



## TORBAY CULTURE - SUMMARY 2020/21

**Torbay Culture** was established in 2015 to progress [Enjoy, Talk, Do, Be - the ten year cultural strategy](#) for Torbay and its communities. The strategy is focused around people and place-shaping, with a mission to enable ***the cultural and creative development of our home, designated as the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark; and make Torbay a better place in which to live, work, learn and visit.*** [TDA](#) is the accountable body for Torbay Culture, executive and financial management. TDA works in collaboration with the independent advisory Board of Torbay Culture, and partners across the bay to implement the strategy to transform cultural provision and engagement in the area. [www.torbayculture.org](http://www.torbayculture.org)

The cultural strategy has three strategic aims:

### 1: increase engagement and participation in cultural opportunities in Torbay

- Build from the community as well as bringing in new and diverse experiences
- Support creative and cultural learning
- Harness the health and well-being benefits of culture

### 2: maximise the distinctive natural and built cultural assets of Torbay

- Protect and enhance cultural places and spaces for culture
- Develop a year-round season-based rhythm of cultural provision
- Contribute to safe and sustainable living, working and visiting

### 3: ensure joined-up cultural development is a key contributor to economic, social and environmental development in Torbay

- Strengthen support for the creative and cultural economy and the advantages it brings
- Share knowledge, skills and resources to diversify and grow the income base
- Make links with and culture proof other policies, strategies and plans

During 2020 our focus was to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, whilst continuing to deliver the commitments we had in place as part of the Great Place Scheme. Our response on behalf of the culture sector included responding to calls for advice, and keeping in contact with [Arts Council England](#), [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#), [Historic England](#) and others, to make sure they had as clear a picture as possible about the impact on Torbay's people and places. Other actions we took included:

- Providing [detailed evidence](#) to the [Parliamentary Inquiry into the impact of COVID-19 on the DCMS sectors](#); and holding discussions with politicians to advocate for a comprehensive [Culture Recovery Fund](#)
- The result of the **Culture Recovery Fund** has meant **grants of over £800,000** have come to Torbay supporting culture organisations including Kents Cavern; Pilgrim Heritage Sailing Foundation, Brixham; Palace Theatre Paignton; Babbacombe Theatre; Torquay Museum, among others, between Oct 2020 - April 2021
- We inputted to the Torbay economic plan - [Respond, Recover, Reposition](#)
- Advised individual local organisations on their own bids to support their businesses and services, including partnership proposals like the UNESCO Global Geopark transformation plan
- Worked with colleagues in [Torbay Council](#) and [TDA](#) to support major place-shaping proposals to UK Government - **Future High Streets Fund** (Paignton) and **Towns Fund** (Torquay), and the future **Levelling Up** Fund (Brixham)
- Advocated for pragmatic actions as an active partner in local partnership fora like the [Torbay Together](#) strategic partnership, the English Riviera Destination Management Group and English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark Management Group
- Worked with Torbay Council and [Heritage Arts & People](#) to support the development of a new [Torbay Heritage Strategy](#) (*adopted November 2020*) and implementation phase (*underway*) complementing the existing Cultural Strategy
- Thanks to Arts Council England's COVID-19 emergency response funding, we initiated [Create To Recover](#). That programme supported Torbay creative practitioners to re-start their work, making art in cultural settings and spaces with local communities. Those activities, adapted to social distancing rules, built morale and community goodwill in Brixham, Paignton and Torquay.
- Initiated a local Torbay chapter of ['What Next?'](#) to bring people together and share knowledge

**In 2021** our focus continues to be supporting strategic opportunities for culture to recover, and to be well placed as part of the future plans for the bay.

- We completed delivery of the [Great Place Scheme](#) as our partners and external funders would expect us to, adapting to circumstances. The final [evaluation was published](#) in March 2021, and a new film - [This Place Is Changing](#) - released in April 2021 celebrates the achievements.
- We have been sharing evaluation of programmes including [Creative Transitions](#) (wellbeing work with young people, Public Health, Imagine This, and others), and [Create To Recover](#) (our COVID-19 emergency response).
- We continue to work closely with Arts Council England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and others to consolidate achievements, and strengthen future opportunities for Torbay's culture, creative, and heritage sectors.

## A summary of Torbay Culture's actions for 2021

Examples of actions are given by way of illustration. **Priorities**, in bold capitals, were agreed by the Advisory Board of Torbay Culture during our strategy review in 2019

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### KEEP GROWING - CULTURAL AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR OUR HOME

Encouraging more place-based cultural programmes, including local and invited artists, and a range of cultural and community organisations. This needs to be **popular and accessible, as well as new and diverse**.

#### ACTIONS:

- Accelerated project as part of the Towns Fund investment (2021) – called 'Lightplay' at Royal Terrace Gardens, this builds a legacy to initiatives like Wavelength with Ginkgo Projects (*MHCLG accelerated work*)
  - Resilience and recovery advice surgeries supporting managers of culture/heritage organisations manage the impact of the pandemic, and independent practitioners (*part of our Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage actions*)
  - Great Place Scheme legacy - including nurturing creative production in local area (e.g. partnership advice; governance / development support for establishment of Filament Works CIC, etc)
  - Supported LocalMotion model in Torbay, building confidence from the ground up with TCDT (*supported creative engagement facilitation tender process, December 2020*)
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### LIVING WELL - SHAPING A BETTER FUTURE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Supporting creative interventions which improve social outcomes and opportunities for young people. This will support young peoples' health and wellbeing, specifically mental health and be devised through a forum of interested parties. It **builds on the 'test and learn' projects for culture, health & wellbeing**.

#### ACTIONS:

- Supporting a collaborative Torbay consortium application to the Arts Council *Creative People and Places* programme with TCDT, South Devon College, Local Spark Torbay, Filament Works CIC, creative and community partners and others (*brokerage and development, in preparation April – June 2021*)
  - Continuing to advocate to local government, NHS, Public Health and others, using the Torbay Culture evidence of impact published during 2020/2021
  - Explore with Literature Works, libraries, and others new activity to support local people in recovery with literature development, building on previous LW pilot projects
  - Supported a collaborative Torbay social prescribing application to the Arts Council *Thriving Communities* fund with PCN, Healthwatch Torbay, TCDT, creatives and others (*brokerage and development, submitted, January 2021, unsuccessful, though other options being explored by sector partners*)
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## ENCOURAGING A RENAISSANCE FOR OUR HISTORIC BUILDINGS, VENUES AND SPACES

Developing cultural community spaces - including innovative thinking about historic assets - working with Torbay Council and other partners. This builds on Eyeview, new models of governance, town centre development projects, creative community development, existing assets, and connects to a **refreshed Heritage Strategy and action plan**. Throughout 2020 we worked with Torbay Council's Spatial Planning team to support and manage a new Heritage Strategy, from consultant recruitment - Heritage Arts and People (HAP) appointed early 2020 - public surveys, development, drafting and public consultation and through to Council adoption (November 2020).

### ACTIONS:

- Secured Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage support for Council/HAP action-planning for early 2021. Interpretation framework to be produced (*Underway*)
  - Advising Council and liaising with external culture and heritage lead bodies to strengthen partnerships for longer-term future opportunities (*Ongoing*)
  - Inclusion of culture and heritage in major strategic plans (*Towns Fund and Torquay Town Investment Plan; Future High Streets Fund for Paignton*)
  - Completion of the *Think Place* guidance policy toolkit for spatial planning and public art with Ginkgo Projects and others (*Great Place Scheme legacy ongoing*)
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## THE ENVIRONMENT – CELEBRATING AND RESPECTING OUR UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK

We want to maximise the opportunities of the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark through creativity and innovation. It is the **canvas on which we all live our lives**, and the bay's unique and distinctive offer to visitors. This builds on Torbay Culture's work (Eyeview, the cultural tourism development and regeneration-supported projects); as well as initiatives like The Rock Connects Us, Geopark Festival, others.

### ACTIONS:

- Building on the extensive investment in the creative programming celebrating the UNESCO designation through the Great Place Scheme, we will continue to support shared messaging through our work with the Destination Management Group, ERBIDCo, the Geopark Management Group and others
  - Championing UNESCO designation through strategic fora, with local and external partners including Arts Council England
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## CULTURAL TOURISM ON THE ENGLISH RIVIERA

Working with partners including English Riviera Business Improvement District (ERBIDCo) and Council to support activity which **underpins the visitor economy for the area**. This builds on our cultural tourism product development; and the English Riviera Destination Management Plan.

### ACTIONS:

- Working with partners including the International Agatha Christie Festival to support new activity and short films to celebrate the less well known aspects of Torbay heritage as part of our Culture Recovery Fund activity (*Underway*)
  - Continuing to support strategic planning through engagement with, and deputy chairing of, Destination Management Group (*Ongoing*)
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During 2020/21 Torbay Culture's activities and programmes were supported with investment from the following:

- The National Lottery Heritage Fund and Arts Council England - Great Place Scheme (England) (2017-20)
- Arts Council England COVID-19 Emergency response fund (2020)
- Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage, DCMS, administered via the National Lottery Heritage Fund (2020-21)
- In April 2021 Torbay Council and TDA committed support to continue Torbay Culture's work during 2021/22.

More details about our [funding](#), [impact](#) and [evaluation](#) can be found on our website.

We are grateful to those who have supported and collaborated with us during 2020/21 and look forward to continuing our work in 2021/22.

Jacob Brandon, Chair of Torbay Culture

Martin Thomas, Executive Director

<https://www.torbayculture.org/news>

<https://twitter.com/TorbayCulture>



The  
National Lottery  
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