

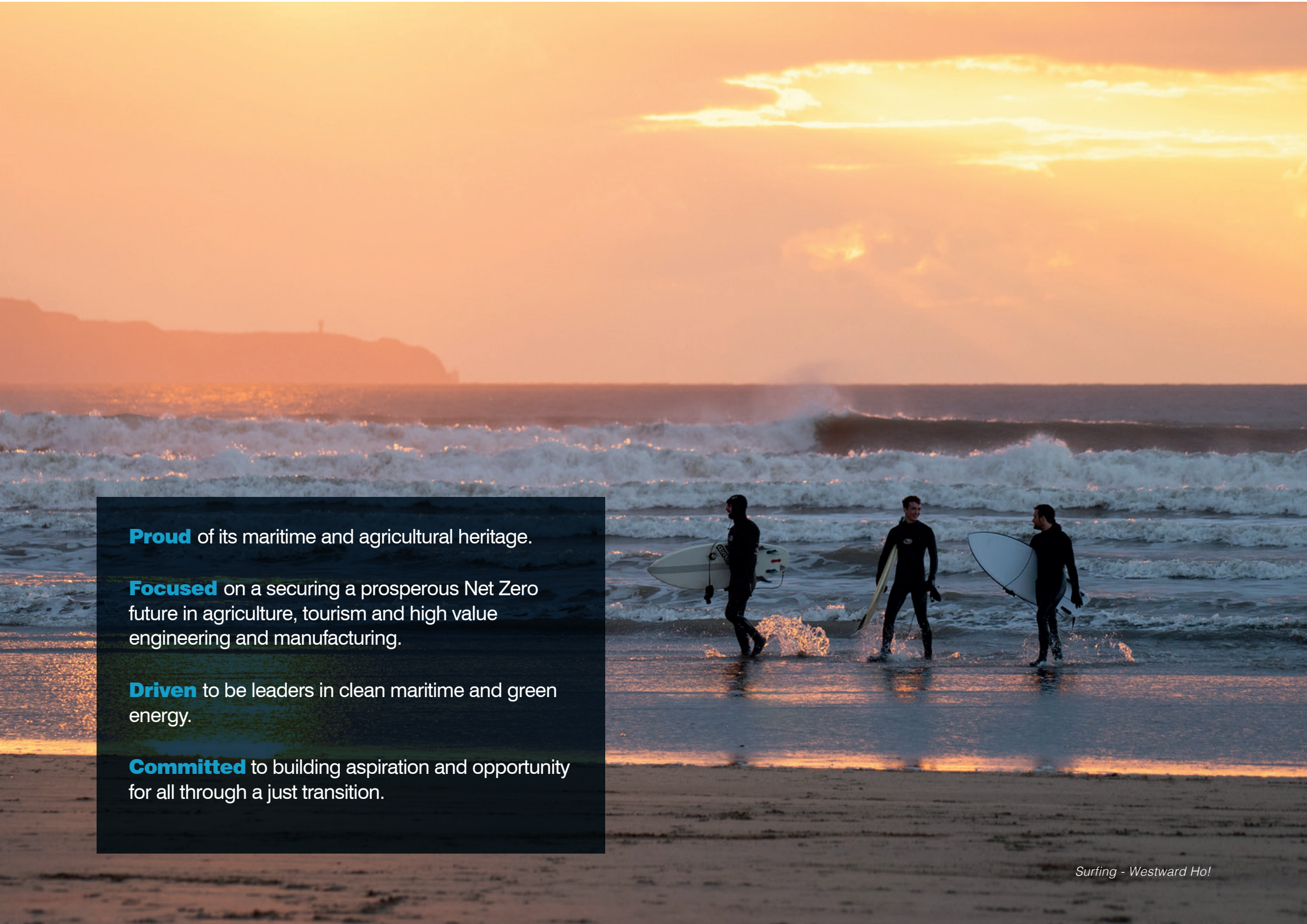
TORRIDGE PLACE STORY

2024



Torrige District Council



A photograph of three surfers in black wetsuits walking on a beach at sunset. They are carrying surfboards and wading through shallow water. The sky is a vibrant orange and yellow, with a large wave breaking in the background. The overall mood is serene and active.

Proud of its maritime and agricultural heritage.

Focused on securing a prosperous Net Zero future in agriculture, tourism and high value engineering and manufacturing.

Driven to be leaders in clean maritime and green energy.

Committed to building aspiration and opportunity for all through a just transition.

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FOREWORD

Welcome to the future of economic opportunity and sustainable growth in our burgeoning district.

Torrige is a proud district with outstanding natural assets – from its picturesque landscapes to the rich biodiversity found in its shores. Combined with its vibrant history and cultural heritage, this forms the foundation of Torrige’s identity and appeal. Our communities’ deep sense of pride is evident in its efforts to preserve Torrige’s natural beauty, rich heritage, and traditions. However, the people of Torrige recognise the urgent need to create more opportunities for young people. They deserve the chance to stay, build a life here, and enjoy what Torrige offers.

This Place Story complements other recent strategic initiatives like the Economic Development Strategy, Clean Maritime Vision, and Flourishing Culture, which outline our aspirations for the entire Northern Devon region. It delves deeper into Torrige’s unique story, showcasing a district gaining national recognition as a place to watch.

Torrige is on the cusp of transformational change. Emerging industries in maritime, clean energy, agricultural technology, culture, and tourism all have the potential to converge and create a thriving ecosystem – vibrant, innovative, and prosperous.

This prospectus highlights these emerging sectors, showcasing their exciting potential for investment and collaboration. Yet, challenges remain. Like many rural and coastal areas, Torrige faces issues that demand innovative solutions to unlock growth and development.

We recognise the opportunity to unlock Torrige’s potential through collaboration. Targeted investments in infrastructure, education, and technology, in addition to embracing the unique characteristics of our environment, are essential components to realising our potential. The development of a new Local Plan will be instrumental in fostering development that delivers good, inclusive growth that aligns with our sustainability goals and creates prosperous places for all.

We recognise that improving access to education and training, enhancing digital connectivity, and attracting investment in high-growth sectors are all essential steps to unlock Torrige’s economic potential. There is therefore an urgent need to address fundamental issues like low-wage jobs, poor connectivity, and housing shortages.





Our relationship with Central Government is strong with significant funding already allocated. The Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre received a £15.6 million Levelling Up Fund award in January 2023. This is further bolstered by the £1 million Shared Prosperity Fund (2022-2025) and nearly £1 million Rural England Prosperity Fund (2023-2025).

Recognising the importance of effective and strategic partnerships to realise long-term, sustainable change, and to maximise the impact of the funding received, we established the Place Board in early 2024. This diverse group brings together local businesses, the NHS, the Police, central government, and national enterprises like the Crown Estate to tackle Torrridge's greatest challenges collectively and creatively.

The Place Board is now working to secure £20m Levelling Up Partnership funding, which will be the next step to deliver our vision, addressing core issues whilst collectively paving the way for future public and private investment and growth. By creating a more vibrant and diverse job market, we believe we can generate significant local opportunities. The result? A brighter and more prosperous future for the people of Torrridge.

WHERE IS TORRIDGE?

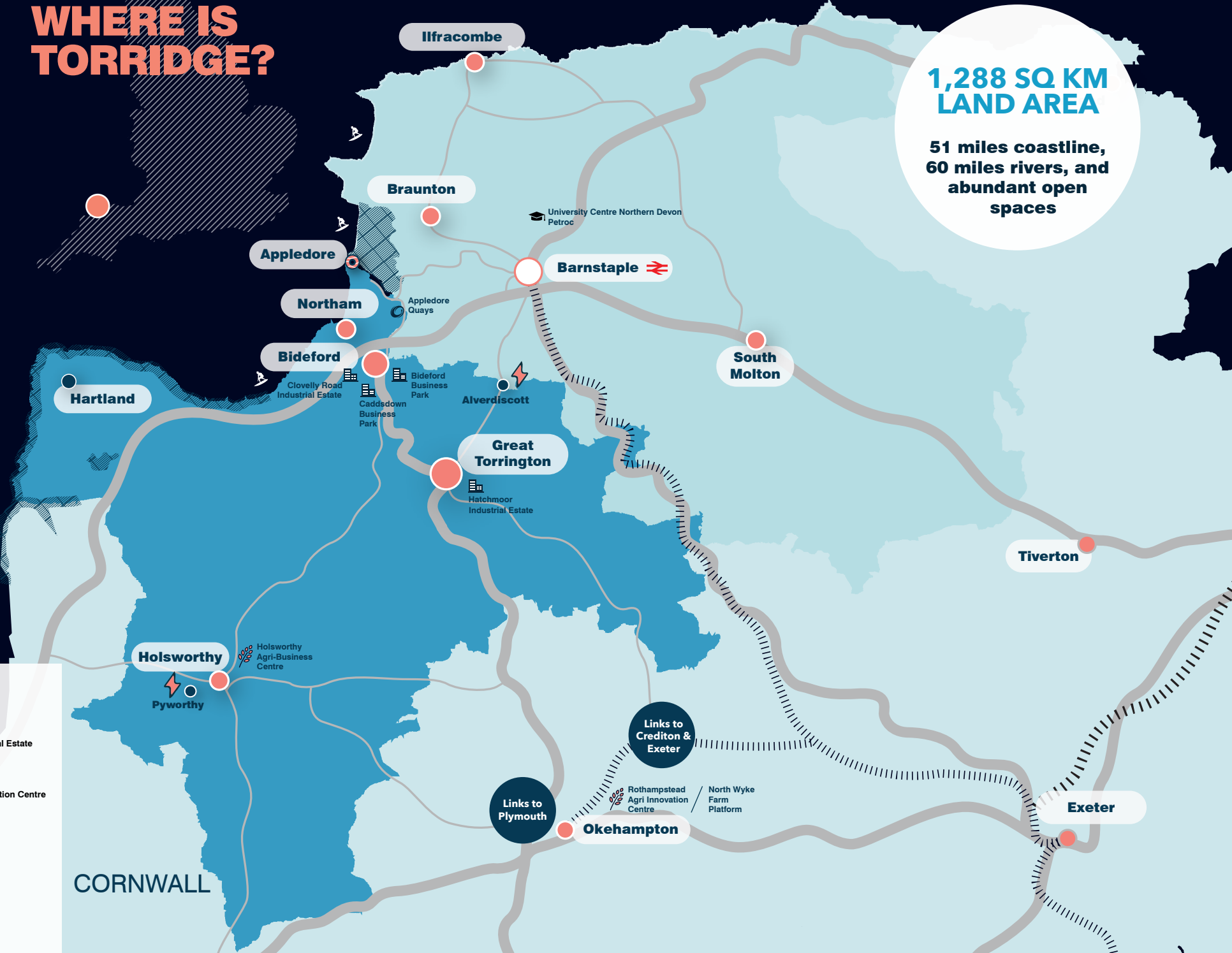
Lundy Heritage Coast

1,288 SQ KM LAND AREA

51 miles coastline, 60 miles rivers, and abundant open spaces

- Regional Centre
- Main Centre
- Local Centre
- Strategic Business Park, Industrial Estate and Employment area
- Coast Related Employment Area
- Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre
- Renewable Energy Substation
- Agri Business Centre
- Strategic Routes
- Railway
- Special Area of Conservation
- Main Beach/Watersports
- Education Centres

CORNWALL



INTRODUCING TORRIDGE

TORRIDGE'S PLACE STORY

This is a prospectus that celebrates Torrridge and shows why Torrridge is a good place to invest.

The objectives of the Place Story:



Champion the progress made so far



Explain why Torrridge is a good place to invest



Present the best of Torrridge; its priorities and opportunities for potential partners



Initiate conversations with potential partners



Share the vision for Torrridge



Torrige - a place on the rise

Situated in Northern Devon, Torrige is a place of ambition, rapidly gaining recognition as a hub for economic growth, innovation, and leadership in Net Zero economies. The district boasts a resilient business community, much of which is transitioning to high-growth sectors, from clean maritime and energy to the future of agriculture and aquaculture.

A legacy of innovation

Since the 16th century, Torrige has been at the forefront of many industries ranging from shipbuilding to pottery. At one point, it proudly held the status of one of Britain's largest harbors and most prolific shipbuilders. Today, the district has a sharp focus on the future, aspiring to leverage its heritage to enable sustainable growth that brings significant value to the local area and creates a dynamic, vibrant job market. Advanced manufacturing is a key area of focus, building on Torrige's history of craftsmanship and innovation to develop cutting-edge industries that offer high-quality employment opportunities and drive economic development.

Leading the way in clean maritime technologies

Torrige has a successful track record, most recently securing £15.6 million in government funding to develop the Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre. Set to open in 2026, the centre will be a national-leading innovation project in the heart of Appledore, acting as a gateway to the Celtic Sea. It will bring together innovative businesses with academia, skills providers, and key markets. The centre has already garnered support from a range of partners, including government agencies like the National Shipbuilding Office, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and the Royal Navy. The centre will position Torrige as a nationally recognised hub for research and development in clean maritime technology and related industries.



£15.6 M
IN GOVERNMENT FUNDING
TO DEVELOP THE APPLIEDORE
CLEAN MARITIME
INNOVATION CENTRE

Torrington Commons

More than just a picture-perfect destination

Renowned for its stunning coastal locations, open landscapes, and scenic beaches, Torridge has a thriving £657.3 million annual tourism sector contribution to the local economy.


Torridge offers a multifaceted identity which includes environmental beauty and rich agricultural heritage to create a vibrant and diverse economic landscape where businesses can flourish.

A flourishing hub for visitors

The wealth of natural wonders draws over five million visitors annually, contributing to Torridge ranking as one of the happiest districts in the UK to live. From the breathtaking clifftop views of the Atlantic to the golden sands and endless waves of Westward Ho!

A thriving agricultural economy

Torridge is also known for its agricultural heritage, which significantly contributes to the region's economy through its vibrant farming community and enterprises. Agri-tech has been identified as a key area for investment. The district is working to improve the productivity and sustainability of the UK's agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, and forestry industries. Holsworthy boasts a well-established reputation for having the largest livestock markets in the southwest, renowned for its outstanding local produce. Alongside regular livestock markets, the town also hosts weekly Farmers' Markets, offering visitors the chance to buy the same fresh produce featured on local restaurant menus. Currently, the Livestock Market serves as a cornerstone of the agricultural sector in Devon and Cornwall, driving economic growth, supporting livelihoods, preserving cultural heritage, and contributing to environmental sustainability.



Through strategic investment and collaboration, Torridge is poised to continue its growth and development, striving for a brighter future for generations to come.

Plymouth Science Park



Clovelly

TORRIDGE AT A GLANCE

THIS IS TORRIDGE

PEOPLE

68,000
RESIDENTS 

ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE 
IN LIFE SATISFACTION & HAPPINESS

STRONG COMMUNITY SPIRIT 

56% 
WORKING AGE

10% INCREASE 
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN 5 YEARS

ENTREPRENEURIAL RESILIENCE 

THIS IS TORRIDGE

PLACE

BEST PERFORMING
DISTRICT COUNCIL IN
THE UK (THE TIMES)

 **HERITAGE HARBOUR**
STATUS

THRIVING 
SME NETWORK

 **SOUTH WEST COAST PATH,**
ONE OF THE
WORLD'S LONGEST
COASTAL
FOOTPATHS

3 LOCAL
CREATIVE
CLUSTERS

REGIONAL
CULTURAL HUB
WITH INSTITUTIONS
LIKE THE BURTON 
AT BIDEFORD AND THE
PLOUGH ARTS CENTRE,
BOTH ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND NPOS

 **THE TARKA TRAIL, A**
180-MILE
FIGURE-EIGHT
LOOP THAT EXPLORES
THE DIVERSE BEAUTY OF
NORTH DEVON.



Tarka Trail

NORTH DEVON BIOSPHERE
RESERVE 
UNESCO

DIVERSE OUTDOOR
ACTIVITIES
SURFING, HIKING, GOLFING,
FISHING

PROMINENT
MARKET TOWNS:
BIDEFORD, HOLSWORTHY,
GREAT TORRINGTON,
HARTLAND

GLOBAL
LEADER 
IN CLEAN MARITIME
INNOVATION

CHALLENGES, ACTIONS, OPPORTUNITIES

CHALLENGES

The region faces significant challenges, being the 5th least competitive economy in the UK. Nearly one-fifth of residents lack qualifications, and 41% of jobs pay below the Living Wage. There is a high proportion of economically inactive residents and the area has the second lowest adult social mobility in England. Additionally, 40% of residents commute out for work, reflecting the rural dispersion and reliance on private transport. The construction of new homes is stagnating, making it difficult to meet local housing needs.

CURRENT ACTIONS



Engage local businesses, the NHS, the Police, central government, and national enterprises to tackle local challenges collectively and creatively.

Promote emerging industries in maritime, clean energy, agricultural technology, culture, and tourism to highlight their potential for investment and collaboration.

Unlock Torridge's potential through strategic partnership investments in infrastructure, education, and technology.

Develop a new Local Plan to support good, inclusive growth aligned with sustainability goals.

Leverage strong relationships with Central Government to secure significant funding.

Use millions of pounds of government funding already in place as a catalyst for change.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

STRONG LOCAL SPECIALISATIONS

IN MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING, AGRI-FOOD & DRINK

CREATIVE SECTOR CONTRIBUTES



£20M

TO LOCAL ECONOMY

NATIONAL AGRI-TECH HUB



FOSTERING SME GROWTH AND CREATING PIONEERING CONNECTIONS WITH GREEN ENERGY AND AQUACULTURE



LARGEST MMO LICENCED SEAWEED FARM

IN THE UK

FISHING & MARITIME INDUSTRIES CONTRIBUTE

£50M

YEARLY



95%

HOUSEHOLDS HAVE HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

LEADING RESEARCH AND

MARITIME INNOVATION



FACILITY OPENING 2026



DIRECT ACCESS TO **CELTIC SEA** AND A POTENTIAL CONNECTION POINT FOR AT LEAST **1.5GW OF GREEN ENERGY** FROM CELTIC SEA FLOW



TORRIDGE, FUTURE CLIMATE LEADERS

The UK faces a growing challenge from climate change, including rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and storm surges. In response, mitigation efforts and investment opportunities are emerging in the region as strategies to address these impacts.


The government's commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 and embracing nature-based solutions is driving investments in sustainable infrastructure projects. These include coastal defence systems, testbeds for floating offshore wind, solar energy production, and green hydrogen production. Torridge is actively positioning itself as a leader in these industries.

Torridge aims to take a significant role in the clean energy revolution and boasts a wealth of assets to do so. From green fuels to net-zero fertilisers and feeds, the district is supporting sustainable manufacturing, agriculture, land-based and maritime transportation. This focus creates sustainable jobs and delivers tangible benefits for its community.

Torridge District and partners are targeting investment toward our natural capital, including initiatives within the Biosphere's Natural Capital Marketplace and the development of Marine Natural Capital. Torridge's potential to generate carbon credits makes it an attractive proposition for investors. The district is truly leading the way in championing this approach to unlock blended investment for growth.

Torridge is well-positioned for success. In the UK, net-zero businesses contributed £74 billion in Gross Value Added in 2022-23 and supported 765,700 jobs. Although Torridge is a relatively new player in the market, it boasts a unique combination of resources and investment opportunities. With the right investment, it has the potential to rapidly achieve significant financial gains, social value, and environmental improvements. Businesses like Harland & Wolff and the Crown Estate recognise this and are already working in partnership with Torridge to seize emerging opportunities.





Torridge has a significant role in the Clean Energy Revolution and boasts a wealth of assets to support this.

OPPORTUNITY SECTORS

Torridge has many interconnected sectors and industrial opportunities, which nurture innovation, provide countless jobs and contribute to its diverse economic landscape.



CLEAN MARITIME



GREEN ENERGY



AQUACULTURE



INNOVATIVE AGRICULTURE



CREATIVE & DIGITAL INDUSTRIES



A YEAR-ROUND SUSTAINABLE VISITOR ECONOMY

SECTOR 1 CLEAN MARITIME



Overview of the sector

The North Devon & Torridge Clean Maritime Growth Vision sets out North Devon and Torridge's ambition to become a world-class integrated clean maritime nexus, holding a thriving blue economy that transforms economic opportunities in the area. It will be a place where people are proud to live and work, where businesses are innovative and resilient, and where visitors are inspired and engaged. By focusing on its clean maritime industries, Torridge has a strategic role to play in helping the UK meet its net zero targets and create significant economic opportunities in coastal areas.

In recent years, Torridge has seen a significant surge in the development of the clean maritime sector. This growth can be attributed to major investments in infrastructure, research, and the development of an active ecosystem with key partners such as universities, local businesses, government bodies, and strategic partners.

Torridge's geography has led to the formation as a hub for marine-related activities, fostering the emergence of innovative ventures that are focused on renewable energy generation and marine conservation. This builds upon Torridge's previous investments in maritime innovation, such as the Lundy Marine Conservation Zone.

The area is set to become a testing ground for cutting-edge technologies such as offshore wind farms, tidal energy converters, and electric marine propulsion systems. The Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre is set to position Torridge as a national leader in research

and development for clean maritime technology and its supporting industries. This focus on clean maritime aligns perfectly with the exciting prospects of floating offshore wind development in the Celtic Sea, just off the coast of North Devon. Among these ventures is White Cross Offshore Windfarm, aiming to bolster local clean energy production and support the South West region's goal of promoting clean energy initiatives.

227,100
JOBS
ACROSS
THE UK



£55BN

**MARITIME
INDUSTRIES
IN THE UK**





INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Clean Maritime

Investment in clean maritime technologies, including hybrid and electric propulsion systems for vessels, will reduce carbon emissions and improve environmental sustainability.

Coastal infrastructure

Development of coastal infrastructure and port facilities to support increased maritime activity, encompassing cargo shipping, passenger ferries, and leisure boating.

Sustainable fishing practices

Torrige would like to see the expansion of practices like low-impact fishing and responsible harvesting techniques, to support marine biodiversity and long-term viability of the industry.

Regional collaboration

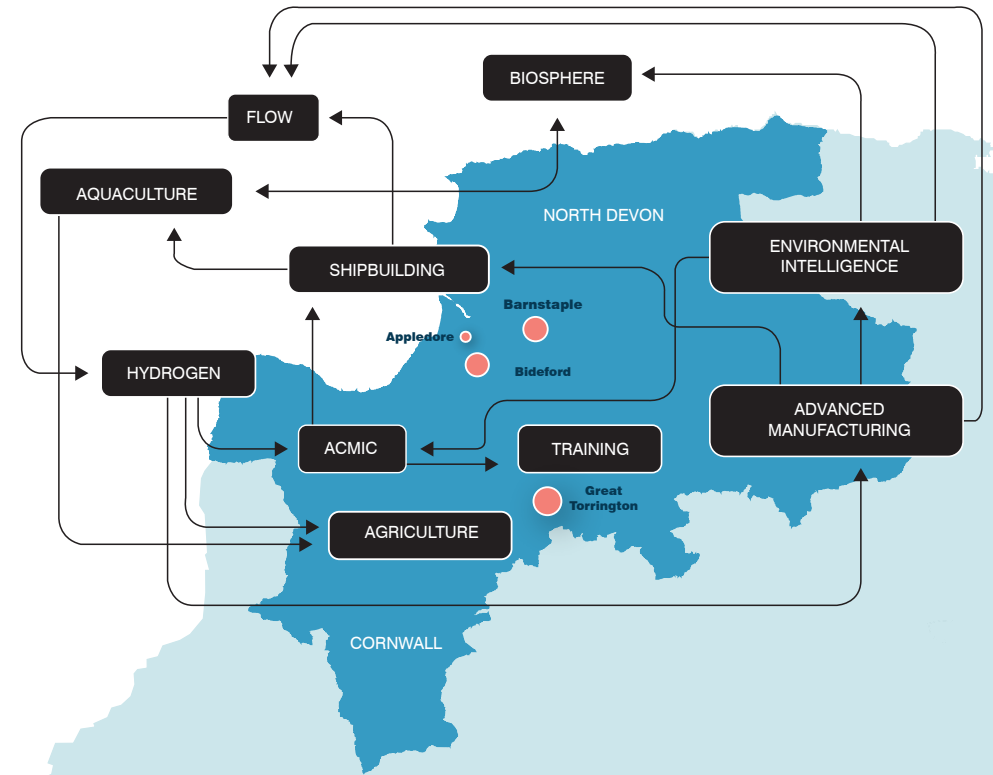
Exploring collaborative opportunities in the marine industry across the South West, with partners like Plymouth Freeport and the Cornwall Marine Network.





Harland & Wolff

CLEAN MARITIME GROWTH VISION



With around 80% of global trade carried by sea and 30-50% of CO₂ absorbed into the ocean, the urgency to conduct maritime activity in a clean and sustainable manner is clear. Through strategic investments, Torridge is at the forefront of change, creating the right conditions to capture commercial, employment and wider economic benefits of the Clean Maritime sector.



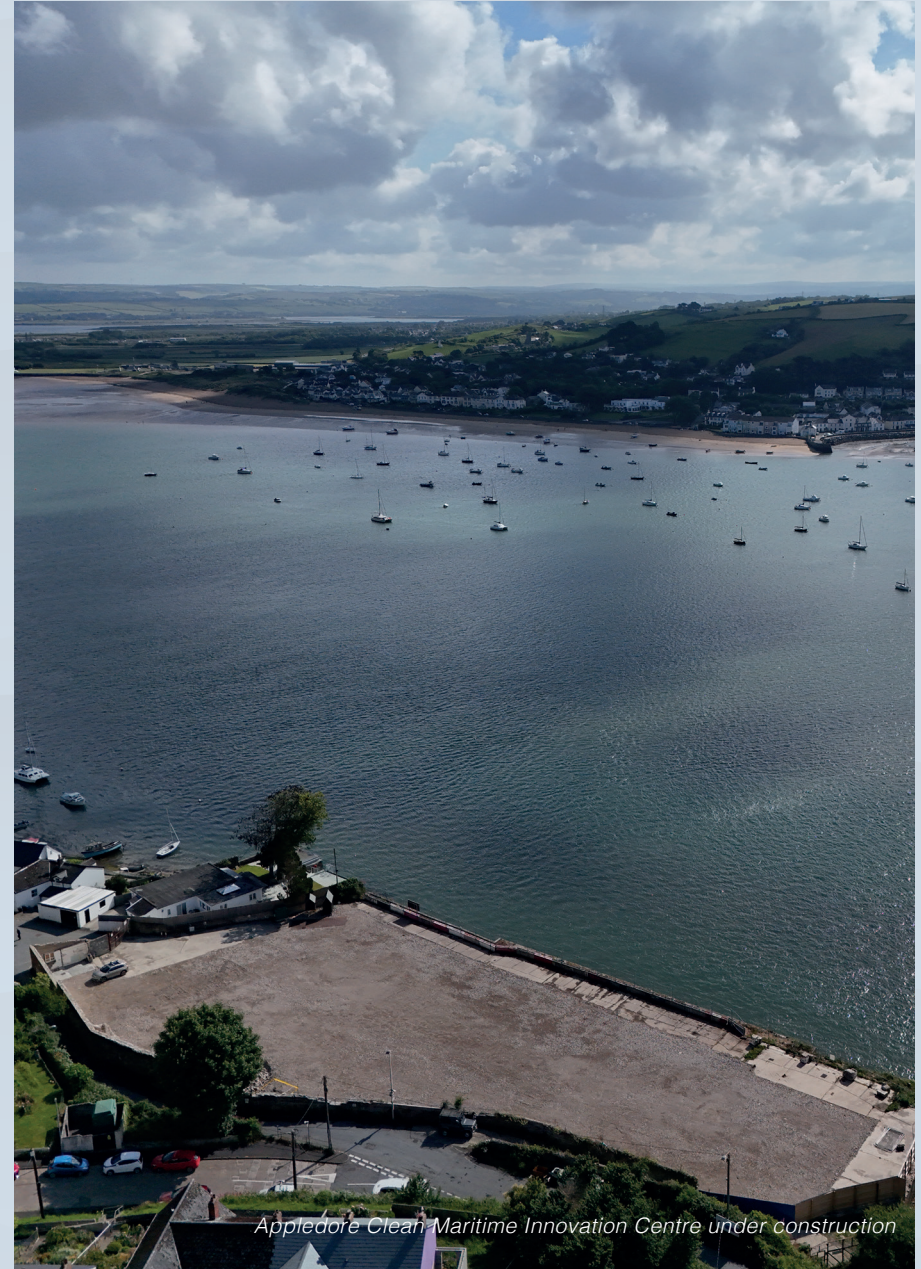
OUR BIG HITTER

APPLEDORE CLEAN MARITIME INNOVATION CENTRE

The Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre, backed by a significant £15.6 million government Levelling Up Fund injection, marks a pivotal moment for Torridge and wider Northern Devon. Scheduled to open its doors in 2026, the centre promises to position the region as a national-leading hub for research and development in clean maritime technology.

Creating a unique combination of academia, private sector innovators, strategic support partners and access to both customers and the opportunity to work with the neighbouring Harland & Wolff shipyard, the complex will drive innovation in clean-propulsion shipbuilding and offshore renewable energy. With an emphasis on job creation, economic regeneration, and education, the centre aims to foster a thriving ecosystem of research, business development, and skills development, poised to propel the region into a sustainable and prosperous future.

Additionally, initiatives like the development of the local seaweed sector and the current Celtic Sea Leasing Round 5 underscore the centre's commitment to supporting emerging industries and capitalising on future opportunities, reinforcing its role as a catalyst for economic growth and environmental stewardship in the region.



Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre under construction



PIPELINE PROJECTS

BIDEFORD BUSINESS PARK

The Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre (ACMIC) project's business consultation emphasised the need for nearby high-value manufacturing and engineering facilities, and ideally, within a 20-minute drive. Recognising this demand, Bideford Business Park emerges as a strategic solution, conveniently found about 20 minutes away from the ACMIC site. Covering around 2.5 hectares of land, it sits east of established commercial areas with easy access from the A39.

In recent years, Torridge District Council has worked successfully with landowners about the park's development, successfully securing planning consent for commercial use, marking a significant milestone. Additionally, potential expansion to the east under the new Local Plan for Bideford offers further growth opportunities.

This expansion not only meets ACMIC's immediate needs, but also aligns with broader regional development goals. By providing dedicated space for high-value manufacturing and engineering, the park can attract investment, drive innovation, and spur economic growth. Its proximity to ACMIC ensures synergies between maritime innovation and advanced manufacturing, fostering a robust ecosystem for both business success and technological advancement.

MARITIME & GREEN ENERGY SKILLS CENTRE

The Maritime & Green Energy Skills Centre in Torridge represents a strategic investment opportunity aimed at capitalising on the rapidly growing sectors of clean maritime and green energy. This initiative entails developing state-of-the-art training facilities and programs tailored to equip the local workforce with specialised skills in maritime technology, offshore wind energy, and sustainable marine practices.

The project entails the creation of a high-visibility skills centre (level 3 upwards) bridging the outputs of the Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre alongside the need for future-fit green skills and workforce development. Co-location alongside both industry and innovation will ensure that the development and delivery of curriculum/courses places employers central to this process.

Harland & Wolff (Appledore) presents a transformative vision for the New Quay yard, which with Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre alongside is designed to be a leading green-maritime technology hub.

This co-located development would also enable the production of aluminium new-build vessels, catering to the burgeoning needs of the defence, commercial marine, and renewable markets, delivering significant orders in the short to medium term whilst longer term renewables and clean energy work comes to fruition.

DLUHC investment would also stimulate significant private sector match funding from Harland & Wolff.



SECTOR 2 GREEN ENERGY



Overview of the sector

Over the last 25 years, offshore wind has established itself as the cornerstone of the UK's move towards a more sustainable future, and is on track to meet the electricity needs of almost half of all UK homes in 2023.

The Crown Estate estimates that capital expenditure on the Celtic Sea 4.5GW programme will deliver £1.4bn GVA to the UK, and 5,400 jobs on average over five years.

Torrige enjoys direct access to the Celtic Sea, positioning it perfectly to harness the region's coastal resources for clean power generation. Construction of the Celtic Sea wind farms will require significant resources, including 264 turbines, 1,056 anchors, 317 kilometres of mooring lines, three sea-based substations, and over 850 kilometres of cabling. This project is estimated to generate 5,400 jobs annually for five years and contribute £1.4bn in GVA, with 450 permanent jobs created upon operation. It is expected that 24% of the expected FLOW expenditure will be in the South West.

Torrige's ongoing investment in skills development and its commitment to learning from innovative projects like those mentioned will further bolster local capabilities and create new avenues for growth and innovation.

Pipeline and supply chain opportunities are vast. Proposals are underway for a Maritime Technology and Green Energy

skills centre with Petroc College to equip the workforce with the necessary skills. Additionally, there are opportunities to maximise green energy impact by developing a Green Energy Park focusing on future grid connections. Industry players are already collaborating with Petroc to ensure a readily available pool of qualified engineers, enabling high-energy users to benefit from these local energy sources.

Hydrogen supply chains are estimated to contribute £124 billion and 1.6 million jobs to the UK by 2050, with up to 35% of UK energy consumption being hydrogen-based by the same year. This presents an opportunity for Torrige, particularly given its collaborations with the Crown Estate and the National Composites Centre. With the Department for Science, Energy and Net Zero (DSNZ) identifying the region as having significant potential for hydrogen production, and with backing from Hydrogen SW, there's a clear pathway for leveraging local resources and expertise.

A green hydrogen roadmap for Torrige could serve as a cornerstone for the region's transition towards sustainable fuel production.

**5,400
JOBS**



**ANNUALLY FOR 5
YEARS**

CELTIC SEA PROGRAMME

£1.4BN

**IN GVA TO
THE UK**





INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Green hydrogen potential

Torrige has the potential to harness green hydrogen using its existing assets: grid connection, surplus energy from Celtic Sea FLOW (Floating Offshore Wind), and abundant water for electrolytic hydrogen production. Notably, a recent successful application to the SW Net Zero Hub secured a grant to develop a green hydrogen roadmap. This is a significant step towards stimulating future investment, fostering cluster development, and creating jobs.

Brownfield sites and local offtake

The area boasts existing brownfield sites offering investment opportunities for small test facilities. These sites are well-aligned with key potential local offtake sectors such as clean propulsion, agriculture and industry, reducing costs and transportation limitations.

Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) Accelerator in the Celtic Sea





PIPELINE PROJECT

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

The Torridge Estuary provides an ideal location for a multi-purpose Operations and Maintenance base.

Proximity to the Celtic Sea arrays, as well as to aquaculture, will minimise transit distance, duration and resulting cost. The direct linkage to the Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre will provide a direct route to customer-driven technology solutions to improve monitoring, reduce risks, enhance safety and improve efficiencies. With Harland & Wolff Appledore on hand to provide clean vessel solutions and ambitions for local green hydrogen production, we are actively looking for partners who are currently scoping next-generation O&M facility opportunities.

The detailed Ports, Harbours and Jetties study also provides clarity on tidal implications and fully-analysed potential SOV, CTV and workboat movement patterns to derisk and maximise the value of future investments.



SECTOR 3

AQUACULTURE



Overview of the sector

The coastal waters in Torridge are an ideal environment for seaweed cultivation. The area is already home to a national leader in the field, Algapelago, who see themselves as an enabler of the transition to low impact agriculture by replacing current carbon-intensive, unsustainable products with a range of seaweed-based, animal feed supplements and plant fertilisers.

Torridge District Council can generate investment opportunities by supporting the development of strategic partnerships with companies and businesses, such as the Crown Estate. Recent investments in the new Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre exemplify interventions that can unlock specific sectors' potential and, in turn, grow Torridge's aquaculture offering.

Beyond seaweed cultivation, Torridge has significant opportunities to be at the forefront of the sector's progression towards higher-value impacts and facilitate crossovers into broader benefits. Holsworthy's prominent position in the South West's agricultural industry, featuring its livestock market and collaborative opportunities with Severn Trent Green Power's biogas plant, creates unique conditions for investment.

 **TORRIDGE HOSTS
AQUACULTURE
BUSINESS LEADERS IN
THE FIELD,
LIKE ALGAPELAGO.**





INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Pioneering low-carbon agriculture

Torrige is at the forefront of low-carbon agriculture. The growing demand for seaweed derived products presents a market opportunity for cultivation ventures in the district.

Academic and applied innovation

Torrige's strategic location and proximity to existing assets like the Biosphere Reserve make it an ideal location for academic and research institutions to expand their innovation and research facilities focused on sustainable agriculture.

Unlocking aquaculture potential

The district's coastal areas offer access to diverse marine ecosystems. Combined with Torrige's existing port and logistics infrastructure, this creates a unique opportunity for businesses to leverage these environmental conditions for aquaculture species like salmon, mussels, oysters, and seaweed.

Aquaculture excellence

The creation of a specialist aquaculture centre would bring together both research and development activities, strengthening investment opportunities around whole system interventions, such as cascading biorefinery and hatchery needs.

It is estimated the European seaweed market will be worth €3-9.3bn by 2030. High in minerals, vitamins and bioactive compounds. Its rich nutrient content makes it the ideal solution for natural fertilisers and animal feed supplements.





OUR BIG HITTER

ALGAPELAGO

SEAWEED INNOVATION AND BLUE MARINE NATURAL CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

Algapelago is pioneering a revolutionary concept by cultivating sustainable and scalable seaweed forests, or “algapelagos,” in Northern Devon’s Atlantic waters.

Algapelago utilises seaweed’s rich nutrients to produce various sustainable products for agriculture, food, skincare, bio-materials, and bio-refining. Seaweed offers a low-carbon alternative for agriculture, plastic replacement products and marine ecosystem restoration. This approach supports regenerative agriculture and provides environmental and societal benefits like carbon sequestration and economic revitalisation of coastal communities.

Algapelago aims to create stable jobs, minimise waste, and offset carbon emissions through offshore kelp cultivation, setting a precedent for scalable seaweed farming and promoting “Blue Forests for a Green Future.” With strategic location and marine expertise, Algapelago is poised to lead sustainable seaweed cultivation globally.



Algapelago

SECTOR 4 INNOVATIVE AGRICULTURE



Overview of the sector

The expansion of the maritime sector offers a crucial pathway for growth in the agricultural sector. Traditionally, the green (land-based) and blue (sea-based) industries have long been separated, but the innovative advancements at sea now offer new opportunities to progress on land.

Agriculture itself accounts for a substantial part of global greenhouse gas emissions, highlighting the urgency to move towards low-carbon production and more sustainable practices. Torridge aspires to be a leader in this field, boosting local productivity and supporting its agricultural sector in the face of cost pressures and uncertainty. The area boasts fertile land with a climate conducive to year-round cultivation, and as such, has a long and rich history of agriculture and food production. Over 70% of its land area is currently dedicated to agricultural activities.

Torridge is committed to spearheading advancements in agriculture by focusing on sustainable practices, enhancing productivity, and embracing new technologies. Coupled with the business support provided by North Devon+, Torridge is an ideal hub for start-ups and entrepreneurs aiming to create a greener and more efficient agricultural landscape.

Investment in business networks and cutting-edge technology heralds an exhilarating era for enterprises in Torridge. The district presents an opportunity to pioneer ground-breaking strategies in zero-carbon farming, cultivating novel markets for both mass-produced and artisanal local goods..

Supported by favourable policies and a conducive business environment, Torridge presents an enticing prospect for investors and emerging ventures looking to innovate and thrive in the agricultural and food sectors.

**TORRIDGE ASPIRES
TO BE A LEADER
IN THE FIELD OF
AGRICULTURE**



**MARKET VALUE OF OVER
£2.7BN
BY 2026**





The agri-tech sector is projected to reach a market value of over £27 billion by 2026, Torrridge's strategic sector focus promises to drive sustainability, stimulate economic growth, and create new employment opportunities within the region.

The Riverford team picking curly kale



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The 'Woodland Enterprise Zone'

This initiative aims to develop and enhance the commercial, wildlife, and social benefits of woodland resources. The Biosphere Reserve Partnership plays a crucial role in sustaining and, where possible, enhancing these resources and their associated economic value. It also strengthens the connection between woodlands and people. Utilising the Biosphere Reserve as a Woodland Enterprise Zone unlocks a wealth of opportunities, all of which can be funded through various public, private, and third-sector measures, with accountability ensured by the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Partnership.

Digital Connectivity

For those businesses that wish to adopt new innovative agri-tech practices there are a range of digital connectivity options that could support their ambition. Torrridge will also be seeking opportunities to help businesses acquire the skills they need to embrace these new technologies.

High-value manufacturing

Investment in mechanisms for local manufacture of high-value products will ensure value capture within the local area. The company Notpla, which has close ties to Torrridge-based Algapelago, exemplifies how harnessing the power of nature by working with seaweed and plants can create innovative, ingenious products that leave no trace of pollution. This industry is rapidly expanding.

Food and drink innovation

Start-ups in the food and drinks sector are harnessing innovations such as precision agriculture, vertical farming, and sustainable food production methods to address contemporary challenges like climate change resilience, food security, and resource efficiency. Torrridge is working with businesses to increase engagement with the Made in Devon marque and improve local brand awareness.

Expanding the Smart Biosphere

Torrridge is working with Biosphere Reserve Partnership to expand the impact of the Smart Biosphere initiative across the region.



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Precision agriculture

Investing in agricultural technologies, such as drones, robotics, and environmental sensors, is essential for making data-driven and efficient decisions. This, in turn, enables the optimisation of resource use and minimises negative environmental impacts.

Diversifying agriculture

Torrige is committed to diversifying agricultural production, including the cultivation of specialty crops, agro-tourism ventures, and value-added food processing, to increase farm incomes and enhance rural livelihoods.

Sustainable farming practices

The adoption of agroecological farming practices, such as organic farming, regenerative agriculture, and agroforestry, is a priority. These practices enhance soil health, biodiversity, and resilience to climate change.

Local food networks

Torrige would like to see the expansion of local food networks and farm-to-table initiatives. This promotes the consumption of locally grown produce and supports a thriving supply chain of small-scale farmers and producers.

Green fertilisers

The introduction of significant green energy cable sources over the next 10 years creates the potential for large-scale hydrogen production. This opens the door to the production of green fertilisers, a sustainable alternative to traditional methods.

Clean transport

Working with key partners, such as the Centre for Future Clean Mobility, Torrige is looking for ways to maximise the use of green hydrogen and agricultural zero emission vehicles.





PIPELINE PROJECTS

HOLSWORTHY AGRI-BUSINESS CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

The development of the Holsworthy Agricultural Business Park presents a significant opportunity to drive economic growth and innovation in the South West and UK agricultural sector. With a potential of up to 40,000m² of employment and innovation space, the project aims to meet the demand for innovation, retail, and professional service space surrounding the existing Livestock Market. The expansion of the Holsworthy Agricultural Business Park could ultimately provide up to 12,000m² of employment and innovation space with a full project BCR over 2:1, estimated job creation of 120 Full Time Equivalents.

Progressing a Planning Application for infrastructure works would unlock the site for development, creating jobs not only during construction but also stimulating the economy through rapid site development thereafter. Furthermore, the project includes plans for active travel routes to enhance connectivity between the town centre and the employment site, bolstering local vitality.

HATCHMOOR INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

The Hatchmoor Industrial Estate project aims to support Torrridge's intentions to boost local employment, enhance economic resilience, and provide a hub for business and collaboration. By expanding the Hatchmoor Estate's infrastructure and offering additional land for employment, facilities will be able to attract new enterprises and support the growth of existing ones, fostering a vibrant economic environment and contributing to the overall prosperity of the region.

Today, there is a significant demand for Innovation, Retail and Professional Service space surrounding the existing Cattle Market.

SECTOR 5 CREATIVE & DIGITAL INDUSTRIES



Overview of the sector

Flourishing Culture: The Northern Devon Cultural Strategy, a joint effort by the district councils of North Devon and Torridge, outlines a vision and action plan for the development of the cultural sector over the next five years. It serves as a framework for increasing investment in culture and aligns with the Arts Council's strategy "Let's Create." The strategy underscores the region's commitment to fostering a vibrant cultural landscape and elevating its profile on the national stage.

Through strategic investments, supportive policies, collaborative initiatives, and investment in market town creative hubs, Torridge is poised to unlock the full potential of its creative sector. This, in turn, will drive innovation, prosperity, and community wellbeing.

There are significant opportunities for growth. If Torridge's creative industries were elevated to the level of Devon's, it could result in a substantial increase in Gross Value Added

(GVA), estimated at £32.75 million.

Torridge presents a compelling opportunity to develop a creative cluster in the region for several reasons. Firstly, culture serves as a cornerstone of local pride and wellbeing, enriching the lives of residents and fostering a strong sense of community identity. Secondly, a thriving creative sector is essential for driving economic growth, as evidenced by the significant contribution of creative and cultural industries to the local economy.



**OPPORTUNITY
TO DEVELOP A
CREATIVE
CLUSTER**

**TORRIDGE'S CREATIVE
INDUSTRIES COULD
INCREASE TO
£32.75M
IN GVA**





Culture and creative industries are pivotal drivers of economic and social development, with capacity to foster inclusive growth and empower local communities to shape their futures.



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Widening access to culture

Working with existing National Portfolio Organisations will maximise their impact and extend the reach of culture to sections of the community who currently don't access high-quality programming, such as the Burton's touring exhibitions from The Tate.

Empowering local creatives

Torrige aims to create the conditions for local people to create and experience cultural experiences that reflect their connection to the local environment their communities and their values. This empowers them to use culture as a conduit to shape their own futures and the future of their communities and their place in the world.

Digital infrastructure

Further investment in internet infrastructure will support growth in the creative and digital industries, attracting businesses, remote workers, and startups.

Digital Innovation hub

Encouraging a culture of creativity and entrepreneurship through initiatives like hackathons and start-up competitions will foster a digital innovation hub. Championing the voices of young people in northern Devon and actively developing pathways to creative opportunities and sustainable careers in the creative sector will, combined with infrastructure improvements, also boost entrepreneurship and SME expansion.

Filming and media production

Torrige is moving beyond being a great place to film to actively developing local media talent and production pipelines. This involves collaborating with the newly created Screen Devon and investing in film-friendly infrastructure (studios and post-production facilities), further strengthening the region's appeal to filmmakers and promoting year-round support services.

Creative business growth

Investing in sector-specific incubators and accelerators presents opportunities to enhance economic output and support individuals in creative fields. The 'Burton in Bideford' a gallery and museum is an excellent example of a cultural hub that offers exhibitions, events, and facilities to showcase local talent. It serves as a vibrant, family-friendly centre celebrating art in the heart of the community. Investing in such opportunities can enhance economic output, nurturing, and professionalising talent to elevate the creative sector.

Supporting youth culture

Torrige recognises the importance of youth culture, encompassing areas like skateboarding, e-sports, street arts, music, fashion.

LOCAL CULTURE AND HERITAGE ATTRACTIONS

DISTINCTIVE MARKET TOWNS
Bideford, Holsworthy, Great Torrington, and Hartland

COASTAL WALKS AND BEACHES
Popular destinations include Westward Ho! Beach, where visitors can indulge in activities such as surfing, swimming, and beachcombing

APPLEDORE BOOK FESTIVAL
One of the most vibrant cultural Festivals in the UK

- 1 LUNDY ISLAND**
A nationally designated Marine Nature Reserve and offers visitors the chance to explore its abundant wildlife
- 2 HARTLAND QUAY**
A historic port and fishing village, known for its dramatic coastal scenery rugged cliffs
- 3 HARTLAND PENINSULA**
A rugged coastal landscape with dramatic cliffs and secluded coves, offering breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean
- 4 THE BURTON AT BIDEFORD**
Contemporary gallery successfully blending national and international touring exhibitions
- 5 NORTHAM BURROWS COUNTRY**
An integral part of North Devon's UNESCO Biosphere Reserve
- 6 ROYAL NORTH DEVON**
England's Oldest Golf Course
- 7 BIDEFORD WATERFRONT**
Historic Port, situated on the River Torridge, once a vital hub for trade, fishing and shipbuilding, now increasingly catering to a range of festivals, outdoor and lifestyle activity
- 8 ROSEMOOR**
RHS Garden Rosemoor blends formal and informal plantings to magical effect.
- 9 THE PLOUGH ARTS CENTRE**
Found in Great Torrington, it provides exciting opportunities for all people to experience a wide and vibrant range of high-quality arts



SECTOR 6

A YEAR-ROUND SUSTAINABLE VISITOR ECONOMY



Overview of the sector

Torrige stands as a captivating gem within the UK's tourism landscape, boasting natural beauty and a rich cultural heritage that entices visitors from far and wide. Over 27% of its territory falls within the North Devon Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Torrige's expansive coastline and stunning landscapes are a true magnet for national and international tourists, attracting millions of visits annually.

There is a wealth of opportunity to elevate the year-round tourism experience within Torrige, particularly during the winter months. This could involve showcasing the district's rugged coastlines, dark skies, and offering immersive activities that celebrate and preserve the natural environment.

With a keen awareness of the need to balance the economic benefits of tourism with the environmental and social impacts of a seasonal economy, Torrige is motivated to invigorate its tourist offerings. By prioritising

sustainability and innovation, Torrige aims to preserve the vital role of tourism in contributing to the regional economy while minimising its ecological footprint and maximising its positive impact on local communities.

Working with local schools and skills partners, Torrige's ambition is to improve career pathways within the tourism and hospitality sector. By driving up leadership and customer-focused skills within the sector, Torrige aims to ensure fantastic experiences for locals and visitors alike. This will strengthen the investment draw and stimulate full-time, year-round, well-paid jobs across all sections of the industry.

4.5m

**VISITORS
EACH YEAR**



GENERATING OVER £350m

**FOR THE LOCAL
ECONOMY**



Diverse, thriving town centres with increased attractiveness and opportunities for our communities will play a role in establishing an even stronger, higher-value opportunity for the tourism sector.



Bideford



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Restoring historic buildings in town centres

Supporting the innovative community ownership model at The Globe Hotel in Great Torrington is a prime example. The project aims to regenerate a derelict Grade II Listed building into a high-quality hotel and restaurant with a strong focus on training and upskilling. Partnering with key partners like RHS Rosemoor and The Plough Arts Centre, and offering hospitality training and apprenticeships in collaboration with Petroc, this initiative aims to combat youth outmigration and change negative perceptions of careers in hospitality, unlocking opportunities for young people with global potential.

A sustainable tourism

Offer Torrige is committed to attracting environmentally-conscious visitors seeking authentic experiences. Promoting eco-friendly accommodations, responsible tour operators, and nature-based experiences aligns with this goal. There is also a need for more high-quality visitor accommodation to extend visitor stays and capture spending within the local economy.

Dark skies and astro tourism

Torrige boasts some of the darkest skies in England, making it a haven for astronomy enthusiasts. Rivaling the world-renowned designation on Exmoor, Torrige's remote areas offer spectacular stargazing opportunities, with up to 2,000 stars visible on clear nights.

Agri-Tourism

Torrige's rich agricultural heritage fosters a thriving culinary tourism scene. Investments are being made in farm-to-table experiences, food trails, and agritourism festivals that promote local food culture and sustainable agricultural practices. From Number 8 in Bideford to Pattards in Hartland and the Black River Inn in Black Torrington, Torrige offers a variety of high-quality restaurants catering to those seeking authentic culinary experiences.

Adventure Tourism

Torrige's stunning coastline and outdoor opportunities make it an ideal destination for adventure tourism. Collaboration with outdoor activity providers allows for a diverse range of exciting activities, attracting adventure seekers year-round and boosting local businesses.

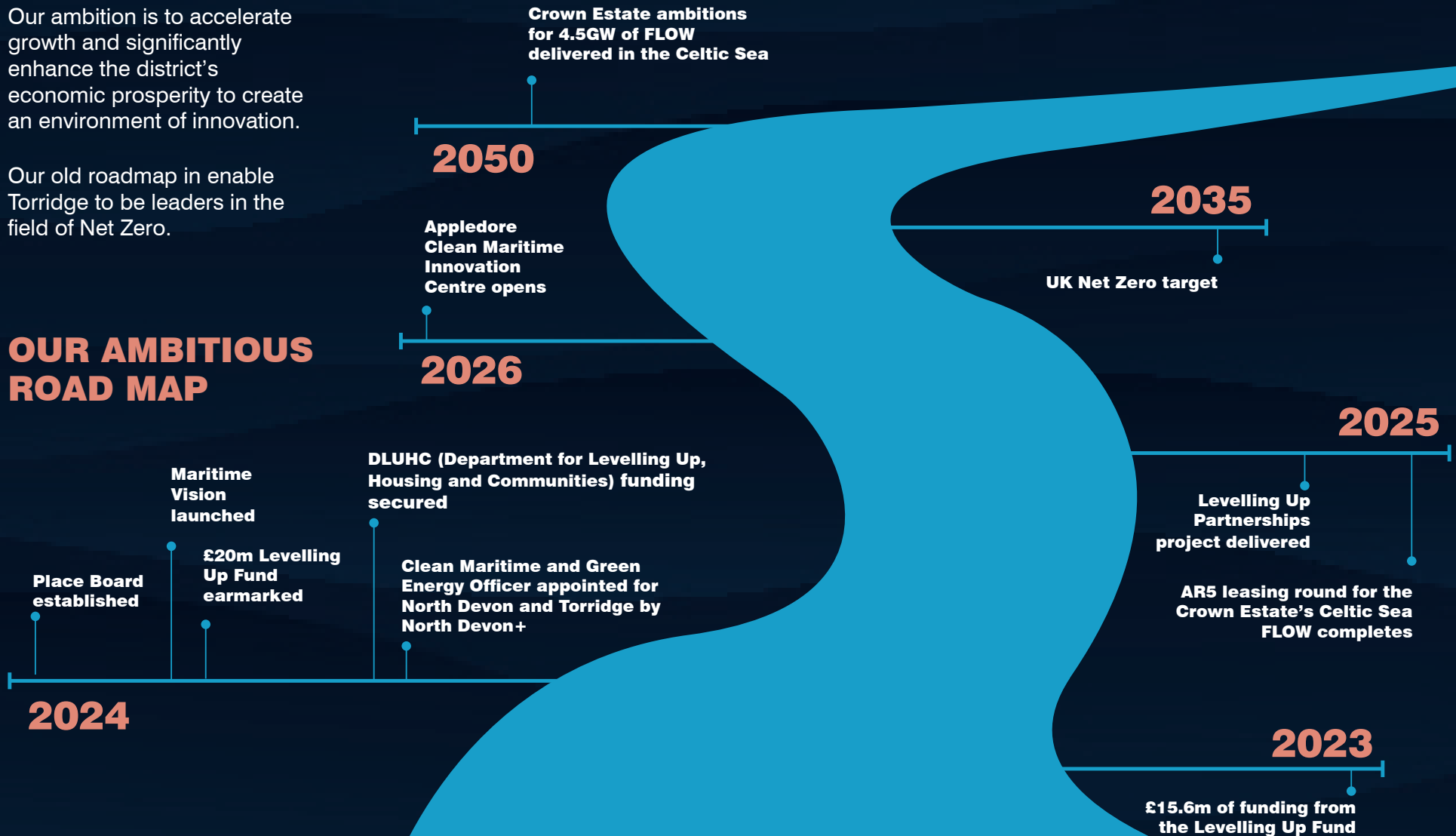
Cultural and Heritage Tourism: Investments in heritage preservation and cultural events promote Torrige's identity, appealing to both cultural travellers and local residents.

CALL TO ACTION

Our ambition is to accelerate growth and significantly enhance the district's economic prosperity to create an environment of innovation.

Our old roadmap in enable Torrridge to be leaders in the field of Net Zero.

OUR AMBITIOUS ROAD MAP



TORRIDGE PLACE STORY



2024