

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2004/2005



Serving the Community



“Improving Torrridge Together”

Our VISION for Torrridge is:

‘A place where people and communities work to achieve a high sustainable quality of life for everyone by promoting prosperity, innovation and independence for all and by protecting and enhancing the distinctive natural assets and environment of the area’.

We have five corporate objectives:

1. To support the development of safe and inclusive communities able to meet their own needs
2. To protect and enhance our distinctive natural environment to encourage a sustainable quality of life
3. To promote innovation and help create and support the successful regeneration of communities and support the local economy
4. To regenerate Bideford and the whole of Torrridge and promote greater recognition of the town and District outside the area
5. To use the Council’s community leadership role to achieve high quality public services

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Foreword by the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council

Torrige District Council is committed to providing efficient, effective and relevant services to everyone who lives, works or visits our area. This Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) sets out our priorities and how we plan to meet them. It includes an analysis of our performance over recent years and targets for the future.

Last year's comprehensive performance assessment (CPA) – an independent assessment of the Council that rates excellent councils as the highest performing authorities– identified some challenging issues for us. Since then, we have been striving to improve our services and our performance. In this, we're being supported by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and Government Office South West (GOSW). Your local councillors and officers have been involved in training and development programmes. We're now re-organising our structures to help us move from the old ways of working to the new. Gone are separate departments working on their own. Instead, we're working together as one Council to make a positive difference to the lives of local people.

We have drawn up a Corporate Plan, Recovery Plan and Vision Document to help us to move forward.

- the Corporate Plan provides focus and direction for the Council towards 2011. It's a 'living' document and will be regularly reviewed and updated.
- the Recovery Plan sets out the way forward for the Council to achieve our aim of being an excellent Council by 2008.
- our Vision document sees Torrige as a place where people and communities work to achieve a high quality and sustainable quality of life for everyone by promoting prosperity, innovation and independence and by protecting and enhancing the area's distinctive natural assets and environment.

We welcome your comments on these documents, which you can see in Council offices, on our website. www.torrige.gov.uk or by contacting Judy Phillips or Jon Walter on 01237 428789 e-mail judy.phillips@torridge.gov.uk or jon.walter@torridge.gov.uk

We recognise that partnership working is crucial to our success. The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and Area Advisory Groups (meetings with parish councils) help us to share resources and solve problems for the benefit of the people of Torrige.

We are doing this to help provide you with the very best value for money and effective services.



Councillor Pat Ferguson
Leader of the Council

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Pat Ferguson'.

Councillor Steve Clarke
Deputy Leader of the Council

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Steve Clarke'.

Interim Chief Executive – Roger Heath



“Torridge District Council has a lot to offer.

The staff are dedicated to providing high quality services to all and are continuously striving to improve.

We have set ourselves the goal of becoming an ‘excellent’ authority by 2008 and I have every confidence that this goal will be achieved”.

Director of Improvement - Mal Brown



“Since starting with the Council in April 2004, I’ve gained a good impression of the talent, quality and dedication of staff and councillors and, most importantly, a determined commitment to change.

I’m convinced that, over the next few months, you’ll notice a great improvement in the quality and speed of our services.

We will be working more closely with you as our customers. We’ll be putting you first and you’ll be more aware of the work we do on your behalf. We will also be listening to you and taking your comments on board as we plan our services for tomorrow. We’re looking forward to the challenges ahead. With your help, views and support, this Council can become the integral part of shaping a bright future for Torridge”.

Director of Resources – Jenny Wallace



“We know how important it is that you have good quality services as well as reasonable council tax levels. We’re striving to provide the best services possible for local people,

businesses and visitors, and at the same time provide value for money.

We’re confident that by exploring new ways of working with other public sector organisations, we can pool resources, avoid duplication and waste and target services that you’ve identified as high priorities,

Listening to you is an important part of our work. Although next year’s budget doesn’t take effect until April 2005, we need to start planning for it now. Over the next few months, we’ll be asking you for your views on the things you need to help you enjoy a good quality of life. The results of this consultation will be fed into our budget process in the Autumn and form the basis of our future spending plans.

You can be sure that we’ll continue to use your money wisely and that we’ll deliver effective services of which we can be justifiably proud”.

Director of Services and Communities – Gail Bowering-Sheehan



“I am delighted that we’ve been able to strengthen our joint working with so many agencies, voluntary and community groups. Such partnership working means we can focus on what matters to Torridge by agreeing common priorities and actions.

These are based on what you have told us during a number of consultation events over the past twelve months. To make sure these stay up to date, we’ll be continuing to ask your views during the next few months and to listen to what you tell us. In this way, we’ll make sure our priorities always reflect your needs.

Our challenge is to work together, particularly with local communities and partner agencies, to address areas you tell us are important to you. We’ll continue to improve services we provide, either directly or with others, and will try and find new and better ways to do this.

We are committed to this approach and to improving the way we communicate with you. That means letting you know about things as well as listening to what you have to say and taking your views into account when planning our services. By doing this, we’ll continue to make sure Torridge is an even better place to live, work and visit”.

Your Councillors at Torridge District Council



John ALLEN - Holsworthy Ward

'Fairway' Sanctuary Road Holsworthy EX22 6DQ
tel: Day: 01409 254298 Eve: 01409 253663

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Democratic Group of Councillors



Hugo BARTON - Bideford North Ward

'Glenrowan' Orchard Hill Bideford EX39 2RA
tel: 01237 474076 Mobile: 07980 202950

Standing in 2003 Election: Liberal Democrat
Group for Administrative purposes: Liberal Democrat



Allin BEWES - Shebbear & Langtree Ward

Suddon, Newton St Petrock, Torrington EX38 8LU
tel: 01409 281205

Standing in 2003 Election: Lib Dem
Group for Administrative purposes: Liberal Democrat



Richard BOND (Judd) -Torrington Ward

25 New Street, Torrington EX38 8BN tel: 01805 624 537

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Hugh BONE – Kenwith Ward

Bones Roost, Parkham, Bideford EX39 5PG tel: 01237 451448

Standing in 2003 Election: Community Alliance Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Geoff BOUNDY - Monkleigh & Littleham Ward

The Grannary, Hallsannery Farm, Bideford EX39 5HE tel: 01237 477999

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Richard BROAD – Tamarside Ward

Waterloo House, Holsworthy EX22 6JL tel: 01409 253226

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Margaret BROWN (Mrs) – Torrington Ward

52 Dartington Fields Great Torrington EX38 7DN
tel: 01805 624375

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Geoffrey BROYD - Coham Bridge Ward
Conservative Group Leader

Waterloo Farm, Holsworthy Hamlets EX22 6J
tel: 01409 259302 or 01409 254838 Mobile: 07971 785351

Standing in 2003 Election: Community First Conservative
Group for Administrative purposes: Conservative



Sonia BUSHBY (Mrs) - Bideford South Ward

5 Brookfield, Clovelly Road Bideford EX39 3DP
tel: 01237 472714 mobile: 0777 0961281

Standing in 2003 Election: Community Alliance Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Peter CHRISTIE - Bideford North Ward

30 Lime Grove Bideford EX39 3JL tel: 01237 473577

Standing in 2003 Election: Green
Group for Administrative purposes: Democratic Group of Councillors



Steve CLARKE - Bideford East Ward
Deputy Leader of the Council

c/o SEL Clarke Ltd, New Road, Bideford Devon
tel: day 01237 476375 mobile: 07968110090

Standing in 2003 Election: Community Alliance Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Phil Collins – Clinton Ward

'Mowhay', Merton, Okehampton EX20 3DS
tel: day 01805 603443

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



John COWLE – Winkleigh Ward

Two Towers, Hollocombe, Chulmleigh EX18 7QQ tel: 01837 83863

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



David DANIEL - Bideford South Ward

184 Moreton Park Road, Bideford EX39 3HB tel: 01237 478736

Standing in 2003 Election: Liberal Democrat
Group for Administrative purposes: Liberal Democrat



John DAVIES - Northam Ward

49 Atlantic Way, Westward Ho! Bideford EX39 1JD
tel: 01237 479194

Standing in 2003 Election: Community Alliance
Group for Administrative purposes: Together for Torridge



Andrew EASTMAN – Appledore Ward

14 Myrtle Street, Appledore EX39 1PH tel: 01237 474550

Standing in 2003 Election: United Kingdom Independence Party
Group for Administrative purposes: Together for Torridge



EASTWOOD Alan ^{OBE} - Northam Ward

Together for Torridge Group Leader

The Elms, Sandymere Road, Northam Bideford EX39 1HB
tel: 01237 421093

Standing in 2003 Election: Community Alliance
Group for Administrative purposes: Together for Torridge



Pat FERGUSON (Mrs) – Three Moors Ward
Leader of the Council

Cemetery Lodge, Buckland Road, Bideford EX39 5AQ
tel: 01237 473682 Mobile 0781 1608228

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Len FORD – Appledore Ward

2 Richmond Road, Appledore EX39 1PE tel: 01237 423180

Standing in 2003 Election: Liberal Democrat
Group for Administrative purposes: Liberal Democrat



Alasdair GOULD – Bideford North Ward

13 Bridgeland Street Bideford EX39 2QE tel: Mobile 07989 344910

Standing in 2003 Election: Community Alliance Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Bob HICKS – Waldon Ward
Independent Group Leader

West Hele, Buckland Brewer EX39 5LZ
tel: 01237 451044 Mobile: 07773795823

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Frank HOWARD ^{MBE} – Broadheath Ward

The Lodge, West Peeke, Tetcott, Holsworthy EX22 6RE
tel: 01409 271358

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Tony INCH – Bideford South Ward

85 Devonshire Park, Bideford EX39 5JF tel: 01237 479162

Standing in 2003 Election: Liberal Democrat
Group for Administrative purposes: Liberal Democrat



William ISAAC - Bideford East Ward

6 Queen Street Bideford EX39 2JG tel: 01237 424242 or
01237 473305 Fax: 01237 478965 Mobile: 07790 843481

Standing in 2003 Election: Community Alliance Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Royston JOHNS – Clovelly Bay Ward

Dyke Green Farm, Higher Clovelly EX39 2RU tel: 01237 431279

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Non aligned



Christine MARCH (Mrs) – Forest Ward

Ash Cottage, Ashwater, Beaworthy EX21 5DH tel: 01409 211340

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Ann MOUNCE (Mrs) – Orchard Hill Ward

35 Morwenna Park Road, Northam, Bideford EX39 1EQ
tel: 01237 476961

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



James MORRISH Two Rivers Ward

c/o Holsmart Centre, Cattle Market, Holsworthy EX22 6BL
tel: 01409 259146 mobile: 07779 143852

Standing in 2003 Election: -
Group for Administrative purposes: Conservative



Pam PADDON (Mrs) – Bideford East Ward
Democratic Group of Councillors Group Leader

5 Sunnyside, Bideford East EX39 4EG tel: 01237 478194

Standing in 2003 Election : Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Democratic Group of Councillors



Bill PILLMAN – Hartland & Bradworthy Ward

'Tower View' West Ball Hill Hartland Bideford EX39 6BX
tel: 01237 441434

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



John RAWLINSON - Torrington Ward

Hillside Cottage, Kingscott, Torrington EX38 7JW
tel: 01805 624548

Standing in 2003 Election: Liberal Democrat
Group for Administrative purposes: Liberal Democrat



Des SHADRICK – Holsworthy Ward
Liberal Democrat Group Leader

Cranbury Farm, Holsworthy EX22 6NY tel: 01409 253578
Mobile: 077922 77516

Standing in 2003 Election: Liberal Democrat
Group for Administrative purposes: Liberal Democrat



Trevor SILLIFANT – Hartland & Bradworthy Ward

'Trebarwick', Mill Road Bradworthy, Holsworthy EX22 7RT
tel: 01409 241375

Standing in 2003 Election: Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Democratic Group of Councillors



Paul STURGES – Northam Ward

17 Geneva Court, Bideford EX39 3BQ tel: 01237 477796
Mobile 07977813791

Standing in 2003 Election: Community Alliance
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent



Tim WILLIAMS – Westward Ho! Ward

11 Windsor Road, Northam, EX39 1EN tel: 01237 477796
Mobile 07812 767996

Standing in 2003 Election: Community Alliance Independent
Group for Administrative purposes: Independent

District Councillors (elected members)

Councillors are members of the public who are elected to represent local people in the Council's decision making process. Torridge has 36 District Councillors – also known as elected members – who are elected every four years.

Councillors work with local communities and help deal with issues that affect people's lives. They play an important role in reflecting the views of local people, balancing different interests in the district and representing Torridge as a whole. Their work is rooted in promoting the social, economic and environmental well-being of Torridge and its residents. Some of this work involves them working with colleagues in partner agencies, such as the Police, County Council or Health organisations.

Councillors stand for election as part of a political or community group or as independents. The Council has six groups:

- Independents
- Liberal Democrats
- Democratic
- Together for Torridge
- Conservative
- Non-aligned

At the last election in 2003, a number of Councillors stood as Independent or Community Alliance Independents and between them, formed the two largest groups. They have now merged into one group of Independent Councillors to forge a better working relationship and to form an administration to carry out the Council's work.

The Council's decision making process involves five main committees:

- Development & Trading Services
- Environment & Leisure Services
- Housing
- Northam Burrows
- Policy & Resources

Two Scrutiny Committees examine decisions taken by various committees and help develop the Council's policies. There are also a number of other smaller committees and working groups (see over the page for a full list of committees, working groups and membership). Sometimes, other working groups are set up on a task and finish basis to deal with issues, which arise from time to time.

The Plans Committee meet every three weeks and the Northam Burrows Committee meet every quarter. The five main committees, plus the two scrutiny committees, meet every six weeks, with the Full Council (all 36 councillors) meeting at the end of this six-week 'cycle'.

Each committee is made up of a number of councillors. Each May, Councillors agree membership of committees, along with a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for each for the next 12 months. They also choose a Chairman and Vice Chairman of Full Council. The Council also has a Leader and a Deputy Leader but they do not have to be elected each year.

All District Councillors have agreed to follow a National Code of Conduct to ensure they carry out their duties to the highest standard.

Membership of Committees and Working Groups 2004/5

updated 29.6.04

Committee	<i>Independents</i>	<i>Lib Dem</i>	<i>Democratic Group</i>	<i>Together for Torridge</i>	<i>Conservatives</i>	<i>Non Aligned</i>
Policy & Resources Committee 15 members	<i>Pat Ferguson (c)</i>	Des Shadrick	Trevor Sillifant	Alan Eastwood	Geoff Broyd	-
	Steve Clarke (vc)	David Daniel	Pam Paddon	-	-	-
	Richard Broad	Allin Bewes	-	-	-	-
	Margaret Brown	-	-	-	-	-
	John Cowle	-	-	-	-	-
	Alasdair Gould	-	-	-	-	-
	Bob Hicks	-	-	-	-	-
	William Isaac	-	-	-	-	-
Development & Trading Services Committee 15 members	<i>Bob Hicks (c)</i>	Hugo Barton	Peter Christie	John Davies	Geoff Broyd	-
	William Isaac (vc)	Des Shadrick	John Allen	-	-	-
	Steve Clarke	John Rawlinson	-	-	-	-
	Alasdair Gould	-	-	-	-	-
	Hugh Bone	-	-	-	-	-
	Richard (Judd) Bond	-	-	-	-	-
	Bill Pillman	-	-	-	-	-
	Paul Sturges	-	-	-	-	-
Environ'tal & Leisure Services Committee 15 members	<i>Hugh Bone (c)</i>	Tony Inch	John Allen	Andrew Eastman	James Morrish	Royston Johns
	Phil Collins (vc)	Len Ford	-	-	-	-
	Pat Ferguson	John Rawlinson	-	-	-	-
	Paul Sturges	-	-	-	-	-
	Frank Howard	-	-	-	-	-
	Christine March	-	-	-	-	-
	Ann Mounce	-	-	-	-	-
	Geoff Boundy	-	-	-	-	-
Housing Committee 15 members	<i>Margaret Brown (c)</i>	Len Ford	Trevor Sillifant	Andrew Eastman	James Morrish	-
	Sonia Busby (vc)	Tony Inch	Pam Paddon	-	-	-
	Pat Ferguson	David Daniel	-	-	-	-
	John Cowle	-	-	-	-	-
	Richard (Judd) Bond	-	-	-	-	-
	Frank Howard	-	-	-	-	-
	Ann Mounce	-	-	-	-	-
	Tim Williams	-	-	-	-	-

	<i>Independents</i>	<i>Lib Dem</i>	<i>Democratic Group</i>	<i>Together for Torridge</i>	<i>Conservatives</i>	<i>Non Aligned</i>
Plans Committee 15 members	Bill Pillman (c)	Hugo Barton	Peter Christie	-	Geoff Broyd	-
	Christine March (vc)	Des Shadrick	Pam Paddon	-	-	-
	Richard Broad	Allin Bewes	-	-	-	-
	William Isaac	David Daniel	-	-	-	-
	Frank Howard	-	-	-	-	-
	Sonia Bushby	-	-	-	-	-
	Tim Williams	-	-	-	-	-
	Geoff Boundy	-	-	-	-	-
Northam Burrows Committee 10 members	Ann Mounce (c)	Len Ford	Pam Paddon	Andrew Eastman (Vc)	-	
	Pat Ferguson	Hugo Barton	-	John Davies	-	-
	Alasdair Gould	-	-	-	-	-
	Paul Sturges	-	-	-	-	-
	Geoff Boundy	-	-	-	-	-
Scrutiny 1 Committee 10 members	Paul Sturges (c)	Hugo Barton	John Allen (Vc)	John Davies	-	Royston Johns
	Hugh Bone	John Rawlinson	-	-	-	-
	Phil Collins	-	-	-	-	-
	Bill Pillman	-	-	-	-	-
	Vacancy x 1	-	-	-	-	-
Scrutiny 2 Committee 10 members	Tim Williams (vc)	Allin Bewes (c)	Trevor Sillifant	Alan Eastwood	James Morrish	-
	Sonia Bushby	David Daniel	-	-	-	-
	John Cowle	-	-	-	-	-
	Margaret Brown	-	-	-	-	-
	Richard Broad	-	-	-	-	-
Licensing Board 7 members	Richard Broad (c)	Hugo Barton	John Allen	John Davies	-	-
	Phil Collins	-	-	-	-	-
	Sonia Bushby	-	-	-	-	-
	Tim Williams	-	-	-	-	-
Licensing Committee 15 members	Richard Broad (c)	Hugo Barton	John Allen	John Davies	Geoff Broyd	Royston Johns
	Richard (Judd) Bond	Len Ford	-	-	-	-
	Paul Sturges	Allin Bewes	-	-	-	-
	Frank Howard	-	-	-	-	-
	Ann Mounce	-	-	-	-	-
	Tim Williams	-	-	-	-	-
	Vacancies x 2					

	<i>Independents</i>	<i>Lib Dem</i>	<i>Democratic Group</i>	<i>Together for Torridge</i>	<i>Conservatives</i>	<i>Non Aligned</i>
Standards Board 6 members	Phil Collins	Hugo Barton	Pam Paddon	Alan Eastwood	-	-
	Ann Mounce	-	-	-	-	-
	Geoff Boundy	-	-	-	-	-

Key

Italics - Chairman of Committee

(vc) Vice Chairman of Committee

Working Groups

<i>Working Group</i>	<i>Independents</i>	<i>Lib Dem</i>	<i>Democratic Group</i>	<i>Together for Torridge</i>	<i>Conservatives</i>	<i>Non Aligned</i>
Bideford Liaison Committee chairs of main cttees and Bideford ward members	Margaret Brown Pat Ferguson Bob Hicks Hugh Bone Bill Pillman Sonia Bushby Steve Clarke Alasdair Gould William Isaac Ann Mounce	David Daniel Tony Inch	Pam Paddon	-	-	-
Bideford Regeneration Group (4)	Bob Hicks William Isaac	Hugo Barton	Peter Christie	-	-	-
Burton Art Gallery Forum (7)	Phil Collins Geoff Boundy Alasdair Gould	John Rawlinson	Peter Christie	Alan Eastwood	-	-
Constitution WG (5)	Tim Williams (C) Pat Ferguson Bob Hicks Bill Pillman		Pam Paddon			
Contracts Board (rotate chair) (7)	Richard (Judd) Bond Geoff Boundy Margaret Brown Steve Clarke	TBC	Pam Paddon	-	Geoff Broyd	-
Harbour Board (6)	Bill Pillman William Isaac Tim Williams	Len Ford	Pam Paddon	Andrew Eastman	-	-

Holsworthy Liaison Committee (8) (chairs of main committees and Hols ward members)	Margaret Brown Pat Ferguson Bob Hicks Bill Pillman Hugh Bone Ann Mounce	Des Shadrick	John Allen	-	-	Royston Johns
Joint Consultative Committee (7)	Pat Ferguson Margaret Brown Ann Mounce Christine March	Hugo Barton	Trevor Sillifant	Andrew Eastman	-	-

Working Group	Independents	Lib Dem	Democratic Group	Together for Torridge	Conservatives	Non Aligned
Grievances & Disciplinary Appeals	Margaret Brown Pat Ferguson Ann Mounce Christine March	Allin Bewes	Trevor Sillifant	Andrew Eastman	-	-
Job Evaluation (Appeals) (7)	Geoff Boundy Pat Ferguson Sonia Bushby	Allin Bewes	John Allen	Andrew Eastman	Geoff Broyd	-
Managed Workspace (5)	Bob Hicks Hugh Bone	David Daniel	Trevor Sillifant	-	-	Royston Johns
Member Development SG (7)	Sonia Bushby Paul Sturges	Allin Bewes	Peter Christie	John Davies	James Morrish	
New Years Eve	Geoff Boundy Alasdair Gould	-	-	-	-	-
Northam Burrows Forum (7)	Ann Mounce Tim Williams Paul Sturges Alasdair Gould	Len Ford	Pam Paddon	Andrew Eastman		
Northam Liaison (chairs main cttees + ward members)	Margaret Brown Pat Ferguson Bob Hicks Hugh Bone Bill Pillman Ann Mounce Paul Sturges Tim Williams	Len Ford	-	Andrew Eastman John Davies Alan Eastwood	-	-

	<i>Independents</i>	<i>Lib Dem</i>	<i>Democratic Group</i>	<i>Together for Torridge</i>	<i>Conservatives</i>	<i>Non Aligned</i>
Torrington Sports Hall (2)	Margaret Brown	-	-	John Davies	-	-
Torrington Liaison Committee (Chairs main cttees + ward members)	Richard (Judd) Bond Margaret Brown Pat Ferguson Bob Hicks Hugh Bone Bill Pillman Ann Mounce	John Rawlinson	-	-	-	-
Tourism Liaison Group x 9	Margaret Brown Pat Ferguson Ann Mounce Hugh Bone	David Daniel Len Ford	Peter Christie	Alan Eastwood	Geoff Broyd	-

Customer Services

What do we do?

The Council wants to deliver good quality services in a way that our customers prefer to receive them. The new Customer Services team aims to provide a better service to customers at their first point of contact. The team administers council tax, business rates, sundry debts and cashiering and is responsible for the Council's reception, administration and public relations & communications services. The Head of Customer Services personally deals with suggestions, compliments and complaints about the Council's work and services.

Our community commitments:

We want to make Torrridge a better place to live and work while sustaining our distinctive natural environment. We will do this by:

Helping communities meet their own needs by:

- finding out how people prefer to contact us and receive information from us
- giving advice about schemes or appropriate benefits
- determining the needs of people in rural areas

Encouraging a sustainable quality of life by developing the natural distinctive environment by:

- maximising the uptake of key benefits
- recycling all used paper
- providing advice to local businesses and people in connection with reliefs available for business and council tax

Supporting the local economy and regeneration of communities through design and innovation by:

- extending benefit fraud awareness throughout Torrridge
- providing advice promptly in a 'right first time' approach
- making sure our staff are well-trained, helpful and informative

Promoting regeneration and recognition of Bideford and the District by:

- using customers' comments, complaints and compliments to help meet local people's needs

Leading the community to achieve high quality public services by:

- working with partners to develop a Torrridge "One Stop Shop" Customer Contact Centre
- finding the best way to provide a similar service to rural areas outside Bideford
- investing in ways to make sure customers can contact us in a way they prefer
- making sure our staff are developed in a way that is tailored to their needs and the needs of their team

What we said and did last year....

What we said we'd do...	What we did...
Introduce plastic payment cards instead of booklets	Successfully completed
Accept payments by credit and debit card for Council Tax, business rates, sundry debts and car park tickets	Successfully completed
Increase collection rates for council tax and business rates	Successfully completed
Accept payments for council tax, business rates and car parking tickets electronically (over the internet and by telephone)	Successfully completed

Our plans for the future:

- to investigate and develop a Torridge "One Stop Shop" Customer Contact Centre
- to investigate a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to improve our service to customers at their first point of contact with the Council
- to improve the time it takes to process benefit applications
- to investigate the introduction of a corporate call centre for customers
- to make sure useful information and news is regularly given to customers through the media

Did you know?

- the most cost effective way to pay your Council Tax is by direct debit. It keeps the Council's administration costs down and helps to reduce council tax increases
- there are 2,414 business premises in Torridge, and 27,622 council tax properties
- there are 7,500 housing and council tax benefit claimants in Torridge
- on average, the Council receives £35,000 in payments to various funds every working day
- the split in revenue of Council Tax is as follows, Torridge District Council receive only 10%, average Parish/Town Council 1%, Devon Fire 5%, Police 9% and Devon County 75%

Contact details:

Customer Services Team
Phone: 01237 428900 (24 hour)
Fax: 01237 424299
E-mail: customer.services@torridge.gov.uk
Website: www.torridge.gov.uk



Development Services

What do we do?

Development Services provide a statutory planning and building regulation role and is responsible for the Council's emergency planning and closed circuit television (CCTV) systems.

- Local Plans - we provide plan preparation and policy guidance in key areas, including the Torridge District Local Plan, which will soon be adopted
- Development Control - we determine more than 1,500 planning applications each year as well as carrying out other work
- Building Control - we provide an advisory and determining service for local people, architectural agents and builders in construction and alteration projects
- Emergency Planning – we co-ordinate the Council's response to an emergency or major incident to meet central Government requirements
- CCTV - to help make Torridge a safer place, we operate the Bideford CCTV system

Our community commitments:

We want to make Torridge a better place to live and work while sustaining our distinctive natural environment. We will do this by:

Helping communities meet their own needs by:

- listening to their aspirations and finding ways to meet them. An example of this is the CCTV facility in Bideford

Encouraging a sustainable quality of life by developing the natural distinctive environment by:

- striking a balance between development and ensuring it is appropriate to its setting and the broader environment. We do this through the Local Plan and documents like the Appledore Conservation Appraisal 2003. We have also contributed to and adopted the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan

Supporting the local economy and regeneration of communities through design and innovation by:

- making sure appropriate land is allocated for employment and housing, as well as a policy framework to help sustainable forms of development in Torridge

Promoting regeneration and recognition of Bideford and the Torridge District by:

- making sure Bideford, as a principal centre of strategic significance, is the focus for planning policies which phase development for residential and economic benefit to the town

Leading the community in achieving high quality public services by:

- reviewing the way we work and communicate with local people to make sure we provide a responsive and efficient service

What we said and did last year ...

What we said we'd do..	What we did..
Commission a new computer system	Achieved. Further modules and refinements will be implemented
Recruit staff to make sure we have the skills and resources we need	Achieved in Development Control, but not completely in Building Control
Set realistic performance indicators and increase development control performance	Some progress made, more to be done in this area
Maintain the timetable for adopting the Local Plan	This work is on target

Our plans for the future:

- to overhaul our web based information and provide answers to a range of planning queries.
- to ensure planning plays a key role in meeting community aspirations
- to begin work on new Local Development Frameworks
- to work with partners, including parish councils, to find ways to resolve planning issues effectively and efficiently
- to show marked improvements in national performance indicators
- to extend the CCTV service where appropriate

Did you know?

- we dealt with 1,500 planning applications and nearly 800 building regulation applications last year
- we were financially rewarded by central government for our progress on the Torridge District Local Plan
- there are more than 1,800 listed buildings and 20 conservation areas in Torridge
- we have received £250,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support improvements to the historic buildings in the commercial core of Bideford's conservation area
- our CCTV coverage has 14 cameras overseeing Bideford town centre and is run from a control room at Bideford Police Station and Bideford College

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Food, Safety & Environmental Protection

What do we do?

The Council has an important role in making sure local people enjoy a good quality of life by having a safe environment. The Health and Housing Service plays a key role in this. It has five main responsibilities:

- food safety & health and safety inspections of commercial and leisure premises
- regulating potentially polluting emissions from industry and commerce
- advising on and promoting sustainable development
- enforcing dog controls and reducing dog fouling
- providing a pest control service
- investigating complaints of noise and other pollution

Our community commitments:

We want to make Torridge a better place to live and work while sustaining our distinctive natural environment. We will do this by:

Helping Communities meet their own needs:

- providing businesses with guidance on good practice and helping them comply with their obligations to local communities

Encouraging a sustainable quality of life through development of natural distinctive environment:

- giving advice on sustainability issues; safe-guarding communities and the planet

Supporting the local economy and regeneration of communities through design and innovation by:

- supporting businesses to achieve high standards of food safety, health & safety, pollution control and sustainability

Leading the community to achieve high quality public services by:

- promoting transparent, consistent and fair regulation of commerce, industry and individuals through detailed enforcement policies and procedures

What we said and did last year ...

What we said we'd do...	What we did ...
<p>Food Safety Inspect food premises in Torridge</p> <p>Respond to food complaints and complaints against food premises.</p> <p>Promote food safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We inspected 407 food businesses for hygiene & safety ➤ We inspected 96% of food businesses categorised as high risk ➤ We inspected 91% of other food businesses ➤ We responded to 80% of food complaints within two days ➤ We took part in the National Food Safety Week campaign ➤ We produce an annual newsletter for food businesses

Food hazard warnings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We liaised with the Food Standards Agency on 78 national food hazard warnings and advised businesses. There were no serious localised incidents
Food poisoning and communicable diseases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We responded to 53 reported cases of food poisoning and 35 cases of communicable zoonotic disease (from animals to people)
Health & Safety at work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We inspected 74% of premises due for inspection ➤ We dealt with 74% of complaints within our target of two days ➤ We responded to 83% of health & safety requests for advice within our five day target ➤ We investigated 67 reports of accidents or dangerous occurrences, 97% within our two-day target ➤ 99% of sixth year primary school children attended Junior Life Skills
Beach Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We provide Beach Safety Service (lifeguarding) at Westward Ho! for the summer season ➤ We rescued 33 sea users, helped 14 other bathers and gave 80 people first aid (10 of these went to hospital). ➤ We gave advice to 2,400 visitors ➤ We found 45 missing people

Our plans for the future:

- to maintain a high rate of inspection of health & safety and food premises, and of potentially polluting processes
- to develop further our web site to make it more accessible and useful
- to become more customer focused, developing more innovative ways to meet the communication needs of local people
- to implement a team focused 'value management' approach to scrutinise and challenge the way we do things
- to develop a food safety award scheme for food businesses which achieve excellent standards of hygiene and food safety
- to continue to carry out environmental sampling to monitor air, drinking water, river water and bathing waters
- to strive to make streets cleaner by a proactive approach to dog fouling

Did you know?

- we have an enforcement responsibility for some 2,000 premises in Torridge
- we dealt with 384 alleged nuisance complaints (such as noise or smoke emissions) last year

Contact details:

Environmental Services
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Finance and Information Technology (IT)

What Do We Do?

- the Finance and IT Service is a key support function to the Council's front line services. It has four teams
- the Accountancy Team is responsible for all the Council's corporate budgeting and accounting, insurance, treasury management, payroll and payment of suppliers
- the Audit Team is responsible for internal audit and risk management to ensure financial probity throughout the Council
- the IT Team maintains the Council's Information Technology infrastructure and is responsible for helping to deliver electronic government (e-Government) projects
- the new Procurement Team will take responsibility for procuring goods and services to help improve efficiency and promote Best Value

Our community commitments:

We want to make Torrington a better place to live and work while sustaining our distinctive natural environment. We will do this by:

Helping communities meet their own needs by:

- targeting grant aid to make sure it is directed towards local needs, as set out in the Community Strategy
- providing an infrastructure to make sure information is available on the Council's website

Encouraging a sustainable quality of life through developing the natural distinctive environment by:

- considering how we can promote sustainability when we procure goods and services

Promoting regeneration and recognition of Bideford and the Torrington District by:

- providing financial input to applications for external funding for potential major capital projects

Leading the community to achieve high quality public services by:

- providing efficient 'back office' systems to make the most of our high quality frontline services
- making the Council and its services available via electronic means
- reviewing budgets to make sure resources are targeted at high priority services in line with the Corporate Plan

What we said and did last year...

What we said we'd do ...	What we did ...
Review the IT infrastructure of the Council's internal network	New and more robust computer servers were installed in March 2004
Consider replacing our ageing financial and payroll systems	We have bought new financial and payroll systems and these will be introduced from April 2004
Improve procurement by introducing improved systems and creating a central team	A central procurement team is being formed and will spearhead rollout of the procurement module of the new financial system
Give a higher priority to risk management issues throughout the Council.	Workshops have been held for councillors and senior managers.

Our plans for the future:

- to improve the speed of financial reporting to councillors and officers when the new financial system is fully operational
- to increase awareness of risk management issues and introduce a comprehensive risk register
- to roll out the electronic procurement system to reduce paper and improve efficiency
- to improve efficiency by concentrating procurement in a central team
- to continue to expand the ways in which the public can contact us electronically (by phone and over the internet) including all council agendas, reports and minutes of meetings

Did you know?

- our Council Tax is 20% less than some districts in Devon
- our gross annual expenditure is £36 million
- there are approximately 3,000 visits to our website each week
- we employ 295 full time equivalent staff

Contact details:

Finance & IT Service
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Housing

What do we do?

The Council manages and maintains more than 1,700 Council properties and almost 700 garages. We are working to achieve the 'decent homes' standard for these and want to make sure rents remain affordable. We have a key role in minimising homelessness and helping people who are homeless. We provide facilities for disabled people and in allocating other repair grants, we help with and enforce repair standards in the private sector. Local people have told us affordable housing is important and we are securing and promoting this with new developments.

Our community commitments:

We want to make Torridge a better place to live and work while sustaining our distinctive natural environment. We will do this by:

Helping communities meet their own needs by:

- providing good quality affordable housing
- enabling people to transfer to homes which may more closely match their needs

Encouraging a sustainable quality of life by developing the natural distinctive environment by:

- reducing fuel poverty by making the proper heating of homes affordable

Supporting the local economy and regenerating communities through design and innovation by:

- aiming to contract repair and improvement work on our properties to local contractors
- investing more than £1,000,000 in the local economy each year on Council property
- supporting self-build schemes through local groups
- awarding empty property award grants and other grants to bring homes back into use

Leading local communities in achieving high quality public services by:

- encouraging and supporting tenant associations
- carrying out surveys every three years to find levels of tenant satisfaction and plan our services for the future

What we said and did last year ...

What we said we'd do ...	What we did ...
Listen to and inform our customers	93.5 % of housing management customers say we are good at doing this
Install 42 new central heating systems, replace 21 old systems and renew boilers in 24 homes	We achieved this target other than one home where the tenant withdrew
Begin our option appraisal for the future of the Council's housing stock	This is in progress, with strong tenant participation, and is on target to be completed in late 2004
Carry out 95% of emergency repairs within 24 hours	We have exceeded this target throughout the year
Encourage formation of a new housing tenants' association	We have achieved this target. A new tenants association has been formed
Carry out a housing condition survey	This is underway

Our plans for the future:

- to complete the housing option appraisal process by the end of 2004, - well ahead of Government targets. This will have a major impact on the way the 'landlord' role is provided to our tenants
- review our housing service before a Government Housing Inspection, in the early part of 2005
- Implement a strategy aimed at preventing homelessness
- secure at least 65 new 'affordable homes' next year
- commission a housing needs strategy

Did you know?

- 75 % of Council properties are in Bideford, Northam, Torrington and Holsworthy
- 93% of our tenants say they are satisfied with the Council home they live in
- 98.9% of tenants believe racial harassment is not a problem on our estates
- 94.8% of tenants said that the attitude of our tradesman is good
- there are 1,300 dwellings on the Common Housing Register (a 20% increase in 4 years)

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Operational Services

What do we do?

The Council plays an important role in helping to make sure Torridge is a clean district. The Operational Services team provides a high quality, comprehensive, safe and efficient refuse collection and street cleansing service. We aim to make this as cost effective and environmentally sensitive as possible. We also provide and develop a recycling service to meet the aspirations of residents and visitors and make sure we meet statutory recycling targets.

Our community commitments:

We want to make Torridge a better place to live and work while sustaining our distinctive natural environment. We will do this by:

Helping communities meet their own needs by:

- supporting local events, such as Bideford's music festival and its New Years' Eve event, Torrington Vintage car rally and Holsworthy Ruby run

Encouraging a sustainable quality of life through developing the natural distinctive environment by:

- minimising fuel use and pollution on our refuse carts
- improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists by street cleansing
- increasing the way we re-use and recycle our resources, materials and re-usable products
- promoting a reduction in litter and dog mess

Supporting the local economy and regenerating communities through design and innovation by:

- using local staffing agencies when we need to find temporary staff
- buying local goods where possible

Promoting regeneration and recognition of Bideford and the Torridge District by:

- continually working to keep Torridge clean and tidy (our performance of litter removal is assessed by a national indicator - BVPI 199)

Leading local communities to achieve high quality public services by:

- reaching mandatory recycling targets
- working in partnership with North Devon District Council and South Molton Recycle Ltd to increase our kerbside collection rate from 78% to 100%. We have secured funding until 2006 to help do this

What we said and did last year...

What we said we'd do ...	What we did ...
Reduce the time to remove abandoned vehicles	This has been achieved. We remove abandoned vehicles within seven working days
Work with town and parish councils to increase the number of dog fouling bins.	This has been achieved. In the past 12 months, we have placed 12 more bins in Torridge
Produce a waste management strategy	We did this in September 2003

Our plans for the future:

- to extend the recycling service to people in rural areas
- to comply with the national target (BVPI 157) to provide information to customers in a variety of ways, including on the Council's website
- to review our 'bring sites' to make them more suitable and accessible
- to continue to work with local school students to promote the importance of recycling
- to continue to help reduce fear of crime by keeping our streets and surrounding areas clean

Did you know?

- we undertake 1,456,000 collections of domestic refuse (dustbins) each year
- we have 58 bring sites for refuse throughout Torridge
- we have supplied 128 dog bins throughout Torridge
- you could get a maximum fine of £2,000 if you consistently put out your refuse on the wrong day

Contact details:

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Performance and Improvement

What do we do?

The Council is striving to improve the way we deliver our services and the Performance Team has a wide-ranging and key role in this. We want to improve the performance and quality of all services across the Council and make sure our customers receive helpful, speedy and informed responses.

To help us meet these challenging aims we are proposing to bring together a team of specialist areas - Legal Services, Land Charges, Election Services, Democratic Services, Member Support, Corporate Support, Performance Review (including Best Value), Personnel and Licensing. Together they are working to provide central support services and to help make the Council fair, open and transparent. We want to give local people choice in the way they access our services and information, in line with the Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislative responsibilities.

Our community commitments:

We want to make Torrridge a better place to live and work while sustaining our distinctive natural environment. We will do this by:

Helping communities meet their own needs by:

- providing a variety of ways to access the Council's services (including web site, e-mail, home visits, translation services including Braille, payments on-line, an application form completion service)
- giving advice to local communities and groups, including parish councils, on legal matters

Supporting the local economy and regenerating communities through design and innovation by:

- providing legal advice and guidance
- recruiting and retaining a skilled and talented workforce committed to delivering excellent services

Promoting regeneration and recognition of Bideford and the Torrridge District by:

- providing alcohol bans in public places – where this is adjudged to be appropriate

Leading communities to achieve high quality public services by:

- working in partnership to develop capacity and achieve more
- continuing to develop a leadership and management training programme for all officers who manage staff
- driving forward the Government's modernising and best value work across all Council services
- continually improving internal and external communications, using a variety of methods
- co-ordinating the Council's approach to managing information

What we said and did last year...

What we said we'd do...	What we did...
Provide minutes and agendas on the web site	Partially completed
Enable potential electors to register by phone	Successfully completed
Respond to all property searches within 10 working days	3,018 (99.93%) were responded to in 10 working days and 2,485 (82.28%) in five working days
Join the National Land Information Service (NLIS)	Successfully completed, with 471 searches received electronically by using NLIS
Develop staffing policies to provide a flexible, trusting and confident workforce	A range of policies have been approved and implemented
Introduce a corporate and formal complaints procedure to improve our performance	Successfully completed

Our plans for the future:

- to make sure Services use Information Technology (IT) to its fullest extent and reduce duplication and waste
- to make sure all customer enquiries receive a quality and timely response (within five working days where possible)
- to provide different ways for people to access services in a fair and even way
- to provide a customer charter and level of service promises across the Council
- to make all application forms available on our web site and provide a 'form filling service'
- to provide personnel policies that encourage and develop staff in a culture of trust

Did you know?

- Torridge has 36 District Councillors and 453 Parish Councillors
- 47,428 people in Torridge are eligible to vote in elections (this includes 450 reaching the age of 18 in 2004)
- during 2003/2004, 18 council house/flats were sold, at an average price of £51,650, compared to 60 in 1999/2000, at an average price of £24,012
- around one quarter of the Council's services are in the top 25% of the best performing councils in the country
- we received 3,069 local land charge searches in 2003/2004, 15% of which were done electronically
- a designated area in the centre of Bideford has a ban on alcohol consumption in a public place

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