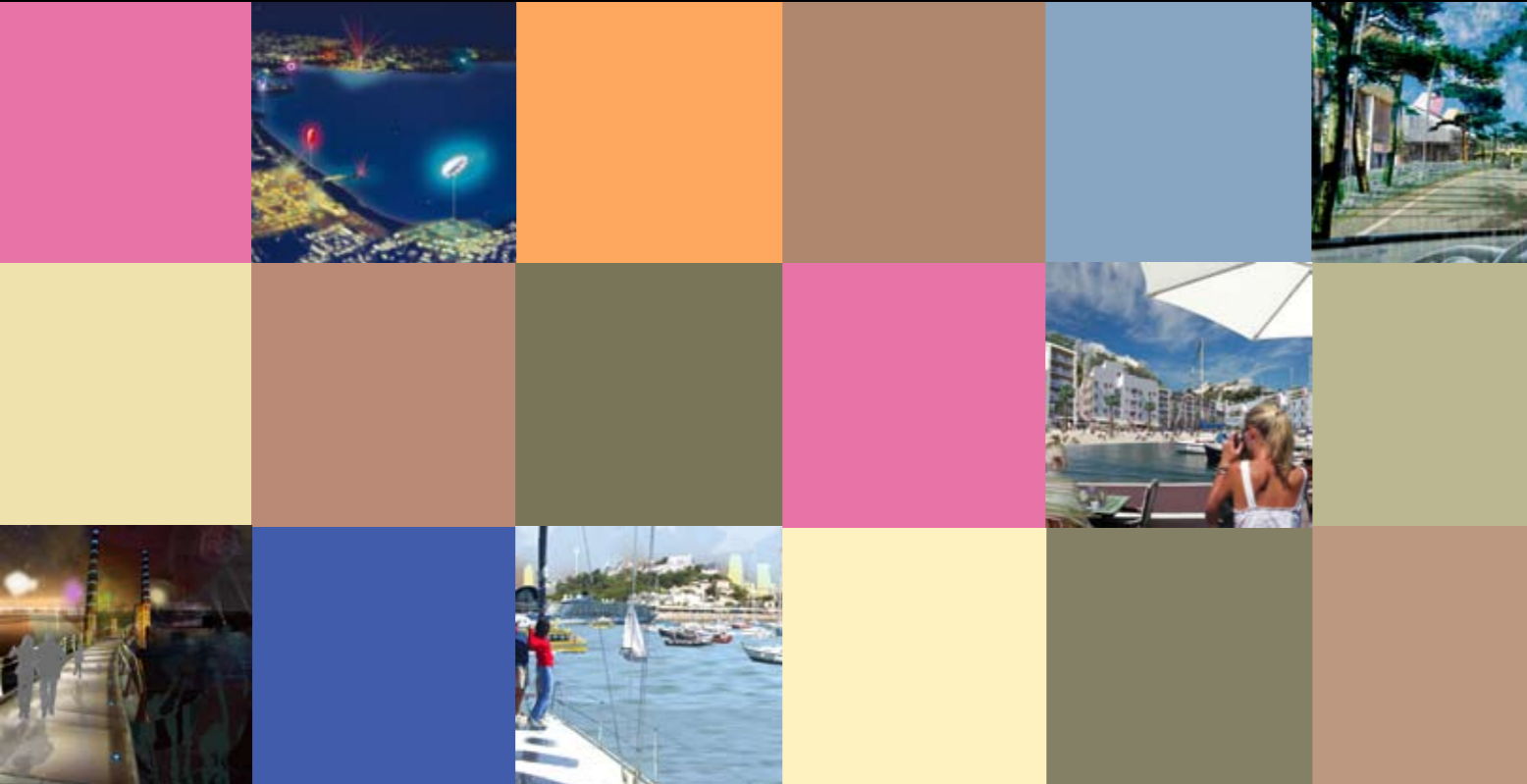


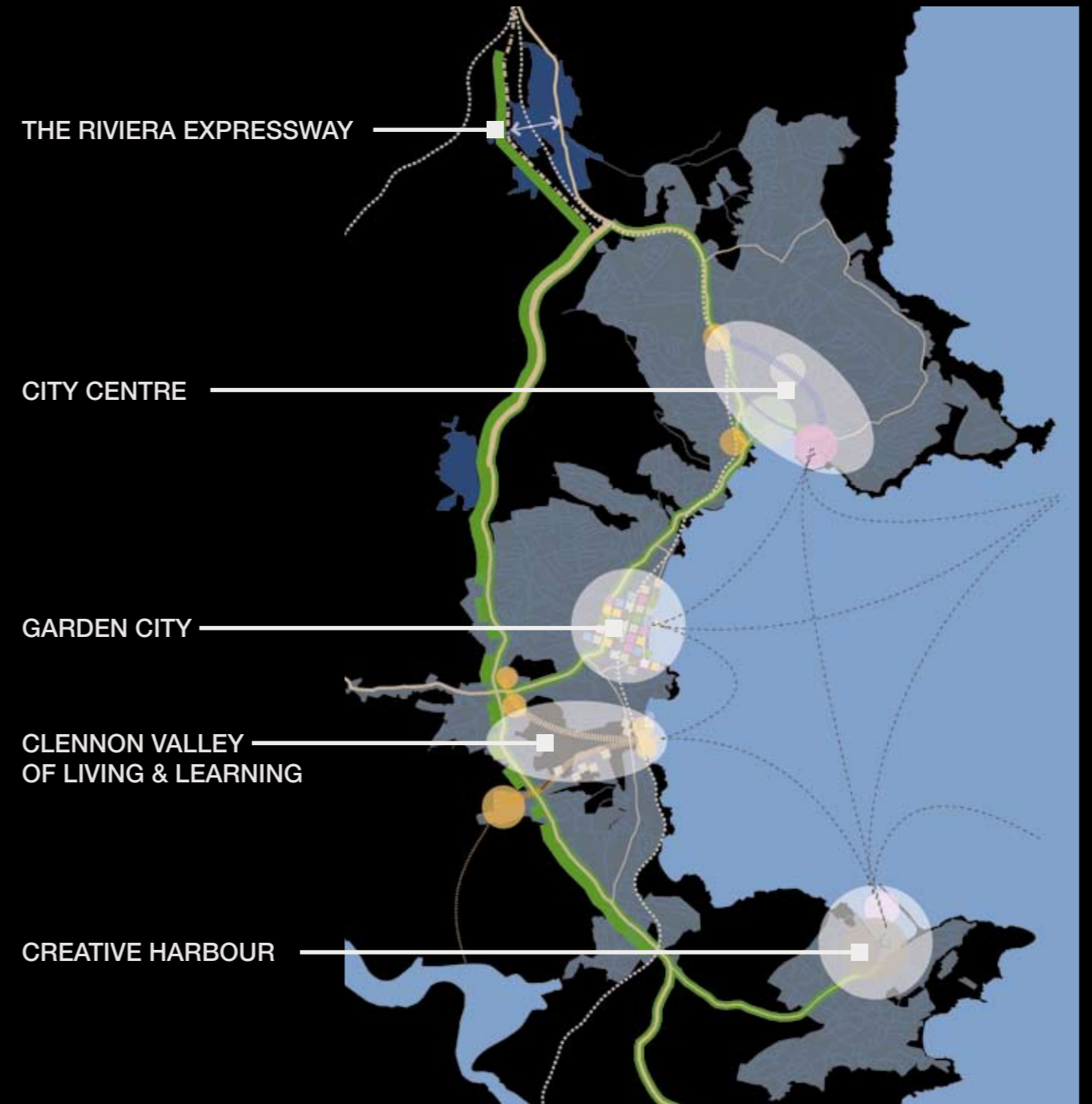
The New English Riviera

The Mayor's Vision for a future Torbay



Executive Summary

LDADESIGN



Torbay has reached an important stage in its evolution. The South West region is enjoying increased economic prosperity while at the same time facing unprecedented growth and Torbay needs to position itself to benefit more effectively than it currently does. Like every other place, Torbay is also facing up to the challenges of climate change and what this means for the future.

Torbay Council and its regeneration partners are committed to leading the way with a vision for a future Torbay. This process began with the Mayor's Community Plan launched earlier this year setting out a vision for Torbay based upon four themes: **Pride in the Bay; Stronger Communities; Learning and Skills for the Future** and **the New Economy**. The next stage in this process is to develop the vision and demonstrate how to deliver economic prosperity for Torbay's citizens in the shape of new development and a changing built environment. The big challenge is to achieve this without damaging the very qualities that make Torbay incredibly special. This vision must take as its inspiration the extraordinary qualities of the natural and built environment that first prompted visitors to call it the English Riviera.

Over time that sense of glamour and style first expressed through its buildings, its rugged coastline and its exotic planting has been eroded. Despite the continued marketing power of the English Riviera, few of its citizens recognise or feel that sense of glamour or style now, but the beautiful natural setting is still there, as are many of the fine buildings that reflect Torbay's golden age. The Mayor's Vision seeks to recapture the spirit of the place and to begin a new golden age.

There are two clear drivers for change, **Economic Growth in the South West Region** and **Climate Change**. Torbay comprises 3 towns, each with its own distinctive identity and role, but taken together they represent a large urbanised area, equal in scale and importance to a city. Torbay's growth has gone almost unnoticed but by 2026 the future population of Torbay will be close to 150,000. Torbay would rank as the 40th largest city out of 60 UK cities. Although few who live in Torbay might regard themselves as city dwellers, the reality is that they share many of the downsides of city life such as multiple deprivation, run-down areas of town, high levels of crime and congestion. Conversely, Torbay misses out on some of the great benefits of city-life such as a university, a strong arts and cultural scene, great shopping or the buzz of city centre living. If Torbay is to attract outside investment, develop a more diverse economic base and kick-start regeneration it must begin to embrace some of the very best aspects of city living. Torbay must take on a city mantle.

The Torbay economy is still heavily reliant on tourism and the Torbay Economic Regeneration Strategy sets out a number of actions aimed at securing a more diverse economic base in the future. This means strengthening the performance of the core sectors, diversifying into new sectors and providing a more focused tourism offer attracting those seeking a short city break or a long weekend. It also means mixing tourism infrastructure with other uses to create a vibrant year-round destination where residents, workers and visitors share streets and buildings, day and night, winter or summer.

The vision we have set out in this document is of a **New English Riviera**. The New English Riviera establishes a strong identity for a future Torbay based upon its built and natural heritage. It provides a new language for the future built environment in Torbay, a language that is forward looking but connected with its past. The New English Riviera sends out a very clear message about the new economy and sustainable development. Future prosperity is based upon a new found confidence which in turn is built upon the strong assertion that **Torbay is genuinely one of the most beautiful seaside cities in Europe**. A strong alliance of three towns acting as one place, drawn together by the sweep of the bay.

To achieve the vision it must:

Take on the city mantle: this means thinking and acting like a city to regenerate run-down areas and each of the three towns developing a clear role in supporting the bigger vision. For example, Torquay town centre will take on the role of city centre, Paignton becoming the Garden City and Brixham, the Creative Harbour.

Torbay must become a place of incomparable beauty: this is a reminder that in order to achieve the vision all new development must be mindful and respectful of the built and natural heritage – the sea, the topography and the countryside. Over the past decades many parts of Torbay have suffered from nondescript “anywhere” type development that has damaged the special character of Torbay. Celebrate the natural features so distinctive to Torbay: the coombs, the cliffs and coves and the extraordinary sweep of the bay.

Torbay taking centre stage in a new map of Europe; Climate change will undoubtedly alter lifestyle patterns across Europe. These effects will range from different tourist flows across Europe, driven by increasing summer temperatures and reduced personal travel to lifestyle choices for those seeking new homes and workplaces to suit their needs. The opportunity is for Torbay to make even more of its favourable climate and its attractions, not just to revive and restore its sense of glamour and style as a destination, but also to make it a great location for those seeking changes in lifestyle and new ways of working.

The New English Riviera can be created in many different ways. The Mayor’s Vision goes on to describe eight components of the vision, representing area-wide initiatives or area-based ideas. These components have emerged through the visioning process and through observation and study. The components of the vision range from area-wide initiatives such as: generating a mix and intensification of uses; putting on the style – bringing back glamour and style to the wider Torbay environment; reaching across the Bay – aimed at reinforcing the importance of the Bay itself in the everyday lives of its citizens; and making the big connections – improving transportation within Torbay and improving connections within the region.

The document then goes on to describe the specific locations where the vision can be delivered. These range from the intensification of **Torquay, forming the city centre**, the reinvention of **Paignton as a garden city** – building on its existing qualities and bringing beauty and personality to Paignton, the opportunity to make **the Clennon Valley a place of living and learning**, connecting up the coast with some of Torbay’s most valuable learning, leisure and business environments. The final component part is Brixham, the creative harbour where fishing, good food, art and culture come together in an incredible natural setting.

The next stage in this process is to test the Vision more widely with stakeholders. It must inspire, but it must also be realistic and achievable. The Vision will help form the Core Strategy for the Local Development Framework and will provide the template for new and existing projects. An Action Framework Plan will be drawn up to prioritise investment and to identify those projects and initiatives that are most capable of generating the step change necessary to transform Torbay.



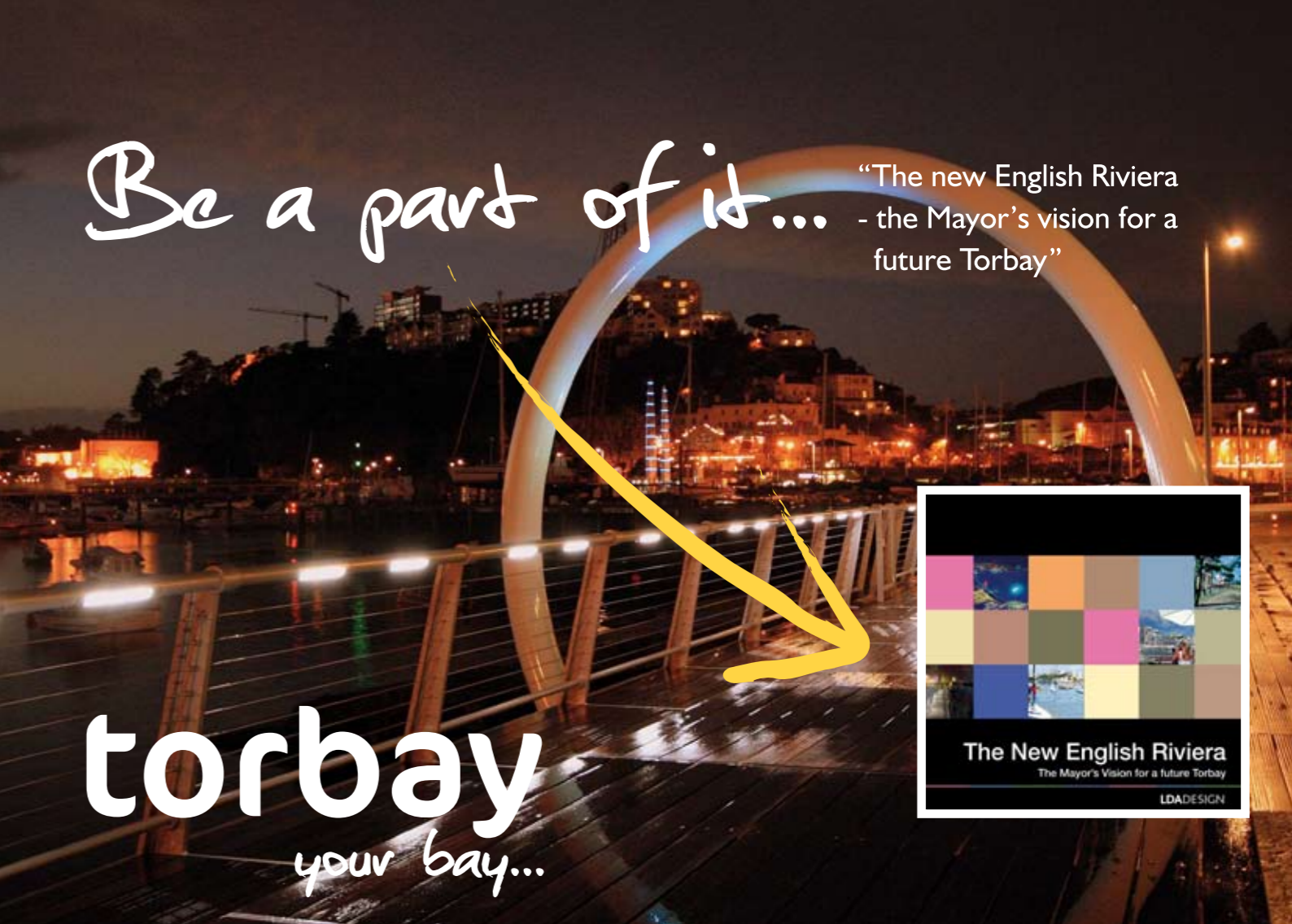
**The Mayor's
Vision offers
Torbay a
golden
opportunity
to shape its
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