older people may take

early retirement. The Strategy will support the growth of existing and new businesses within this sector, whilst supporting the sector to help itself. For example, through the establishment of a network of local companies, to strengthen collaborative links, promote the interests of the sector, and facilitate dialogue with public sector organisations and engage in development activities

- **P2.2 – Healthcare:** The healthcare sector is another significant and growing sector in Torbay, with strong growth prospects. Torbay a competitive advantage in this sector as a result of its aged and aging local population. This strategy supports opportunities to develop the local healthcare sector, particularly knowledge-based research and development activities. These opportunities include the proposed £1/4 billion investment to redevelop Torbay hospital, and plans to invest a further £6 million developing a National Centre for Innovation and Training at the hospital. It is hoped that the Innovation Centre will encourage a partnership of local healthcare, education, leading supply chain partners and the private sector, to bring best practice in international healthcare to the UK, to share that through training, and potentially to spearhead the provision of new medical education facilities in South Devon. The strategy also supports links between Torbay and the Peninsula Medical School, in a bid to create a local knowledge-base, and plans to establish a training centre to deliver surgical skills training locally in Torbay. Further opportunities include:
  - a closer partnership between the TDA and the healthcare sector to discuss future opportunities and assist the creation of critical mass;
  - further development of community projects, involving local schools and disadvantaged communities, to promote careers in the healthcare sector and provide advice with career choices and getting started on a career in healthcare.
- **P2.3 – Fishing:** This strategy supports the fishing industry because of its local significance, traditional and cultural heritage, and because it is an exporting industry and holds close links to tourism in Torbay. There are significant opportunities for growth and entrepreneurial activity in processing, marketing and catering activities as well as recreational fishing. The strategy is supportive of proposals for a new fish market as this offers the potential to develop and promote closer links between fishing and tourism by providing improved access for visitors, linking fish and Torbay life more generally and promoting the Brixham fish market and industry as a tourist attraction, possibly branded as “the world famous Brixham fish market”. Only a small proportion of the local catch currently remains in Torbay and much is exported to international markets. Opportunities exist to add value to the fishing sector by building increased recognition of the Brixham fish brand and encouraging local restaurants and retailers to source the local produce.
- **P2.4 – Marine:** In contrast to the above sectors, the marine sector is included as a priority sector because it is currently under-developed considering Torbay's marine location, environment, and heritage. This strategy will support opportunities to develop this sector, particularly the marine leisure industry which is described in more detail in Theme 5, but also the establishment of links with the South West Marine CoVE to provide marine leisure and marine engineering training in Torbay, and the provision of sites and premises as part of the Brixham Regeneration programme to accommodate new or existing businesses relating to marine leisure or businesses to service the expected increase in marine activity.
- **P2.5 – Other high value added manufacturing:** The strategy also recognises the continuing potential for productivity improvements in some other manufacturing sectors. Two high value added manufacturing sectors in Torbay will be supported:
  - **Manufacture of Plastics:** There is a local focus of activity in Torbay and Newton Abbot, which has created a workforce with relevant skills and suggests Torbay's locational disadvantages are less significant for this sector. This strategy is supportive of plans to

develop this sector through the establishment of a network of local companies and by encouraging the exploitation of training opportunities to overcome skills gaps and provide basic skills training.

- **Food and Drink:** The food and drink sector accounted for almost 15% of Torbay manufacturing output in 2004, making it the third largest manufacturing sector in Torbay behind electrical engineering and the manufacture of rubber and plastics. The sector is currently dominated by meat and meat products and bread and biscuits although the composition of the sub-sectors varies greatly from year to year and dairy products were the largest sub-sector in 2003. There are opportunities to create high-value added services within this sector such as high quality retail food, and specific marketing activities to encourage local sourcing of produce, including Brixham fish – discussed in more detail below. One example involving links between this sector and 'green tourism' is Ocombe Farm where an organic farm is being linked with a visitor centre and retail outlets.

### 3.5 Theme Three: Encourage Appropriate Diversification of the Economic Base

Economic growth through sectoral diversity is a key aspect of the strategy. This theme (and the strategy) is built around the concept of improving the robustness of Torbay's economy, building on the best of the established industries and creating new and forward-looking industries which will drive the economy forward.

Diversification of the local economy is linked closely to, and should be supported by, some of the other themes and priorities of this strategy such as the provision of appropriate sites and premises, developing appropriate skills in the local workforce, improving access to Torbay, and attracting appropriate and sustainable inward investment. The strategy will also focus on the development of entrepreneurship and innovation as a stimulus to economic growth in these sectors and throughout the economy.

#### Priorities

- **P3.1 – Encourage successful entrepreneurship and innovation:** Torbay has very high rates of entrepreneurship, although much of this activity is focused on the tourism and retail sectors. However, current levels of innovation and new business survival rates are a concern. In a strong and diverse economy, innovation and entrepreneurship are critical and these must be supported and encouraged. This is especially the case in knowledge-based industries. The strategy will encourage more successful and sectorally diverse entrepreneurial activity, through training, improving access to funding, and facilitating start-ups within the area. It will also be important to raise the aspirations of entrepreneurs, and creating an environment (e.g. by making efforts to extend the tourism season), to encourage more businesses to maximise their potential and thereby drive growth of the local economy.
- **P3.2 – Develop Environmental / Marine Science sector:** This relatively small, but growing high-value, knowledge-based sector is dominated by Astra Zeneca. There is potential for further growth of this sector by developing links with the South Devon sub-regional cluster of activity, developing a local knowledge-base base and learning opportunities linked to South Devon College, and to provide appropriate facilities to encourage entrepreneurial activity, relocating businesses and potential spin-offs.
- **P3.3 – Develop other high-value, knowledge-based sectors:** There are opportunities to develop a range of knowledge-based sectors and activities, which provide a good fit with Torbay's strengths and needs, due to their demand for high quality of life and ability to provide high-value and high wage employment. Torbay needs to develop a knowledge-base to support and attract industries of this type and promote itself as a location with a high

quality of life, to advance developments in this sector. Knowledge-based sectors with potential for growth in Torbay include:

- **Financial and business services:** This is a growing sector, which is relatively small in Torbay compared to neighbouring districts and the national average. The sector is dominated by real estate activities in Torbay which have benefited from the buoyant housing situation. This sector has experienced GVA growth of 7.1% per annum in the ten years to 2004 and further growth is forecast, suggesting there is potential for Torbay to develop this sector. Specific competitive advantages might involve Torbay's aging population and relatively high retired population and the provision of pension advice services.
- **Computing Services:** This is a growing sector, experiencing strong and steady GVA growth of 13.8% per annum between 1994 and 2004, albeit from a very small base. The growth trend is expected to continue both at regional and sub-regional level, with this sector predicted to achieve the strongest rates of GVA and employment growth of all sectors to 2026. There are opportunities for Torbay to begin marketing itself as a lifestyle location to attract a growing number of these high-value added services, for whom a high quality of life is likely to be of greater importance than the locational disadvantages. This sector clearly links closely with Torbay's potential to encourage and promote Broadband access and to place itself at the forefront of developments in ICT infrastructure.
- **Creative Industries:** This is a growing sector with strong performance and potential for growth within Torbay. The Perfect Moment report of 2006 emphasises that it is a sector that attracts a GVA per head considerably ahead of the average. It faces particular challenges in growth which include marketing, access to finance, lack of premises, skills issues and business support. There are good opportunities for Torbay to develop workspace and clusters of creative industries businesses within the managed workspace scheme and enabling larger units for growing businesses. Creative industries businesses will also require strong ICT infrastructure to reach their markets and a high skills base both of which reinforces points made elsewhere within the strategy.
- **P3.4 – Encourage businesses with seasonal demand for labour in winter months:** Sutton Seeds is a relatively large employer in Torbay, employing more than 200 people. Sutton Seeds moved to Torbay in 1976 and the principle reason for relocating was the high seasonal un/employment in the Torbay economy. Sutton Seeds also have seasonal employment demands but these are in contrast to, and complement, the tourism industry, as they are busiest during the winter and spring months when demand is highest for their produce in preparation for the summer. This is an interesting example of an industry that can ease the impact of seasonal unemployment from tourism and this strategy supports the identification and encouragement of similar businesses in Torbay.

### 3.6 Theme Four: Business and Infrastructure Support for Economic Growth

The analysis and consultation has recognised that the core strategic objectives of raising productivity, increasing diversification and employment growth are contingent on the effective delivery and co-ordination of the business support function, the provision of appropriate sites and premises, and improvements to the transport infrastructure. These supply side measures are critical to provide the environment and support to facilitate economic growth in Torbay.

#### Priorities

- **P4.1 – Provision of a transport system that secures good access to jobs and markets, and convenient access for visitors:** The aim of this priority is to deliver an efficient,

integrated, sustainable and multi-modal transport network capable of supporting a growing population and increased economic opportunity.

- This Strategy is supportive of the proposed South Devon Link Road and believes its construction would ease pressures and increase productivity of existing local businesses, facilitate the adding of value to existing key sectors (particularly tourism, retail and manufacturing), whilst making Torbay a more attractive proposition for businesses considering locating in the area.
- This Strategy also supports Torbay Council plans to develop the Western Corridor transport infrastructure and especially the Kings Ash Road section of the Torbay Ring Road and the Tweenaway Junction. Without such intervention, the proposed development of the employment sites in Paignton and housing and employment development as part of the Brixham Regeneration programme will add further pressure on this section of road and will constrain the growth potential of these schemes.
- A public transport solution to the congestion in Torbay would be through park and ride provision. Torbay does not have a park and ride facility, which is perhaps surprising given the size of the Torbay conurbation and the extent of the congestion problem. A park and ride scheme is proposed at Lawes Bridge in Torquay and this strategy would support such provision. A park and ride scheme would also provide an effective solution to the access and parking issues faced in Brixham, particularly given the temporary loss of the main town centre car park, while the regeneration of Brixham takes place. A park and ride scheme would provide an effective solution to improving accessibility and reducing congestion and pollution in the town centres, providing sites can be found in convenient locations that do not have an unacceptable adverse impact on prevailing landscape, nature conservation, countryside and agricultural land protection policies.
- The Bay itself could provide a solution to the transport issues in Torbay through provision of a year round ferry service linking the three towns and providing an enjoyable, congestion-free alternative for visitors, commuters and shoppers. A ferry service already operates during the summer months but a more robust, all-weather, year round service could fulfil a significant role as part of an efficient, integrated, sustainable and multi-modal transport network. This strategy would be supportive of a ferry service linking the three towns assuming there is sufficient demand for the scheme to be viable.
- Finally this strategy recommends the development of close working relationships with communities and transport providers in order to develop integrated and coherent transportation plans for Torbay.
- **P4.2 – Develop and promote ICT infrastructure:** The above transport priorities will help to overcome the access and congestion issues facing Torbay but not other locational disadvantages, such as peripherality. There is an opportunity for Torbay to use and develop its ICT infrastructure to overcome these locational disadvantages and attract businesses for which the physical infrastructure is less of an issue, such as lifestyle and knowledge-based industries. Torbay has full coverage in terms of Broadband and should increase awareness and encourage up-take of Broadband amongst local businesses and individuals with the ability to work from home. In particular there is a need to raise awareness generally in Torbay of the new opportunities open to business using ICT with e commerce, procurement, access to public sector tenders and new markets available.

Torbay should also be more proactive and innovative regarding ICT infrastructure, and could be better placed to attract these desirable high-value, knowledge-based businesses by ensuring Torbay is at the forefront of ICT infrastructure developments. For example, BT is soon to increase the speed of Broadband connections across the South West and will also begin updating Broadband and replacing ADSL with SSDL (which gives same speed upload as well as download), initially rolling out the new format to selected urban areas. Torbay should aim to become one of first areas to benefit from these technological advances to

---

show they are at the forefront of ICT developments and attract leading edge businesses to locate in Torbay.

- **P4.3 – Establish an effective partnership between statutory bodies and the business community, to ensure that key priorities for the business environment are addressed:** There is a need to encourage businesses (particularly the larger local businesses) to engage and play a greater role in forums, chamber trade and public/private partnerships, addressing the key priorities in Torbay. Private sector businesses were, on the whole, keen to be involved in the consultation for this strategy, suggesting that there is an enthusiasm to become more involved and perhaps there are opportunities to strengthen business engagement by reviewing the current procedures for engaging business in the decision making process. Some consultees suggested that as well as time constraints, business representatives (outside of the tourism sector) were put off by the strength of local focus upon the core sector of tourism within the statutory bodies in Torbay.
- **P4.4 – Improve provision/co-ordination of business support:** A variety of organisations are involved in providing business support in Torbay, and it is important that their work is co-ordinated, to ensure effective delivery against strategic priorities, and that businesses are involved in the process, to ensure that their priorities are met. The inclusion of priority sectors in this Strategy also raises implications in terms of sector specific support needs. Business support also needs to be developed to support the implementation of the objectives relating to enterprise in Torbay. There have already been improvements to the business support function in Torbay with the introduction of the Torbay Business Bureau (TBB) as described above. This strategy supports the TBB and the further improvement of business support provision in Torbay. It further encourages specific types of business support including a more general provision of ICT and e commerce support and awareness than has previously been available. The establishment of a bank of business mentors to tap into the talent in the community is also supported and could strongly complement the premises and support made available through the workspace programme.
- **P4.5 – Provision of appropriate employment land:** A shortage of appropriate sites presents a constraint to development and there is a need to ensure that provision of sites and premises meet business priorities, particularly the needs of priority sectors, and that current initiatives reflect those needs. Given the identified need to add value and diversify the local economy, and to raise the success rates and growth potential of new businesses, it is important that these initiatives anticipate the needs of start-ups as well as addressing the requirements of existing firms.
- **P4.6 – Strengthen links with South Hams and Teignbridge:** Torbay should develop and build on opportunities to strengthen links and increase co-operation with adjacent local economies. Teignbridge and South Hams have experienced stronger economic growth in recent years but share many similarities with the Torbay economy. There is potential to exploit these synergies and individual competitive advantages to maximise the opportunities and benefits to each economy by working more closely.
- **P4.7 – Attract appropriate and sustainable inward investment:** There are clear benefits in ensuring that future efforts to encourage inward investment into Torbay are targeted to achieve strategic economic objectives – encouraging and adding value to priority sectors, encouraging appropriate diversification, enhancing prospects for entrepreneurship, encouraging supply chain development and growth of knowledge-based businesses. It is important that future activity to attract inward investors is accompanied by plans to embed them in the local economy.

### 3.7 Theme Five: Develop Skills and Learning Opportunities

Skills are a means for Torbay residents, employees and businesses to prosper, fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations. For people, skills provide the means for inclusion in society – not solely for access to employment and increased earnings but also as means for greater self-fulfilment and quality of life. Business competitiveness needs staff and management able to apply creative and innovative solutions to all aspects of work. Torbay's businesses need people with the skills not only for today's jobs but also tomorrow's. Skills mean an inclusive society with thriving businesses, social enterprises able to compete and adapt to changing economic pressures and a sustainable community connected to and benefiting from wider regional and global opportunities.

Torbay's competitive economic advantage depends on building a culture of lifelong learning. At present, prosperity is held back by low skill levels amongst the adult population. Improving the skills (basic, general, technical and personal/interpersonal) of the workforce is increasingly recognised as a key requisite of successful economic development. It can help to increase economic activity rates, and can also open up opportunities for social development and a greater concern for improving the environment. A modern economy relies on knowledge, sophisticated skills and customer focus to produce and sell high value-added goods and services.

This theme aims to raise the aspirations, skills and educational levels of people living and working in Torbay by promoting a lifelong learning culture that is adaptable, accessible and attractive to all, while meeting the existing and future skills needs of businesses and supporting people trying to improve themselves.

#### Priorities

- **P5.1 – Improve learning provision in Torbay:** The marked improvement of the provision and facilities at South Devon College has the potential to have a huge impact on the Torbay economy, and this strategy is supportive of these developments. The strategy recommends the facilitation of efficient linkages with South Devon College, opening up a whole new range of opportunities (e.g. potential to develop the construction department following the recently achieved CoVE status). However key issues such as the lack of participation in learning and low skill levels indicate that there is much to achieve to create the building blocks of a successful economy. Furthermore, if Torbay is to create and promote a knowledge-based economy, there is a need to increase the quality of training provision delivered by schools, South Devon College and all other training providers and this strategy will support initiatives to:
  - Upskill the local workforce, in all sectors;
  - Provide specific courses for some of the sectors which the area would like to become known for, e.g. Environmental/marine science;
  - Promote vocational training in the future (the need for which is represented by the current lack of skilled and qualified workers in some sectors).
- **P5.2 – Establish and fill unmet training requirements in established sectors in Torbay:** The development and direction of skills and learning provision should be led by demand, facilitated through a consolidated understanding of businesses, the wider economy and the provision of other institutions. It is important that provision meets the needs of established sectors, especially the priority sectors identified in this strategy, and identifies/addresses skills shortages. However skills shortages can either be due to a lack of supply in particular provision, or a lack of demand for that provision. The solution could therefore involve expanding provision to cover skills shortages or raising awareness of existing provision. For example, it has been suggested that hospitality training does not contain sufficient practical training, as a result South Devon College plans to develop a training restaurant in Brixham, which will be open to the public. South Devon College is also able to extend current

provision to include a number of areas that are not currently covered including marine engineering, fish processing, retail NVQs, assuming there is demand for this provision.

- **P5.3 – Increase skill levels/skills development opportunities within Torbay:** There is a need to increase employer and individual participation in learning, particularly amongst the 'hard to reach', by removing existing barriers and providing easier access to training provision from basic skills to the higher level skills that are relatively scarce in the local population. The strategy supports partnership working in order to promote recognition of the role of skills in fostering economic development, facilitate communication and information sharing, and ensure that skills development can play its role in supporting economic development projects. There is potential to use regeneration packages, such as the Brixham Regeneration programme, as an opportunity to get employers together to discuss skills issues, raise skills levels and promote take up of training.
- **P5.4 – Develop closer relationships between schools, South Devon college, other training providers and business (in particular in the leisure & tourism sector and retail):** The development of skills and learning opportunities relies on the combined effort of a variety of delivery organisation, including:
  - The educational institutions – schools, South Devon College, other training providers;
  - The strategic planning and funding bodies – the Learning and Skills Council, the Devon and Torbay Learning Partnership, the Education Authority, the Local Strategic Partnerships;
  - Others, including signposting organisations (such as the Information Advice and Guidance networks) or organisations which reach certain groups of the population (e.g. Jobcentre Plus, voluntary and community sector)

There is a particular need for training providers to work collaboratively to address some skills issues in Torbay, such as increasing participation levels, and developing provision relevant and tailored to business needs. This is of key relevance to the tourism industry where training provision is required to assist plans to raise the quality of the tourism offer and customer service in Torbay. There are opportunities to link up with and support the work of the Hospitality Task & Finish Group set up by Devon & Cornwall LSC in order to ensure that the action planning that this group will soon embark on can take account of and support economic development strategies and actions formulated for the hospitality sector by Torbay Council and others.

A greater awareness of education and career progression routes will help local people to access opportunities in the changing economy, support individuals making the right choices about their career and future, and articulate the role of local educational institutions in these pathways. This will be of particular benefit to the tourism industry, which suffers from being perceived as having a low status and paying low wages, although these are national issues and not exclusive to Torbay. Furthermore many employers in the industry have a limited propensity to train their staff, and there is a limited awareness amongst young people, parents and schools of the range of career opportunities within the sector, which creates ongoing problems in attracting high calibre local individuals into the industry. It is these high calibre individuals who have the potential to inject much needed innovation into the industry and increase the quality of the local tourism product. These negative perceptions are a particular concern in Torbay, where the tourism industry is so significant, and there is a need to change these perceptions to let people know that the industry can provide continuous opportunities for learning and personal development, good jobs and long-term career progression. This needs to be done by improving liaison and awareness of opportunities between the industry, training providers, schools, parents and young people.

### **3.8 Theme Six: Community Support for a Higher Quality of Life**

This final theme of the strategy seeks to ensure that the benefits of economic development engage the community as a whole – both in the specification of priorities and through the design

of measures to include community organisations and those who are often socially excluded. Priorities here also seek to ensure the distribution of benefits across different areas of Torbay and different social groups and communities including in particular the workless. In this respect the strategy is linked to, and plays its part in delivering, the objectives of the Community Plan – particularly those objectives which try to advance economic development. This theme reflects the distributional and inclusion objectives of the Plan to:

- Make greater improvements to Torbay's economy and environment in ways that meet our wider responsibilities, and
- Do more for the mental, physical and spiritual well being of all of the people who live in, work in and visit Torbay, especially by providing fair treatment and equal opportunities for all
- The Community Plan is itself now under review and its strategic priority is likely to put more emphasis on economic prosperity and ensuring quality of life through quality of opportunity. The following four priorities show how this can be advanced.

## Priorities

**P6.1 – Gearing up the social economy:** The strategy will specifically encourage community participation in economic development to promote social inclusion and sustainable communities. The strategy will support capacity building of the voluntary and community sector to enable it to participate in partnership with statutory bodies. This would involve strengthening the skills of individual community representatives to undertake this kind of work, increase efforts to promote greater unification of a currently disparate sector, as well as strengthening of one or more of the coordinating bodies to enable it to operate as an effective representative of a unified sector in matters where one point of contact would be beneficial. As government policy on increasing the share of service delivery undertaken by non-statutory bodies grows, and as the recent development of the Torbay social enterprise sector demonstrates the opportunities for further social enterprise growth, Torbay Council is encouraged to work with the potential third sector providers locally to develop providers awareness of the Council's procurement routes and need for services giving such providers the opportunity to bid. The strategy will also support the development of social enterprises building on existing initiatives and developing the relationship and raising awareness between representatives of the voluntary and community sector - particularly Torbay Voluntary Services and ChangeUp in their capacity as coordinating bodies, the TDA Voluntary Sector Manager and CoActive. The strategy will support increasing resources for supporting social enterprise given the rising challenges faced by groups in accessing funding and the resulting need to broaden their income stream.

- **P6.2 – Improving security, health and social care:** This priority builds on the objectives of the Community Plan to improve people's feeling of safety and well-being reduce public disorder incidences and the fear of crime by reducing and discouraging offending behaviour through education, "designing out" crime through model town centre and housing areas layouts address community safety in public areas. It also seeks to reduce victimisation in crime, fire and road safety. The strategy also supports measures to reduce inequalities in access to health and social care facilities, particularly among young people, families and vulnerable adults by working closely with the Primary Care Trust and the education authority.
- **P6.3 - Promoting social inclusion and addressing worklessness:** As the Community Plan also recognises, the economic development of Torbay could lead to a dual economy and labour market, if new opportunities that are created by-pass existing and future socially or economically marginalised groups. Already a significant proportion of young people are not participating in learning. This is important not only for the well-being of individuals, but also for the development of the economy. A priority will be given to initiatives which support growth and wealth creation in ways which benefit all social groups – both existing and new populations – and reduce inequalities of those who are disadvantaged. The objective of

initiatives in this area should be to build social capital by strengthening social networks between people with neighbourhoods and between institutions, the community and businesses. It will also recognise the increasing role of the voluntary and community sector in regenerating Torbay, and of social enterprise in promoting economic regeneration and socioeconomic benefits.

Worklessness is a particular area of concern in Torbay and the high proportion of Jobcentre Plus priority group customers, such as Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Lone Parent Benefit claimants, has already led to a number of initiatives. These have included the promotion of Jobcentre Plus services to those individuals who are not required to attend the Jobcentre on a regular basis. Some success has already been achieved by advertising in doctors surgeries and distributing leaflets with medical prescriptions to IB claimants. Once engaged, individuals are being provided with skills coaching to help overcome any skills or confidence barriers to employment. Torbay was used as a pilot for this skills coaching initiative and due to the success achieved in Torbay, it is now being extended to other areas. The strategy suggests worklessness should have a significant focus, building on these previous and current efforts, whilst adding new initiatives to target solutions at those wards where the problem is most prominent, such as Roundham-with-Hyde, Tormohun, Ellacombe, Blatchcombe and Watcombe. This strategy also recommends the establishment of a working group, including representatives of Jobcentre Plus, TDA and the Council, to work more closely to reduce worklessness in Torbay, and supports the development of initiatives to engage with hard to reach claimants (such as long-term IB claimants), to provide relevant and free training and counselling services to encourage and support individuals to a position of job readiness, and to work closely with employers to assist the 'job-ready' in accessing employment opportunities.

- **P6.4 – Regenerating key community areas in the three towns:** This final priority seeks to ensure that the benefits of physical regeneration are brought directly to, and distributed across the communities of the three Torbay towns through action on town centre and neighbourhood regeneration and improvement of the public realm.

The strategy also supports the provision of infrastructure to facilitate sustainable regeneration of towns and neighbourhoods. Infrastructure initiatives which form part of regeneration schemes in the towns of Torbay will also provide benefit to key economic sectors which are located there and to the local communities working in them. This strategy supports these regeneration initiatives including:

- The relocation of the fish market, as part of the Brixham Regeneration programme, will provide a boost to the fishing industry as the existing fish market is in critical need of investment. The proposed development of a Northern Arm for Brixham Harbour will provide shelter for the proposed marina for the benefit of the marine leisure sector;
- Further expansion of the seafront and harbourside regeneration projects in Torquay and Paignton will support Theme 1 and attract new investment to the seafront. Phase 3 of the Torquay Harbourside project includes the development of a purpose built slipway, which will improve boat launching capabilities to the benefit of the Torbay marine sector. Opportunities to extend the initiative to other harbourside areas such as the Paignton Harbour area should be explored.
- The proposed Goodrington Resort development where there is an opportunity for significant investment.
- There are significant mixed use regeneration opportunities around the existing underused rail station sites at Paignton, Torquay and Torre. At Paignton in particular there is an opportunity to improve the town centre shopping offer to visitors and locals and to improve visitor facilities and services using the Paignton and Dartmouth Steam Railway.

- There are also opportunities to focus training and access to employment and facilitate community capital projects proposed under other themes by targeting key “regeneration wards” where deprivation, exclusion and worklessness are highest such as Blatchcombe, Watcombe, Roundham with Hyde, Ellacombe & Tormohun.
- **The public realm** - Supporting the town centre and harbour area improvements in all three towns in measures to enhance Torbay’s “assets”, including improvements to heritage buildings, public spaces and the waterfront, with a particular focus on quality of design.

## Annex1 Project and Funding Programme

Each of the recommended action projects and initiatives listed in the Annex has been reviewed in consultation with the key stakeholders and a priority list of 47 initiatives has been recommended for early action to initiate the strategy. In each case the Strategy Theme and Priority it is expected to advance is identified. The complete action plan is available as a separate document.

### Torbay Economic Regeneration Action Plan 2006- 2016

Strategy Theme / Priority	Project / Initiative Title	Implementation Period	Delivery Agency	Funding Responsibilities
1 Theme1/ Priority 1& 5	Assign 25 tourism champions and use to drive quality improvements across industry	2007	Torbay Development Agency in consultation with tourism industry	TDA
2 Theme 1/ Priority 3	Support plans for a casino development in Torquay	2008 – 2010	TDA, Torbay Council, Private Sector	Private sector
3 Theme 1 / Priority 2	Support provision of infrastructure in place in preparation for potential surge in interest in marine leisure following the 2012 Olympic Games	2008 – 2010 and 2011 - 2016	TDA, Torbay Council, SWRDA	TDA, SWRDA, Sport England
4 Theme 1 / Priority 2	Support development of Maritime Centre of Excellence	2008 - 2010	TDA, Torbay Council, Marine South West, Marine South Devon, SWRDA	TDA, SWRDA, Sport England & others to be identified.
5 Theme 1/ Priority 3	Market the surrounding environment and activities/attractions - e.g. Dartmoor, golf courses (to target affluent 50+ market)	2008 - 2010	TDA, South West Tourism, Private Sector	TDA, Private sector
6 Theme 1/4	Support the development of events and attractions based on Torbay's culture and heritage	2008-2010	TDA, Torbay Council, Private Sector	Private sector supported by others to be identified
7 Theme 1/ Priority 5	Market Torbay as a high quality destination - publicise quality restaurants with Michelin stars, Brixham fish, etc	2008 - 2010	TDA, South West Tourism, Private Sector	English Riviera Tourist Board, Private Sector
8 Theme 1/ Priority 5	Market Torbay, its environment and attractions to students at the area's language schools to encourage return visits	2008 - 2010	TDA, South West Tourism, Private Sector	English Riviera Tourist Board, Private Sector
9 Theme 1/ Priority 7	Support development and regeneration of Torbay town centres to maintain the market share and to increase quality of the retail offer: - 20,000sq m of comparison and specialist retail floorspace in	2011 - 2016 2008 -2010 2007	TDA, Torbay Council, Private Sector	Private Sector with Torbay Council

## Towards Torbay's New Economy

Strategy Theme / Priority	Project / Initiative Title	Implementation Period	Delivery Agency	Funding Responsibilities
	<p>Torquay town centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- modernise and improve the performance and appearance of Paignton town centre</li> <li>- 2,500 sq.m of quality convenience and 5,000 sq.m of comparison and niche shopping at Brixham Town Centre Car Park site and the Lanes</li> </ul>			
10 Theme 1/Priority 7	Investigate the potential and demand for Business Improvement Districts in Torbay.	2007-2010	TDA, Torbay Council, Private Sector	Private sector, Torbay Council & public funders to be identified
11 Theme 2/ Priority 1	Encourage entrepreneurial activity in hi tech manufacture by promoting Syntech Technologies' Technology Partnership Scheme' and other such programmes, thereby making use of the underexploited pool of skilled labour that exists in Torbay	2007-2016	TDA, Private Sector	Private Sector
12 Theme 2/ Priority 2	Support plans to redevelop Torbay Hospital and, if it proceeds, encourage maximum use of local construction sector	2008 - 2010	TDA, Torbay Hospital, South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust, Private sector	NHS, Private sector
13 Theme 2/ Priority 2	Develop local medical knowledge-base through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- links to Peninsula Medical School</li> <li>- Torbay Hospital's status as National Centre of Innovation and Training</li> <li>- Plans to develop surgical skills training centre</li> </ul>	2007-2016	TDA, Torbay Hospital, Primary Care Trust, Peninsula Medical School, South Devon College, LSC, SWRDA, Private sector	LSC, Private sector & others
14 Theme 2/ Priority 3	Increase awareness / branding of Brixham fish and the proposed fish market. Establish links with similar areas to develop joint opportunities.	2008 - 2010	TDA, Brixham 21, Brixham Trawler Agents, SWRDA, GOSW	European Fisheries Fund, TDA, Private Sector
15 Theme 2/ Priority 4	Establish links with the South West Marine CoVE to develop local provision of training opportunities which will meet skills needs of an expanding marine leisure sector and other marine sub-sectors	2007-2016	South West Marine CoVE, South Devon College, Other training providers, Marine South West, Marine South Devon	South West Marine CoVE, South Devon College
16 Theme 2/ Priority 4	Ensure Torbay's marine activities are promoted to maximise the advantage of Torbay. Also become actively involved with Marine South Devon and Marine South West	2007-2016	TDA, Brixham Trawler Agents, SWRDA, Marine South West, Marine South Devon and other marine organisations	TDA, Marine South West, Marine South Devon

## Towards Torbay's New Economy

Strategy Theme / Priority	Project / Initiative Title	Implementation Period	Delivery Agency	Funding Responsibilities
17 Theme 2/ All Priorities	Develop networks / forums for priority sectors	2008 - 2010	TDA, SWRDA, Private Sector	TDA, SWRDA, Private Sector
18 Theme 3/ Priority 1	Provide incubation/managed workspace facilities to encourage successful entrepreneurial activities	2006 – 2008	TDA, Business Link, South Devon College, SWRDA	Competitiveness & Employment, SWRDA and private sector
19 Theme 3/ Priority 1	Stimulate an entrepreneurial culture through promotion of enterprise to young people and provision of appropriate business support measures	2006 – 2016	TDA, Torbay Business Bureau (TBB), Schools, Colleges	TBB members
20 Theme 3/ Priority 2	Develop links between environmental / marine science sector and the wider South Devon cluster of activity	2007	TDA, SWRDA, Astra Zeneca	Private sector
21 Theme 3/ Priority 3	Market Torbay's ability to provide quality of life and high quality premises to encourage new and existing knowledge-based businesses to locate in Torbay	2011 – 2016	TDA, Torbay Council, SWRDA	TDA
22 Theme 4/ Priority 1	Support plans for South Devon Link Road	2006 – 2016	Devon County Council, Torbay Council, TDA SWRDA, GOSW	Local Transport Plan
23 Theme 4/ Priority 1	Support plans to improve the Western Corridor and ease access to Brixham and existing and potential employment sites	2006 – 2016	Devon County Council, Torbay Council, TDA SWRDA, GOSW	Local Transport Plan
24 Theme 4/ Priority 1	Investigate alternative means of gaining access to, and travelling around, Torbay such as park and ride and a year round ferry service	2008 - 2010	Torbay Council Transport Division, TDA, Brixham 21	Local Transport Plan
25 Theme 4/ Priority 2	Ensure Torbay is at the forefront of ICT infrastructure developments to attract high value businesses and overcome locational disadvantages	Ongoing	TDA, Broadband4Devon, SWRDA	European programmes, SWRDA
26 Theme 4/ Priority 2	Ensure that Torbay businesses are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities of e commerce and that appropriate support is in place to enable businesses to engage	Ongoing	TDA, SWRDA	Competitiveness & Employment, SWRDA
27 Theme 4/ Priority 3	Encourage businesses (particularly larger businesses) to have greater involvement in the local economy and public debate	2007	TDA, Torbay Council, Business Community	NA

## Towards Torbay's New Economy

Strategy Theme / Priority	Project / Initiative Title	Implementation Period	Delivery Agency	Funding Responsibilities
28 Theme 4/ Priority 4	Increase awareness of the Torbay Business Bureau to facilitate and encourage access	2007	TBB partners (TDA, Business Link, Enterprise South Devon, South Devon College, Jobcentre Plus)	TBB partners
29 Theme 4/ Priority 4	Ensure business support coverage is appropriate to meet needs of local businesses – particularly new business and priority sectors. In particular investigate the establishment of a mentor bank to ensure that the talent in the community can support new businesses.	2006 - 2016	TBB partners (TDA, Business Link, Enterprise South Devon, South Devon College, Jobcentre Plus), Employers	TBB partners
30 Theme 4/ Priority 5	Create sufficient workspace of appropriate size, type and location to permit expansion of a diversified business base	2011 – 2016	TDA, Torbay Council, SWRDA, GOSW, and Private sector	SWRDA, TDA, Private sector
31 Theme 4/ Priority 6	Be more proactive and develop links with South Hams / Teignbridge to share information and best practice	2007	TDA, Torbay Council, South Hams District Council, Teignbridge District Council, SWRDA	NA
32 Theme 4/ Priority 6	Discuss potential opportunity to develop a joint employment land register for South Devon or even wider area	2008 - 2010	TDA, Torbay Council, South Hams District Council, Teignbridge District Council,	Torbay, South Hams, Teignbridge District Councils
33 Theme 4/ Priority 7	Develop a strategic approach to inward investment taking account of need to: - encourage development of priority sectors - enhance diversification and entrepreneurship - attract and develop knowledge-based businesses Produce necessary marketing material on Bay to facilitate this	2011 – 2016	TDA, SWRDA	TDA, SWRDA
34 Theme 5/ All Priorities	Promote collaboration between all schools, colleges, training providers, strategic planning and funding bodies, signposting organisations, and business to address problems. (E.g. raising awareness of existing provision, identification of training needs, creating provision to meet those needs, increasing participation)	2007 and 2008 - 2010	Schools, Community Colleges, SDC, Other training providers, LSC, Business Link, Employers	LSC, Private sector
35 Theme 5/ Priority 1	Develop a central, organised and reliable source of training information, which is promoted and easily accessible to employers	2007	TDA, South Devon College, Other training providers, LSC, Business Link,	LSC, South Devon College, Private sector

## Towards Torbay's New Economy

Strategy Theme / Priority	Project / Initiative Title	Implementation Period	Delivery Agency	Funding Responsibilities
			Employers	
36 Theme 5/ Priority 1	Continue to support developments at South Devon College and encourage increased provision to support priority sectors	2008 - 2010	TDA, South Devon College, LEA, LSC, Schools, Community Colleges, Employers	LSC, Competitiveness & Employment programme and SWRDA
37 Theme 5/ Priority 3	Encourage more people to achieve higher level qualifications via South Devon College provision of foundation degrees / Support the Peninsular Project at South Devon College encouraging young people into Higher Education	2006 - 2016	Schools, Community Colleges, South Devon College, University of Plymouth, TDA	South Devon College, University of Plymouth
38 Theme 5/ Priority 4	Identify clear progression routes in leisure & tourism and retail and sell these to guidance people, parents and young people to attract higher calibre young people	2007	TDA, Tourism Skills Network, English Riviera Tourist Board, ERAT, Torbay Hospitality Association, South Devon College, Other training providers, Schools, Colleges, LSC, LEA	Tourism agencies, LSC
39 Theme 6/ Priority 1	Explore the creation of a referral mechanism that would signpost budding or existing entrepreneurs to social enterprise support services,	2006 - 2008	TDA, Co-Active, Torbay Business Bureau	TDA, Co-Active, SWRDA
40 Theme 6 / Priority 1&2	Develop social enterprise opportunities in the following areas: - Creation of credit union - Childcare - Care for the elderly - Maintenance/repair and gardening for disadvantaged people	2007-12	TDA, Torbay Council and others	TDA
41 Theme 6 / Priority 3	Establish a working group to work more closely to reduce worklessness in Torbay and specifically to target worklessness in key wards including Roundham-with-Hyde, Tormohun, Ellacombe, Blatchcombe and Watcombe.	2007	Jobcentre Plus, TDA, Torbay Council, Torbay Strategic Partnership	Jobcentre Plus, TDA
42 Theme 6 / Priority 3	Develop new, and support existing, initiatives to: - engage hard to reach claimants. - provide relevant and free training and counselling services to encourage and support individuals to a position of job readiness. - work closely with employers to assist the 'job ready' in accessing employment opportunities.	2008 - 2010	Job Centre Plus, LSC, South Devon College, Training Providers, Torbay Strategic Partnership, Employers	Job Centre Plus, LSC

Towards Torbay's New Economy

Strategy Theme / Priority	Project / Initiative Title	Implementation Period	Delivery Agency	Funding Responsibilities
43 Theme 6/ Priority 4	Commence phase 1 of Brixham harbour regeneration – Fish Market and Oxen Cove business units	2007	TDA, Torbay Council, Brixham 21, Brixham Trawler Agents, GOSW	Objective 2, FIG and SWRDA plus private sector
44 Theme 6/ Priority 4	Work with the communities and Brixham 21 to deliver town centre and remaining marina / mixed use development of Brixham Regeneration Scheme	2008 - 2010	TDA, Brixham 21, SWRDA, GOSW, Private investors	Private sector with public sector support
45 Theme 6/ Priority 4	Complete phase 3 of Torquay Waterfront regeneration and extend programme to Paignton Harbour	2007 and 2008 - 2010	TDA and Torbay Council	Torbay Council, SWRDA, Private Sector
46 Theme 6/ Priority 4	Initiate mixed use regeneration projects for underused station sites at Paignton, Torquay and Torre	2011 - 2016	TDA, Network Rail and Torbay Council	Private sector and Network Rail with public sector support
47 Theme 6/ Priority 4	Support the development of the Goodrington Resort	2008-2010	Torbay Council, TDA & Private Sector	Private Sector & others to be identified







To download this strategy go to Torbay Council's website at [www.torbay.gov.uk/torbayeconomicregenerationframework](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/torbayeconomicregenerationframework)

To find out more about our vision for the economy of Torbay please call 01803 296296.



This document can be made available in other languages, on tape, in Braille, large print and in other formats. For further information please contact 01803 296296.



Supported by



**South West of England**  
Regional Development Agency