

CHILL OUT : IT'S YOUR LIFE

DEVELOPING TORBAY'S CULTURE

FOREWORD

Culture is what makes life worth living. However, mention the word “culture” to the majority of people and their eyes are soon likely to glaze over – either because they do not see culture as something that is relevant to them or because they imagine it is only concerned with certain traditional arts.

But culture – in the way it is defined in this document - impacts on the lives of all people across Torbay. It involves the activities we do out of choice: those things that we enjoy, that inspire us and improve the quality of our lives.

It represents a wealth of activities. For example:

- taking part in or watching different types of sport or leisure activities – yes including skateboarding!
- enjoying musicians perform in a pub or at a classical music concert
- being uplifted by our magnificent coastline, open spaces and public parks
- cherishing our shared heritage of historic buildings and local museums
- using our libraries to connect to the vast amount of knowledge and information they contain
- being a member of a local drama or dance group
- going to a local nightclub or theatre
- and much, much more.

Torbay Council has recently reorganised its services and has now created a new Learning and Cultural Services Directorate to enable cultural activities across the Bay to flourish. However, this strategy is not just concerned with what Torbay Council or any one organisation does. Instead, it addresses the cultural development of the area as a whole. It is about making people proud to say they live in Torbay and encouraging visitors to come and enjoy all that the area has to offer.

The strategy links closely to the work of Torbay’s Local Strategic Partnership and their development of an overall Community Plan which will address the various challenges facing the Bay in the years to come. Indeed, Culture is one of the six themes around which the Community Plan is being developed.

The proposals in this strategy have been endorsed by local people – of all ages – and organisations during the course of recent months. An overwhelming message to emerge from that consultation was the need to translate the strategy into practical action which can improve the Bay’s cultural well-being.

The strategy now sets out a clear direction to develop cultural activities across the Bay in the years ahead. The challenge facing us all is to begin to turn the ideas contained in this document into reality and, in doing so, to bring real and lasting benefits to all of us who live, work in or visit the Bay.

[Signed)
Councillor Jean Cope
Executive Member for Learning and Cultural
Services, Torbay Council

[Signed)
Barry Cole
Riviera International Centre, on behalf of
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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CULTURE?

Culture means many different things to different people. However, we believe it is important at the outset of this document to define what we mean by that elusive word so that there is a recognised starting point for this strategy.

Culture – in its broadest sense – is concerned with the way we live and the quality of our lives. It not only looks back to our shared past but is constantly changing and evolving as new activities develop and flourish. With that in mind, there are three common characteristics that help define cultural activity: it inspires us; it involves learning; and it provides enjoyment and fun.

The vibrancy of an area’s culture is an important barometer of its sense of community spirit, its civic pride and its overall values. As a result, culture has a direct relevance to the everyday lives of all local people – it is not restricted to a privileged few who already take part in recognised cultural pursuits, but offers an opportunity to all local people to enjoy a range of creative activities. Culture is all around us and everyone should be part of those opportunities: whatever their age, whatever their interests and whatever their background.

Nor do we draw any distinction between so called “high” or “low” culture. Instead, we firmly believe that cultural activity, whether it involves organised activities or those undertaken on an individual basis within a person’s own home, help shape people’s character and that of the area as a whole.

And culture is concerned not only with activities and events: it reflects ideas, beliefs and customs. It can help improve people’s self confidence and skills. As a result, culture has a major part to play in developing the general well-being of the area.

Against that background, we have taken the word “culture” to encompass an enormous range of activities, including:

- watching or taking part in a whole range of sporting and leisure activities : whether that be team activities or those undertaken on an individual basis
- enjoying the best of Torbay’s nightlife, which might involve watching a band perform in a pub, going to a night-club or cinema, or visiting the area’s restaurants and cafes
- taking part in organised activities such as attending a classical music concert, going to a local theatre, belonging to an amateur drama or dance group
- being a professional or amateur musician, singer or artist, operating from home or from a studio
- taking the opportunity to explore Torbay’s magnificent coastline and landscape, its historic buildings and heritage

- visiting our museums, libraries, galleries and archive collections to find out about the area's rich local history and cultural heritage; and its relevance to us today

..... and much more besides. The list could go on and on – in our view the common feature which binds such activities together is their ability to inspire and fulfil people. This strategy is however, not an attempt to enforce a rigid “official” version of culture – instead culture involves people making their own choices about what fires their imagination and inspires them.

WHY DO WE NEED ANOTHER STRATEGY AND WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?

Local authorities, along with many other organisations, are awash with strategies and plans. So why do we need yet another strategy and where does this one fit?

A good deal is already happening in terms of Torbay's cultural life (and some key features of that activity are highlighted in the next section of this document). However, this strategy is concerned with how best to develop local cultural activities further and to provide a strategic framework for that work in the coming years. It involves focusing on those priority actions that will benefit the whole community and help bring people together to enjoy all that the Bay has to offer – whether that be sport, our nightlife, our shared history, our open spaces and public parks and much else besides.

It also aims to highlight the ways in which cultural activity – in their various forms – link and contribute to other aspects of the area's well-being : in terms of making Torbay a safer and more pleasant place, bringing communities together, providing enjoyment and fun; stimulating learning and education, encouraging healthier lifestyles and contributing to the area's future economic prosperity. In order to do so, this strategy is intended to:

- set out a direction and shared vision for developing cultural activities across Torbay
- identify and secure support for those priority actions which focus on the cultural needs of both local people and visitors
- stimulate more effective partnership working by those organisations with a direct involvement and interest in Torbay's cultural activities: from across the private, voluntary, community and public sectors
- champion and celebrate Torbay's cultural achievements and, in doing so, help to attract further investment in local cultural activities
- explain ways in which culture can be a key component in the area's social and economic well-being.

So where will this strategy fit with other local strategies and plans? This document is intended to act as a reference point for all those involved in Torbay's cultural development. It also represents one of the key foundations for the work of Torbay's Local Strategic Partnership and

its developing Community Plan, which is concerned with the area's overall economic, social and environmental future. Indeed, Culture is one of the six themes around which the Community Plan is being developed. The particular ways in which the six over-arching themes of the Community Plan relate to this strategy are shown in the diagram at Annex One:

There are a number of local strategies already in existence or currently being developed which are relevant this Cultural Strategy. As well as the overall Torbay Local Plan, they include local strategies concerned with:

- sport
- playing pitches
- parks and open spaces
- the arts
- children's play
- heritage
- libraries

It is not proposed however, to describe within this document all the specific cultural activities which are already carried out by Torbay Council and other organisations in the context of these strategies. Instead, those activities are set out in the variety of service plans and business plans which are produced by the relevant organisations responsible for those individual services. What this document seeks to do therefore is to provide the wider strategic context and a rationale for the various activities being undertaken.

In addition, this document provides a link to the wide range of activity taking place outside of Torbay at a national or regional level which impacts on Torbay's future. Thus the strategy is influenced by and concerned with national priorities such as education and learning, crime and safety, social inclusion, healthy living, children's services, economic and social regeneration. For example, the strategy takes account of the recent report by the Local Government Association on the part which cultural activities can play in enriching the national curriculum within schools, improving the quality of life for children and young people, and providing informal lifelong learning opportunities. ("Raising Educational Standards in Schools and Beyond" – November 2003).

As well, the strategy is intended to dovetail at a local level with the work of the South West Regional Development Agency, Culture South West (the Regional Cultural Consortium); and the individual regional agencies concerned with different aspects of cultural activity : for example English Heritage, the Arts Council for England, Sport England and the South West Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. In addition, the strategy provides a means of linking Torbay's cultural priorities with those in neighbouring areas of Devon and Plymouth.

The ways in which this strategy links to the range of other strategies and plans is illustrated in the diagram at Annex Two.

WHAT IS HAPPENING ALREADY?

Torbay's culture and heritage have played a major part in helping define the area, its character and its people. As a result, the towns of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham are home to a varied mix of cultural activity, each with their own traditions and character. For example, in Brixham the town's culture has been formed, in large measure, by its fishing traditions and its continuing position as one of the country's largest and most important ports. Sporting activity also plays a central role in the lives of many people locally and represents an important part of the cultural make up of the area.

The one common feature which links all of Torbay is the importance of the sea and coastline; and the way they continue to shape the character of the area and its culture. This manifests itself in Torbay's role as a recognised premier seaside resort area – the English Riviera – which capitalises on that unique mix of natural environment, beaches, coastline and heritage. As a result, tourism is Torbay's dominant industry, with its resident population of some 127,000 people expanding to around 200,000 during the summer months.

Therefore this strategy needs to address not only inward looking culture which is aimed at local people and what they enjoy, but also an outward looking culture which can draw people to the area. At present, there are a variety of cultural events and activities which reflect Torbay's position as a major tourism venue. However, whilst the local tourism industry is a significant feature of the overall Torbay economy and employs some 15,000 people (both directly and indirectly), the large influx of visitors – particularly during the summer months – poses a number of challenges to the area, its local character and its cultural facilities.

Against that background, some key facts and figures illustrate the scale and characteristics of cultural activity across Torbay at the present time:

- Torbay Council spends some £4.9 million each year on culture, libraries, sport, leisure and tourism related activity. Based on 2001/02 figures, the Council spends £37.80 per head of population on such net expenditure. This is broadly in line with that spent by similar areas such as Bournemouth, Plymouth, Poole and Southend; although considerably less than other areas such as Brighton and Portsmouth¹
- some 675,000 people visit and use the various Council run or contracted leisure attractions each year
- some 40% of local school pupils attend after school sports clubs, mainly in traditional team games, with some gymnastics and dance activities

¹ Source data from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2003

- some 450,000 people visit Paignton Zoo Environmental Park each year and the Zoo's new "Living Coasts" in Torquay is estimated to attract some 300,000 visitors each year
- Torbay has a range of theatre venues used by local people and visitors. They include the Princess Theatre, Torquay (150,000 visitors pa), the Babbacombe Theatre (40,000 visitors pa), the Palace Theatre, Paignton (26,400 visitors pa), the Little Theatre, Torquay (run by the Torquay Operatic and Dramatic Society) and the Brixham Theatre (run by the Brixham Operatic and Dramatic Society), both of which offer a range of amateur performances each year
- the area has three registered museums providing access to a wide range of important collections which tell the story of Torbay's history for current and future generations: Torquay Museum, the oldest operating museum in Devon, which attracts some 17,000 visitors each year; Brixham Heritage Museum (8,000 visitors each year) and Torre Abbey (some 20,000 visitors each year) which combines an historic house and an art gallery with The Spanish Barn, the former tithe barn of the Abbey
- there are some 630,000 visits to local libraries each year, representing just under five visits each year per head of population; with libraries having an important role in providing access to knowledge, information and leisure activities, including a wide range of services for children
- Torbay has 870 listed buildings, 24 conservation areas, 6 listed parks and gardens which bring to life the area's rich history and heritage
- Torbay has significant open space (some 970 hectares), which is greater than many similar sized areas throughout the country. Such open space includes a nationally designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (around Brixham), as well as Areas of Great Landscape Value, and a Coastal Preservation Area
- the area has 12 nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), with over 75% of the coastline designated as SSSI or a County Wildlife Site
- the area has a rich variety of plants, animals and insects in their natural environment, including 10 nationally rare plant species and 28 nationally scarce species, which are found in Torbay.

Torbay has a range of other important features which characterise local cultural life:

- the area is home to a number of creative and cultural industries, including a wide range of professional and amateur artists, musicians and craftspeople from across the area
- there is a strong voluntary commitment to cultural activity as demonstrated by the large number of local arts groups (both professional and amateur), sports and leisure clubs (a number of whom are focused around sea-based activities such as sailing, water-skiing and

diving), heritage and history societies, volunteer support for museum activities and community partnerships working to enhance the area's environment, parks and public open spaces

- there are a number of theatre companies who operate from the area; ranging from the Westcountry Theatre Company who provide performances and work with schools across the South West as a whole, through to local amateur groups such as the Bijou Theatre Company who perform at the Palace Theatre, Paignton
- a large variety of events and festivals are held throughout the year, run by the Council, local cultural bodies, heritage organisations such as local museums and history societies, community organisations, sporting and recreational groups – with a number of such events targeted at visitors to the area
- the Bay is a recognised focus for cultural activity within surrounding towns and villages – with Torbay being the first place that people from such areas look to for cultural activities.

But what is the picture that lies behind those overall facts and figures?; and what are the key strengths and weaknesses concerning cultural activity at the present time?

Torbay has a number of recognised strengths which are an important feature of cultural life and can be developed further in the context of this strategy. They involve:

- an unparalleled mix of coastline, beaches, landscape and woodland which is enjoyed and valued by residents and visitors alike. It is best summed up in one phrase – the Bay. This presents an opportunity (for example through Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust) to take into care land which is of strategic importance in conserving the area's heritage and provides opportunities for use as imaginative venues for cultural activities
- a flourishing and vibrant nightlife, which is popular with many local people as well as attracting visitors from outside the area
- a number of important buildings which represent and display the best of Torbay's built heritage. These include Torre Abbey, Oldway Mansion, the Palace Theatre, the Pavilion, Paignton's town centre, Brixham and Torquay's harbourside areas and a range of notable "Blue Plaque" buildings recognised by Torbay Civic Society. Such examples of the area's built heritage provide practical opportunities not only to present Torbay's past but also to act as a focus and venues for future cultural activity
- a passionate commitment to the cultural development of Torbay by a number of local organisations and individuals which can be capitalised on in carrying forward this strategy
- the range of professional and amateur cultural activity which currently takes place across the area and the quality of that activity, particularly in terms of the visual and performing arts
- a good range of sporting opportunities available locally – both on a team basis and for individuals – with much of it water based.

However, this positive picture needs to be balanced by a number of significant weaknesses and barriers which hamper further cultural development within Torbay. As such, these represent the key issues which the strategy needs to address and involve:

- the perceived absence of strategic thinking, ambition and leadership concerning cultural activities; both within the cultural sector itself and Torbay Council. Whilst there are a wide range of local organisations and recent moves to co-ordinate their work – for example through the setting up of Torbay Arts Base – there is no unifying organisation which binds together the local cultural sector as a whole
- the need to work more closely with the local community to identify their cultural needs so as to increase participation in cultural and leisure activities across the Bay
- the lack of recognition of the wider role that culture can play in the area’s overall development – and, as a result, the lack of profile and “clout” which culture commands locally
- a general lack of awareness amongst many local people about what cultural activities are already taking place across the area and, in some cases, local people finding activities are too expensive or difficult to access, thus reducing their participation
- the need to generate greater excitement and “buzz” through higher profile events of a national/international significance, local street theatre and public art in open space and town centres; and generally using the area’s public areas in more imaginative ways
- the need to improve the physical appearance and “feel” of Torbay’s town centres to make them more friendly and accessible places for all members of the community and, in so doing, secure an improved sense of civic pride
- the lack of sufficient local activities aimed particularly at young people; both in terms of cultural activities in schools and more informal recreational pursuits – for example an increased focus on sea-based activities would go a long way to reinforce young people’s sense of belonging to the area
- the need to give greater attention to the issue of children’s play and informal learning as an important cultural activity. There are currently only a limited number of such cultural activities for children, particularly between the ages of 8 and 13
- the fragile position of many of the area’s cultural organisations and creative industries, with a good number operating on a financial knife edge
- the low success rate in securing external funds for local cultural activities from the National Lottery, regional and national cultural agencies and the European Union. For example. both the overall scale of National Lottery funds secured by Torbay organisations and the size of individual awards are very low compared with the take up across the South West as a whole.

This is particularly the case in terms of funds for arts and heritage activities, (with sporting activities having done slightly better in securing Lottery funds). Only some £196,000 has been secured from the Lottery for 14 local arts related projects and £860,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for 15 projects – although two large applications (in respect of Torre Abbey and the Palace Theatre) are currently being considered

- a need for a more recognised and visible physical base for cultural activities to complement what is already in place; in terms of space for exhibitions, performances, events, rehearsals and, particularly for local young people, for informal leisure activities
- capitalising more on advances in new technology, particularly the Internet, to aid the area's cultural development.

It is against this background of the strengths and weaknesses of current cultural activity that the programme of priority areas for action, described on later pages has been developed.

Before describing such a programme, the following sections explain the wider context to the plans – an overall vision of how Torbay can be seen and recognised in the years ahead, as well as a set of strategic themes around which action can be taken.

HOW THE CULTURAL STRATEGY WILL ADDRESS THE THEMES OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

The Community Plan identifies a vision for Torbay:

“A HEALTHY, PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY, LIVING, LEARNING AND RELAXING IN A SAFE AND BEAUTIFUL BAY”

From this vision the community developed eight key themes:

- Making Torbay a Safer Place
- Improving health and social care in Torbay
- Improving access to good quality affordable homes
- Towards a prosperous Torbay
- Valuing our Environment
- Placing learning at the heart of our community
- Developing Torbay's Culture
- Creating Sustainable Communities

The Cultural Strategy was developed in conjunction with the Community Plan and although this strategy focuses down on key themes identified in the Community Plan this has been extended to include other considerations for the Cultural sector. The Community Plan addresses many of the elements not only in the section “Developing Torbay's Culture” but also in six of the remaining priority areas. The links can be identified below:

“Extract from the Community Plan – Culture Section”

DEVELOPING TORBAY’S CULTURE

Our Aim

To create a more vibrant and diverse mix of cultural activities in Torbay's outstanding location which are recognised, valued and taken up by local people and visitors alike

There is a strong local commitment to cultural activity - in all its forms - as demonstrated by the large number of local music, drama and dance groups, sports and leisure clubs (including those focussed around the area's sea-based activities), heritage and history societies and much more

PRIORITIES

➤ *Aim to meet the cultural needs of our community*

Increase the range of cultural opportunities especially by meeting the needs of Torbay’s young people, and those traditionally excluded and by developing an environment to encourage sustainable cultural industries.

➤ *Giving culture a higher profile*

To increase people’s access to and understanding of cultural opportunities and to improve the quality of what is currently available.

➤ *Celebrate Torbay’s Cultural successes*

To raise awareness of and celebrate Torbay’s cultural achievements and cultural Heritage.

AIM TO MEET THE CULTURAL NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY (Action Plan 7.1)

THIS IS WHAT WE WILL DO:

- ◆ Increase the take-up of cultural activities by young people
- ◆ Encourage the growth of cultural industries
- ◆ Provide quality space for community performance, exhibitions, events, rehearsal space and particularly for young people, informal leisure activities.
- ◆ Be successful in attracting external funding for the various cultural initiatives
- ◆ Encourage a continental “Café Culture”
- ◆ Exploit the advances in new technology and electronic media
- ◆ Remove barriers which allow all the community to access cultural activity
- ◆ Increase informal learning through use of cultural facilities. especially in relation to libraries.

GIVING CULTURE A HIGHER PROFILE (Action Plan 7.2)

THIS IS WHAT WE WILL DO:

- ◆ Increase the numbers of people – both residents and visitors – who take part in cultural activities
- ◆ Increase customer satisfaction with local facilities, as judged by surveys of local people and visitors
- ◆ Make greater use of the area's natural environment, beaches and historic buildings for cultural activities
- ◆ Develop quality facilities in which cultural, informal learning, sport and leisure activities can flourish
- ◆ Improve marketing and sharing of information

CELEBRATE TORBAY'S CULTURAL SUCCESSES (Action Plan 7.3)

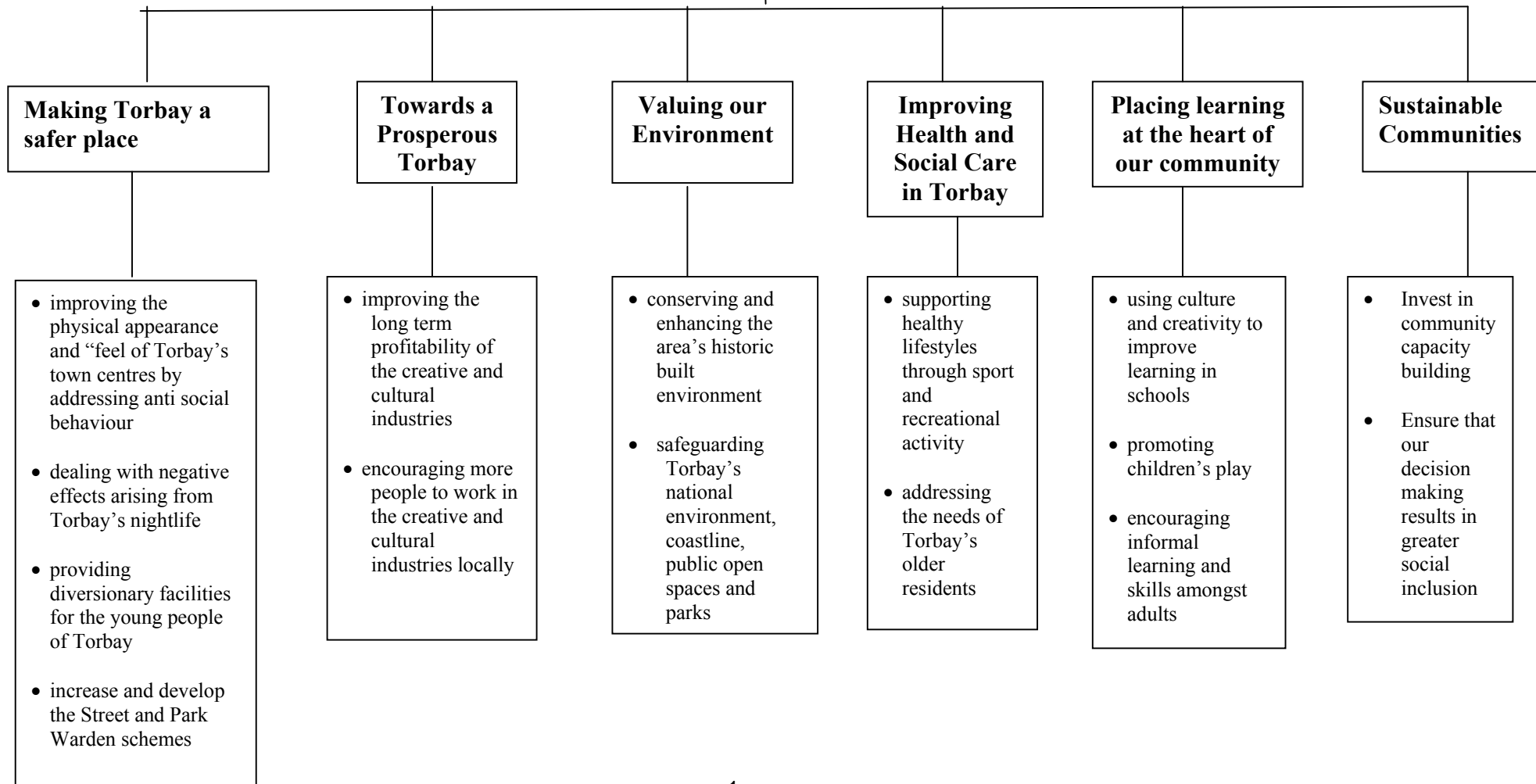
THIS IS WHAT WE WILL DO:

- ◆ Increase joint working between local cultural organisations to develop the range of activity that is currently available
- ◆ Increase the stability and profitability of local cultural organisations and industries
- ◆ Boost confidence to increase investment in the local cultural sector, particularly in terms of external funding sources
- ◆ Support local cultural and heritage organisations to develop their role with targeted funding, marketing and business advice

As well as the main culture theme in the Community Plan, the Cultural Strategy will also link to the following key themes:

TORBAY'S COMMUNITY PLAN

Ways in which the six other Community Plan themes relate to the Cultural Strategy



HOW THE STRATEGY WAS DEVELOPED – METHOD

A steering group was formed to develop the Cultural Strategy and appoint a consultant to develop the themes through consultation. The initial development of the strategy was through three main focus groups attended by key local organisations with an interest in Torbay's cultural development. This informed the draft of the Strategy that went out to public consultation. This was distributed through a number of outlets including Libraries, cultural establishments, exhibitions and Connections offices. The council's viewpoint panel were also consulted on the key activities to look at how they relate to the quality of life in Torbay. The response to this initial consultation resulted in a lack of respondents in the youth sector. Therefore additional consultation took place with Paignton Community College 6th form and distribution of the Summary Document and questionnaires to local schools. This was followed up by telephone calls to ensure feedback from this element of the community was included.

The final version of the strategy was completed by February 2004 and ready for publication once the Cultural Partnership is established.

(A detailed breakdown of the Consultation Document is attached in Annex 3)

AN OVERALL AMBITION AND VISION

In order to provide the strategy with a clear sense of direction, an over-arching "vision" statement has been developed with key culture sector stakeholders. This "vision" has been also been endorsed by a significant majority of local people who responded to consultation on the earlier draft strategy and follows the theme of the Community Plan.

Such statements can often be no more than a long collection of fairly meaningless phrases and aspirations. However, the following vision is intended to act as a concise statement which encapsulates the overall rationale that underpins the strategy. It also reflects an ambition which is capable of holding good for at least the next 10 years. The vision is:

"To create a more vibrant and diverse mix of cultural activities in Torbay's unique location which are recognised, valued and taken up by local people and visitors alike"

In order to measure progress in achieving this overall vision, it is proposed to set a number of specific targets. The precise targets will be set later but they will involve the extent to which there is:

- an overall increase in the numbers of people – both residents and visitors – who take part in cultural activities
- an increase in the number of local people taking part in cultural activities for the first time, particularly amongst young people and children
- an increase in investment in the local cultural sector, particularly in terms of external funding sources such as the National Lottery, Central Government and the European Union

- an increase in joint working between local cultural organisations to develop the range of activity that is available currently
- an increase in the satisfaction with local facilities, as judged by surveys of local people and visitors

THEMES TO DRIVE THE STRATEGY

The following five strategic themes, which fall within the three key objectives of the ‘Developing Torbay’s Culture’ section of the Community Plan, have been identified in order to drive forward the strategy. They represent the key issues to be addressed which have emerged from an assessment of the area’s present strengths and weaknesses. The proposed themes involve:

“Aim to meet the cultural needs of our Community”

- increasing people’s access to cultural opportunities across Torbay
- meeting the cultural needs of Torbay’s young people and children more effectively
- improving the quality of cultural activities currently available and ensuring longer term sustainability

“Giving culture a higher profile”

- changing people’s attitude and understanding of culture and the area’s cultural heritage

“Celebrate Torbay’s cultural successes”

- raising awareness of Torbay’s cultural successes and characteristics.

All the above themes have received endorsement by a significant majority of local people who responded to the earlier consultation on the draft strategy. The two themes concerned with improving the quality of cultural activity that is currently available and meeting the needs of young people and children received the highest level of support. The latter theme received considerable support not just from young people but also many adults, although a number also made the point that it was important the strategy did not give overall priority to young people at the expense of the needs of older people.

The themes provide the foundations from which individual actions will flow, both now and in the future. They lie at the heart of this strategy and provide the framework for strengthening cultural activity in a number of practical ways in the years to come, and link to the Community Plan priorities. Future cultural activity should be judged as to the extent to which they address the above themes.

However, it is not the intention of this strategy to set out all of the individual cultural activities taking place or planned across the area. They will remain the responsibility of individual

organisations and will continue to feature in their respective strategies and plans for specific cultural activities such as sport, the arts and heritage.

Instead, this document focuses on a small number of key activities which represent those that impact on the area's cultural development as a whole; where real progress is needed in order to overcome the shortcomings identified earlier; and respond to the opportunities becoming available.

OTHER STRATEGIES LINKED TO THE CULTURAL STRATEGY

There are a number of other strategies that informed the development of the cultural strategy and will in the future take the lead for this overarching plan.

Sports Strategy

The Sports Strategy is critical for the development of sport, which in turn is closely linked to health, regeneration and the quality of life. The sports Strategy provides a framework for facilitating sports facilities development and activities managed and provided by local clubs, professional organisations and the public sector. The Sports Strategy was developed in March 2003 following extensive consultation. It contains an audit of sports provision, sets out aims and objectives for sport in the context of the socio-economic profile of Torbay.

Playing Pitch Strategy

In December 2002 Sport England funded the appointment of a specialist consultant to develop the Playing Pitch Strategy for Torbay. This strategy deals with the operation level of sport in the field of Football, Rugby Union, cricket and hockey. 125 sports clubs and 88 schools were involved in the consultation process. The recommendation of the strategy link to the Sports Strategy by providing a development plan related to the level and quality of the provision in Torbay.

Heritage Strategy

The Heritage Strategy is based on work carried out over the past decade by Torbay Council together with many different groups across the community of heritage interests in Torbay. The strategy seeks to act as a road map for all organisations and agencies interested in the heritage of Torbay and provides a list of priorities in a number of heritage categories with associated actions. The strategy also seeks to develop cross organisation working across group to better promote and deliver heritage in Torbay. The Heritage Strategy was developed by the Heritage Forum.

Library Position Statement

The Library Position Statement identifies the current level of service provided by the service. It identifies how the library service will contribute and further develop to meet the needs of the cultural development, lifelong learning and enjoyment of the community.

Arts Strategy (under development in partnership with the Arts Council South West)

This strategy will be developed during 2004/5 to address the issues currently affecting arts in Torbay. The strategy will look at current provision for performing arts, visual arts, public art and media and identify a long term strategy of improvement and development opportunities.

Green Open Spaces Strategy (under development)

The Green Open Spaces Strategy is being developed as part of a national pilot facilitated by CABE Space. The Green Spaces Strategy will address predominantly generic themes, such as safety, appearance, perception, addressing neglect and uses. The Strategy is hoped to provide guidance and actions to ‘get more quality use from green space by local people and visitors to the bay. The Green Open Spaces Strategy will

Play Strategy (under development)

The Play Strategy is being developed following the publication of the Governments Play Strategy – ‘Getting Serious About Play’. Torbay acknowledges that play services are fragmented, outdated and are now unlikely to engage children and young people effectively.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

Therefore arising out of the key themes, a programme of ten priority areas for action has been identified as those on which attention will focus in the first instance. They have received a significant endorsement from local people during the earlier consultation on the draft strategy. The programme of priority actions provides early evidence of action being taken to address the current shortcomings in cultural activity particularly relevant to the cultural sector and interested groups and individuals.

The programme of action involves:

- identifying a “**Cultural Champion**” or “Ambassador” – someone with sufficient charisma, profile and “clout” to be a recognised spokesperson for cultural issues locally who can drive forward specific initiatives on behalf of the local community as a whole. Such a “Champion” will be the Chair of a new Torbay Cultural Partnership (described on later pages). The key characteristics required for such a Cultural Champion are a passion for and commitment to local cultural activities, combined with the ability to get things done. The precise arrangements for identifying the Cultural Champion and how he or she operates are currently being determined in consultation with prospective members of the new Torbay Cultural Partnership
- bidding to Central Government to **set up a Creative Partnership** between local schools and cultural professionals to give children and young people between the ages of 5 and 18 (and their teachers) the opportunity to work with creative and heritage professionals on a long term basis. This will provide young people with imaginative opportunities to take part in music, drama, dance, the visual arts and to work with museums and libraries in order to stimulate their interest in learning across the curriculum as a whole. Such an initiative would complement the plans by Brixham Community College to become an approved Arts College able to support other local schools in arts based activities

- carrying forward Torbay Council's plans to **introduce a Leisure Card**, whereby local people including those from low income households, are able to access and take part in cultural opportunities within the area more easily
- securing and running a targeted programme of **world class events and activities** which capitalise on Torbay's unique maritime and coastal environment. Specific examples include the motor grand prix racing which takes place annually and opportunities to extend its impact with a range of cultural and sporting activities developed in partnership with local organisations, particularly those focussed on the area's young people and children; and high profile musical events which attract nationally recognised performers and would bring people together from across Torbay and beyond
- **exploiting the area's natural environment, beaches and historic buildings** for cultural activities – for example protecting and making greater use of Torre Abbey and the area's publicly owned open spaces and parks for outdoor performances and events, in line with the local heritage strategy
- **creating public art, events and street theatre** in town centres and open spaces across Torbay to open up those areas more for public use and, in doing so, to create a greater sense of energy, excitement and "buzz" within the area, in line with the Torbay Local Plan
- **supporting the local creative industries and the café culture, cultural and heritage organisations to develop their role** by providing them with targeted forms of support. For example, helping local creative businesses and voluntary organisations to develop funding applications (for example from the National Lottery, Central Government and European Union funding programmes); providing marketing advice; and other forms of business support services and "mentoring" help
- **exploiting the advances in new technology and electronic media.** This involves developing web cams of local cultural activity (for example local artists working in their studios) which can be accessed via the Internet and setting up a community radio facility. In this way, it would open up new market opportunities for local creative businesses and individuals, as well as raising the profile of the area generally. Such an initiative provides the opportunity for local young people to obtain hands on experience of working with emerging new technologies, which will become an increasing feature of our lives in the years to come
- **developing quality facilities in which cultural and leisure activities can flourish**, in terms of space for community based performances, exhibitions, events and, particularly for young people, rehearsal space for budding musicians and informal leisure activities. Decisions on the long term role of the Palace Theatre, Paignton are relevant here, given the potential it offers to provide some of these facilities as part of its development
- **improving the arrangements for co-ordinating the activities of local organisations** and enabling them to share information and market themselves more effectively. This includes

greater use of a centrally managed and updated website and the sharing of information via a regular newsletter.

The table at Annex Two sets out for each priority action:

- what will happen
- the overall strategic theme(s) which the action will address
- the organisation responsible for leading the initiative
- the timescale(s) involved and the milestones to monitor progress
- what it is likely to cost
- potential sources of funding
- what will be achieved and how this will be measured

As this initial set of actions are implemented, other future areas of activity will emerge which can be developed within the framework of the strategy's five overall themes.

In addition to the programme of priority actions, a number of other ideas emerged from the consultation with local people on the draft strategy which are not already addressed in this strategy. These are summarised in Annex Four. However, it will be important that any future programme of action retains a clear focus on what is important – it must avoid becoming a catch all which ends up catching nothing!

MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

Within the area's overall cultural activities, Torbay Council has a multi-faceted role which involves a combination of:

- itself providing some services – this role is now a more limited one but does involve specific activities, for example the operation of the Council's library services and management of the Palace Theatre, Paignton
- contracting with other organisations for the delivery of activities – for example sport and leisure services, providing grant aid to local museums etc.
- an enabling role – working with the community to identify their cultural needs and setting priority actions and targets to meet these needs; and supporting other organisations to develop and run activities on behalf of the area as a whole

That enabling role will be a key feature of the Council's future activity and involves providing:

- more effective leadership for cultural matters
- greater advocacy for cultural activities, across Torbay
- improved coordination of cultural activities within the Council (the recent setting up of the Council's Learning and Cultural Services Directorate is an important step in this direction)
- the means of securing better partnership working with local creative industries and cultural organisations.

Torbay Council will remain a key player in terms of local cultural activity. However, the advent of Torbay's Local Strategic Partnership and its development of an overall Community Plan for the area, provides opportunities to introduce a more effective partnership driven approach.

A new Cultural Partnership will have the prime responsibility for driving forward this strategy and cultural activity as a whole, reporting to Torbay's Local Strategic Partnership in terms of the contribution which culture is making to the area's overall development. It is intended that the Chair of the Cultural Partnership will take on the role of "Cultural Champion" or "Ambassador" (described in the preceding section) and become the spokesperson and main driving force for cultural development across Torbay.

The precise composition and working arrangements of the Cultural Partnership are currently being agreed. However, it is envisaged that it will comprise up to 20 members, drawn from representatives from across the Bay of:

- local artists and arts organisations: Torbay Art Base would appear well placed to identify suitable representatives to join the proposed Cultural Partnership
- other creative industries, for example the local media, architects and design companies
- heritage organisations, such as local museums, history and conservation societies etc.
- sport and recreational organisations
- the local Chamber of Commerce to represent the wider commercial aspects of cultural and creative activity
- local people, as users of cultural activities, including representatives of specific groups such as young people and older residents
- local organisations concerned with children's play, for example play associations and professional organisations such as the Children's Society

- Torbay Council.

It is important that the Cultural Partnership is not merely a “talking shop” and commands support across the area which helps embed cultural activity within Torbay. Therefore the Partnership’s functions will involve:

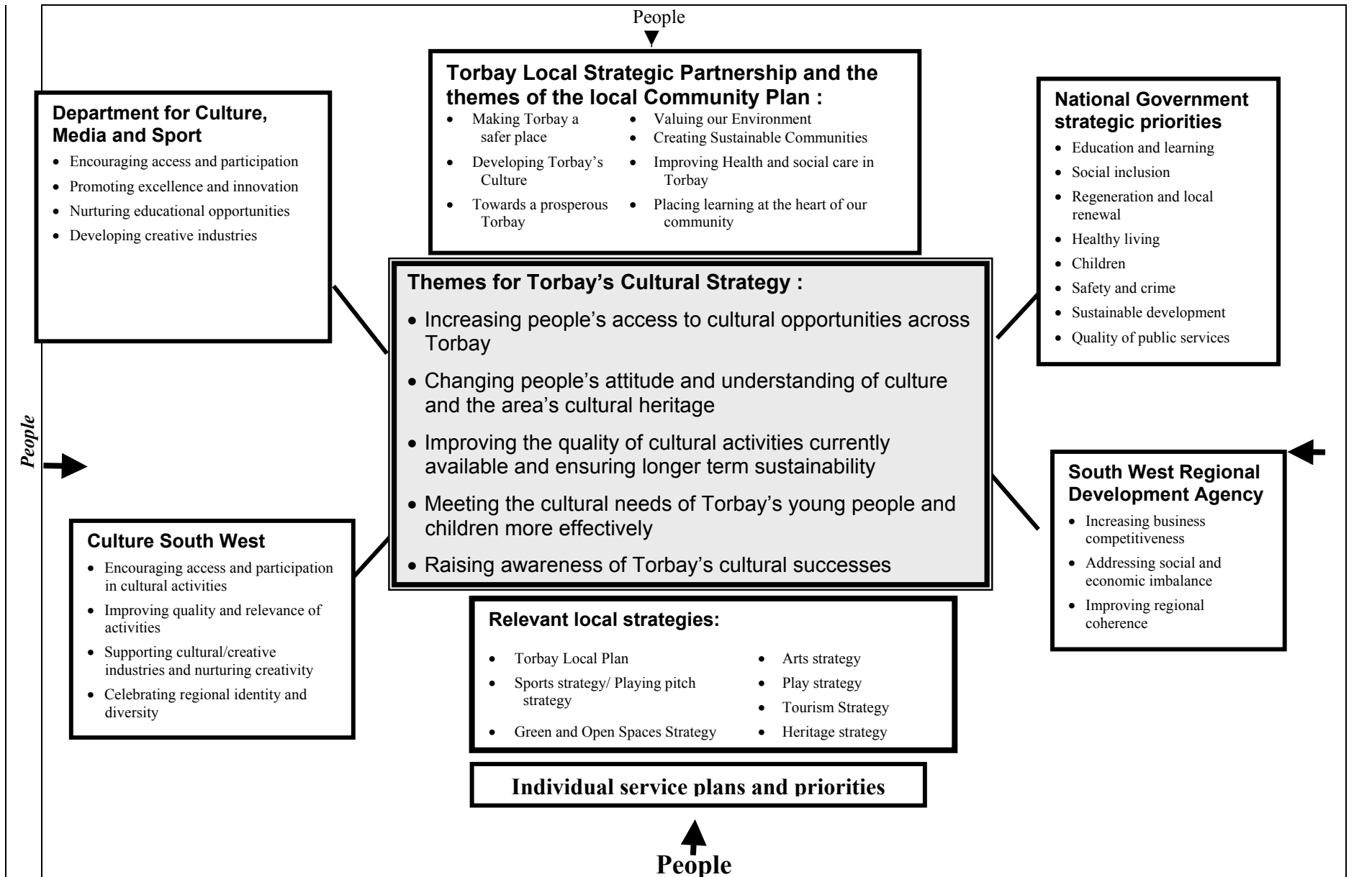
- overseeing the progress of the priority actions identified in this strategy
- setting and monitoring targets for these priority actions which are measurable, time limited and show real benefits
- developing more detailed aspects of some of the priority actions – for example the plans to capitalise on the area’s historic heritage and landscape as venues for future cultural activities
- advocating the importance of the creative sector and cultural activity with key local individuals and organisations (including Torbay Council) and with relevant regional agencies who have an interest in the area’s cultural development
- encouraging greater collaborative working across the cultural sector within Torbay and with the neighbouring areas of Devon and Plymouth
- formulating and agreeing subsequent programmes of action once the early priority actions have been developed and implemented.

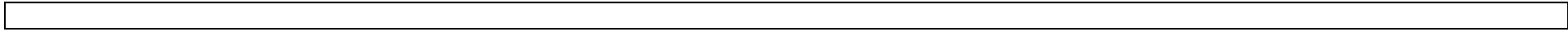
CONCLUSIONS

This strategy sets out a practical framework to improve the quality of life for people in Torbay in the coming years. It offers a number of real benefits, both for the cultural sector and the future well-being of the area as a whole.

The overall direction and the individual proposals described in this strategy have received overwhelming endorsement from local people and organisations who responded to the consultation that took place across the area. Work is now starting to turn this strategy into reality and to capitalise fully on the opportunities which present themselves.

People





AN INITIAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION

What will happen	Linked strategic theme(s)	Lead responsibility	Timescale and key milestones	Likely costs	Potential sources of funding	What will be achieved and how this will be measured	Key risks to be managed
i) Selecting a chair of the Cultural Partnership to act as a high profile “Cultural Champion or Ambassador”, supported by new Cultural Team within Torbay Council	All	Torbay Cultural Partnership (when formed)	Appointment to be made by Septmeber 2004: Roles and responsibilities as “Cultural Champion or Ambassador” to be determined and agreed – by July 2004 Cultural Partnership formed – by May 2004 Chair of Cultural Partnership chosen – by June 2004 Working arrangements agreed between Cultural Partnership and new Council Cultural Team – by June 2004	Limited costs only in terms of direct costs	-	Improved profile and leadership for cultural activities and sector Greater strategic direction for cultural activities locally Increased awareness locally and take up of cultural opportunities Progress to be measured by Cultural Partnership	Identifying and agreeing clear role and responsibilities Selecting the right person with appropriate qualities Developing and maintaining momentum of various initiatives
ii) Bidding to Central Government to establish a Creative Partnership bringing together schools and cultural professionals in a long term partnership	Meeting the cultural needs of Torbay’s young people and children more effectively; changing people’s attitude and understanding of culture and the area’s cultural heritage	Torbay Council	Bid to be developed in 2004/05: Discussions with Arts Council England about next bidding opportunity for Creative Partnerships – January – March 2004 Bid prepared – during 2004	Potential to attract up to £750,000 budget in first year, subject to success of bid	Arts Council England	Long term partnership to be developed between Torbay schools and cultural/creative/heritage professionals Develop young people’s creativity in learning and enable them to take part in cultural activities, connecting to all parts of the school curriculum Progress to be monitored by Torbay Council – as Local Education Authority – and schools	Securing support for bid from local schools, cultural and heritage professionals Securing agreement from Regional Office of Arts Council England to submit bid Submitting convincing bid

What will happen	Linked strategic theme(s)	Lead responsibility	Timescale and key milestones	Likely costs	Potential sources of funding	What will be achieved and how this will be measured	Key risks to be managed
iii) Introducing Torbay Leisure Card to provide improved access to cultural activities , including local people from low income households	Increasing access to cultural opportunities across Torbay: changing people's attitude and understanding of culture and the area's cultural heritage	Torbay Council	Leisure Card in place - by April 2005:	Already agreed in principle	Torbay Council,	Increased take up of cultural activities by local people Increase in number of local people taking part in cultural activities for the first time	Identifying and agreeing practical arrangements to introduce Leisure Card
iv) Securing and running a programme of world class cultural and sporting events/ activities, particularly based on Torbay's maritime and coastal environment	Improving the quality of cultural activities currently available and ensuring longer term sustainability; raising awareness of Torbay's cultural successes and characteristics; meeting the cultural needs of Torbay's young people and children more effectively	Torbay Council and Torbay Business Forum	Programme of high profile events and activities to be developed by December 2004: Detailed planning of programme – from April 2004 onwards	to be determined but likely to be significant	National Lottery, EU, SWRDA, Torbay Council, local businesses and other sources	Major increase in national/international awareness of Torbay Increase in investment in local cultural sector from external funding sources Increase in joint working between local cultural organisations	Securing local support for programme of events and activities Obtaining sufficient funding to ensure high profile events/ activities Determining arrangements for professional project management of successful events and activities

What will happen	Linked strategic theme(s)	Lead responsibility	Timescale and key milestones	Likely costs	Potential sources of funding	What will be achieved and how this will be measured	Key risks to be managed
v) Making greater use of the area's natural environment , beaches and historic buildings as venues for cultural activities	Increasing people's access to cultural opportunities across Torbay; raising awareness of Torbay's cultural successes and characteristics	Torbay Council	Develop agreed programme of cultural activities which draws on the area's historic buildings and open spaces by September 2004: Determine outcome of Heritage Lottery Fund bid in respect of Torre Abbey – by January 2004 Identify new opportunities for use as cultural venues and settings, in conjunction with Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust – by January 2004	Nil – in terms of direct costs	-	Increase in use of high profile historic buildings and open spaces for cultural activities Increase in people's access to cultural activities Improved awareness of Torbay's cultural achievements and character	Securing satisfactory outcome to National Lottery bid in respect of Torre Abbey Obtaining agreement to use of new open spaces and/or historic buildings for cultural activities
vi) Creating public art, events and street theatre in town centres and public open spaces, which complement the Torbay Local Plan	Increasing people's access to cultural opportunities across Torbay; changing people's attitude and understanding of culture and the area's cultural heritage; improving the quality of cultural activities currently available and ensuring longer term sustainability	Torbay Council	Council policy on public art to be determined – by September 2004 New programme of public art and events to be developed - by April 2005	to be determined	Torbay Council, private sector businesses, developers	Increase in high profile public art, street theatre and events, leading to an increase in local satisfaction with cultural facilities To be measured by Cultural Partnership	Securing Council approval for new policy on public art Ensuring that any new public art, street theatre or events are part of the future overall planning and development of the area and are sensitivity planned so as to gain public support

What will happen	Linked strategic theme(s)	Lead responsibility	Timescale and key milestones	Likely costs	Potential sources of funding	What will be achieved and how this will be measured	Key risks to be managed
vii) Providing support to local creative and cultural industries in terms of help with funding applications, providing marketing advice and other business support services	Improving the quality of cultural activities currently available and ensuring longer term sustainability	Business Link for Devon and Cornwall	<p>Introduce new Business Link led programme of support for local creative and cultural industries - by September 2004:</p> <p>Identification of needs and priorities – by September 2004</p> <p>Support for new programme secured from key partners such as Arts Council England, South West Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, Torbay Council (in respect of providing help with developing funding applications) etc. – by December 2004</p> <p>Agreement reached on targeted programme of business support services – by June 2004</p>	Advisor time	Business Link for Devon and Cornwall, Torbay Council (officer time in providing help with funding applications)	<p>Increase in stability, profitability and long term sustainability of local creative and cultural industries</p> <p>Increase in investment in the creative and cultural sector from external funding sources</p> <p>To be measured by Cultural Partnership and Business Link for Devon and Cornwall</p>	<p>Securing support and commitment from Business Link and other partners, as appropriate</p> <p>Generating sufficient take up of support services by local creative and cultural industries</p>
viii) Exploiting advances in new technology and electronic media to enable local cultural activities to be accessed more easily e.g. via the Internet	Meeting the cultural needs of Torbay's young people and children more effectively; raising awareness of Torbay's cultural successes and characteristics	ANT Artists Networks Technology	Introduce pilot programme of web cams of local cultural activity – by December 2005:	Scale of pilot programme to be determined	SWRDA, EU, Arts Council England	<p>Increase in use and experience of electronic media by local young people</p> <p>Open new market opportunities for local cultural organisations and individuals</p> <p>Raise the profile of Torbay in terms of its application</p>	<p>Securing support from local creative and cultural industries to participate in pilot programme</p> <p>Obtaining funding for pilot programme</p> <p>Managing possible expansion of initiative</p>

						of new technology To be measured by Cultural Partnership	if pilot programme proves successful
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What will happen	Linked strategic theme(s)	Lead responsibility	Timescale and key milestones	Likely costs	Potential sources of funding	What will be achieved and how this will be measured	Key risks to be managed
ix) Developing quality facilities for use by local people and organisations in terms of performances, exhibitions, events, rehearsal space and for informal leisure activities	Improving the quality of cultural activities currently available and ensuring longer term sustainability; meeting the cultural needs of Torbay's young people and children; increasing people's access to cultural opportunities across Torbay	Torbay Cultural Partnership	Decisions reached on scale and type of new facilities required by September 2004: Long term future of Palace Theatre determined and Lottery funding secured – by August 2004 Cultural Partnership to determine what facilities are required and develop business case for any additional facilities in the light of decisions on the Palace Theatre – by December 2004	to be determined after outcome of Heritage Lottery Fund bid for Palace Theatre is known	National Lottery, Torbay Council, local cultural sector, private Trusts	Increase in high quality facilities available to local cultural organisations Increase in take up of cultural activities Increase in take up of cultural people by people for the first time, particularly young people and children Increase in joint working between local cultural organisations To be measured by the Cultural Partnership	Failure to reach agreement on key priority needs to be addressed Difficulty in securing funding support

What will happen	Linked strategic theme(s)	Lead responsibility	Timescale and key milestones	Likely costs	Potential sources of funding	What will be achieved and how this will be measured	Key risks to be managed
<p>x) Improving the co-ordination of information between local cultural organisations and their marketing activity to potential audiences</p>	<p>Improving the quality of cultural activities currently available and ensuring longer term sustainability; improving people's access to cultural opportunities across Torbay; raising awareness of Torbay's cultural successes and characteristics</p>	<p>Torbay Cultural Partnership</p>	<p>New arrangements agreed to share information between organisations by September 2004:</p> <p>Detailed arrangements developed for the more effective sharing of information on performances, events and venues etc – by March 2004</p> <p>Specification developed for new/ enhanced website promotion of cultural activities – by June 2004</p> <p>New/enhanced website introduced – by August 2004</p> <p>Arrangements agreed for quarterly newsletter for local cultural organisations - by December 2004</p>	<p>£10,000 plus ongoing maintenance/ update costs for website and ongoing publication costs of quarterly newsletter</p>	<p>Local cultural organisations, Torbay Council</p>	<p>Increase in number of people taking part in cultural activities</p> <p>Increase in joint working between local cultural organisations</p> <p>To be measured by Cultural Partnership</p>	<p>Securing agreement amongst local organisations to share information</p> <p>Ensuring such arrangements are properly maintained</p> <p>Obtaining funding for new/enhanced website</p> <p>Ensuring new marketing material (including website) is sufficiently accessible and innovative</p>

**OTHER IDEAS WHICH EMERGED DURING
CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT STRATEGY**

- celebrate successes through the area’s historic buildings and famous personalities of the past
- achieve greater integration of cultural history with local library services
- stronger liaison with local church groups to emphasise the spiritual element of culture
- develop a top class venue to attract bigger musical “names”
- develop a local ice rink and other leisure activities for young people
- three dimensional art/painting in venues other than museums
- introduce standard booking facilities e.g. via schools

To be added to final page/inside back cover

Work on developing this strategy has been supported by Torbay Council and carried forward by a group comprising:

- *John Clamp, Herald Express*
- *Barry Cole, Riviera International Centre*
- *Councillor Jean Cope, Torbay Council*
- *Brian Harris, HIOTA Leisure*
- *Jo Larsen, Art 14*

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RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

INTRODUCTION

1. This note draws together the results of the public consultation on the draft cultural strategy, undertaken from the end of August.
2. As agreed at previous Core Team meetings, consultation involved the following:
 - distribution of the draft strategy, summary document, response questionnaire and covering letter to some 200 organisations and individuals who had taken part in the stage one consultation during early summer; as well as a range of other known local and regional organisations with a potential interest in the strategy
 - the issue of a press release by Torbay Council to secure media coverage and raise general awareness of the public consultation exercise. This resulted in articles in the Herald Express and an interview on Gemini Radio
 - widespread distribution of the summary document and questionnaire: including to all local libraries, schools and Connexions offices; as well as main Council buildings, local museums and other key places throughout the area
 - placing the strategy, summary and questionnaire on the Council's website to allow on-line access and completion of the questionnaire
 - the production of 500 posters publicising the draft strategy, although, in the event, many organisations declined to display them
 - encouraging organisations working with local young people to secure feedback from them and their parents (such as field workers with the Youth Service and Torbay's Children's Fund).
3. In addition, other action involved:
 - direct telephone contact with every local school to encourage their participation, plus providing them with sufficient numbers of the summary so that every teacher had a personal copy, copies were available to distribute to pupils and display at reception areas
 - follow up coverage in the Herald Express to encourage people to take part in the consultation

- e-mails to all Council and local NHS staff to encourage their participation
- reminder letters to all targeted organisations and individuals, with an extension of the deadline for the return of questionnaires to mid-October.

SCALE OF RESPONSES

4. In the event, 355 completed questionnaires were received. A list of respondents is attached at Annex One, encompassing residents, school pupils, Council members and staff, local and regional organisations. As can be seen, a significant number of respondents did not disclose their identity. Some of the anonymous responses (perhaps of the order of 70) would appear to be students from Churston Ferrers Grammar School (see paragraph 6 below).
5. An analysis of the age and gender breakdown of respondents shows the following:
- a) gender**
- | | | |
|------------|---|-----|
| male | - | 142 |
| female | - | 208 |
| not stated | - | 5 |
- b) age**
- | | | |
|------------|---|-----|
| under 18 | - | 148 |
| 18-24 | - | 9 |
| 25-44 | - | 48 |
| 45-59 | - | 70 |
| over 60 | - | 67 |
| not stated | - | 13 |
6. It can be seen from the age breakdown of respondents that a significant proportion (over 40%) were aged under 18. However, the great majority of such responses would appear to come from students of Churston Ferrers Grammar School (a batch of over 100 responses were received together, having apparently been sent via the school).

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE CONSULTATION

7. Responses to the questionnaire were collated by Torbay's Research Team and then analysed separately, including all narrative comments. The remainder of this report contains a summary of the key points to emerge from that analysis of the responses.
- i) The ambition**
8. Respondents were asked whether they thought the draft strategy had the right long term "vision" for developing culture across Torbay (The vision was: **"To create a more vibrant and diverse mix of culture activities in Torbay's unique location which are recognised, valued and taken up by local people and visitors alike"**).

9. The response was:

- | | | |
|---------------|---|-----|
| Yes | - | 72% |
| No | - | 11% |
| No firm views | - | 17% |

10. It can be seen there was a significant majority who agreed with the draft “vision”, with only some 11% disagreeing with it. It will also be seen that a good number (over 50 of the overall respondents) had no firm views – the great majority of whom were aged under 18.

11. If people did not agree with the vision, they were asked what changes they would want to make and whether there were any other points they wished to see emphasised. In the main, those respondents who did not agree with the vision failed to put forward alternative ideas and instead raised points arising from their particular concerns – for example why a specific activity was not being addressed in the vision. However, amongst the additional comments on the vision, the following points were made:

- culture is more than activities, it is about the general wellbeing and upkeep of the area; it also needs to reflect ideas, beliefs and customs
- the need to overcome apathy in achieving the vision’s ambition and to put cultural Torbay on the map
- the need to achieve a stronger overall identity and image for Torbay; and to use cultural activity to do so
- the importance of encompassing diverse communities and involving the whole community in cultural activities
- whilst most respondents appeared happy with the use of the word “culture” some comments were made about it appearing elitist and therefore words such as history, sport and public parks should be used instead
- a minority questioned the value or need for additional action on cultural activity, either because of likely increased costs and the dangers of “empire building”, or the need to give priority to other local services, such as education or housing.

ii) The themes

12. Respondents were asked how important the five proposed themes in the draft strategy were to them. The response was as follows:

Very important	Moderately important	No firm views	Less important	No importance
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• Increasing people's access to cultural activities	54%	29%	11%	4%	2%
• Changing people's attitude and understanding of culture	46%	30%	13%	7%	4%
• Improving the quality of what is currently available	68%	23%	6%	1%	2%
• Meeting the cultural needs of young people more effectively	63%	25%	8%	2%	2%
• Raising greater awareness of the area's cultural successes	44%	29%	16%	6%	5%

13. As can be seen, all of the five proposed themes received consistent endorsement, with a significant majority considering each of them to be either very or moderately important. The themes concerned with improving the quality of what is currently available and meeting the needs of young people received the highest level of support. Not surprisingly, a large percentage of responses from young people rated this theme highly but it also received a similarly high level of endorsement from adult respondents.

14. A further analysis of the responses identified a much higher number of young people expressing no firm views on the themes, compared with adult respondents. Also, considerably more young people than adults regarded changing people's attitude towards culture and raising greater awareness of the area's cultural successes as being far less important. On the other hand, a significantly higher percentage of adults than young people considered that increasing people's access to cultural activities was very important.

15. Particular comments from an analysis of all respondents included:

- the need to ensure the themes are translated into real action, backed up by funding where necessary – this was a consistent message from a number of respondents. There was also a degree of scepticism expressed as to whether practical change and benefits will actually follow, given past experience
- there was a fairly even split between those respondents who felt that too much emphasis was being given to young people and, as a result, less on older people; whilst others (not just young people themselves) praised the focus given to young people and the importance of ensuring their needs are met
- a general lack of awareness of the area's existing cultural successes and the need for improved public awareness of what is already happening – and, in doing so, realise the area's full potential. Again this was a regular message from a number of respondents

- from young people a consistent call for more fun activities and interesting things for them to do – for example a local ice rink (see paragraph 17 below), more music festivals, skateboarding competitions, graffiti walls etc.
- the importance of a physical location to act as a base for local cultural activities – this point featured in a good number of responses and is commented on further in later paragraphs concerned with priority actions
- the importance of raising the area's ambition and standards of cultural activity, and not simply maintaining the status quo
- the importance of education, creating greater demand for higher quality activities from young children onwards. This view is also reflected in the comments on a Creative Partnership between schools and local creative organisations (see paragraph 19 below)
- improving access will require lower costs and better public transport – a consistent message from a number of young people in particular
- the importance of building the capacity of local organisations to support cultural development
- the need to link into cultural activities in neighbouring areas and work more closely with other councils, as well as regional funding agencies (see later comments at paragraph 22)

iii) Priority actions

16. Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the ten priority actions proposed in the draft strategy (page 9 of the summary document). Their responses were:

Yes	-	83%
No	-	17%

17. All of the priority actions received degrees of support and there were few alternative proposals put forward which were not linked, in some way, to the proposed ten priority actions. Amongst those who said they did not agree with the priority themes, a good number were aged under 18. Such respondents put the case for specific action (such as an ice rink, which received support from a number of young people) or took the opportunity to say the area was boring, whilst not putting forward any specific ideas.
18. Amongst the priority actions put forward, by far the most supported involved providing quality facilities for performances, events and rehearsal space. This brought together support from arts professionals calling for a local arts centre, amateur groups and individuals seeing the need for space for greater community based activity, and young

people calling for space for informal leisure activities or events. Overall, support for such quality facilities received twice as much support as any of the other priority actions.

19. Amongst the other proposed actions, four received a higher level of support from respondents:

- securing Government support for a new Creative Partnership, enabling children and young people in schools to work with cultural professionals
- developing more open air events and activities which take account of the Bay's natural and built environment. This action received particular support from young people
- increasing public art and street theatre. This action also received a good deal of support from young people, a number of whom (along with some adults) commented on the need to improve the "feel" of town centres in particular
- instigating a programme of world class events and activities, capitalising on the Bay's coastline and maritime heritage

20. The proposal for a Cultural Champion to drive forward various initiatives also received a good deal of support (with some respondents arguing it should be a paid post). However, this proposal also caused some concern and opposition from other respondents. Doubts were expressed as to the extent of the person's powers; whether the tasks were too large for one person; whether the right person could be attracted and how that recruitment would take place; and whether the post would be sufficiently independent from the Council to be effective.

21. In terms of the remaining proposed areas for action, the order of their perceived importance by respondents was as follows:

- providing local organisations with a range of targeted support to enable them to develop further.
- providing subsidised support for people with low incomes via some form of "Cultural Credits". This action received particular support from young people, although other respondents expressed concerns about the stigma of possible means testing. It has also been pointed out that this action needs to now reflect the Council's proposed leisure card which will go across all elements of cultural activity
- co-ordination of local organisations, including the improved marketing of activities to the public and the sharing of information. This received particular support from adult respondents, including local organisations themselves
- capitalising on advances in new technology and electronic media – for example setting up a community radio facility. Perhaps not surprisingly, this action received

particular support from young people with a number highlighting it as an area of real interest.

22. As well as comments on the proposed priority actions, a number of other comments were made by respondents which will need to be reflected in the final strategy:

- a consistent message (and re-emphasising the earlier point at paragraph 11) was the need for the cultural strategy to be followed through into real action, with people being kept informed of progress. To quote one respondent “just make it happen”
- in line with earlier comments at paragraph 11, whilst there was a good deal of support for focusing on young people, there were a number of comments about the need for the proposed priority actions to address all sections of the community, including older people
- the importance of more facilities being available for children’s play, for example play park areas and holiday clubs
- the need to tackle alcohol and drug abuse on the streets, as well as improving the overall physical appearance of town centres, if people are to feel an improved sense of civic pride
- an underlying message from a number of respondents (both adults and young people) was the need to create a greater sense of excitement and energy within the area in order to inspire people to take part in cultural activities, not just settling for what is already in place
- the importance of recognising sport’s role in the cultural make up of the area
- ensuring support is provided for more traditional cultural activities such as museums, libraries and the historic environment; and not just for contemporary cultural pursuits
- recognising the role that cultural activity can play in improving people’s self confidence and skills generally
- the danger of “dumbing down” in terms of cultural activity and ensuring that the quality of what is available is paramount, bringing in specialists where necessary to run high profile, innovative events
- making more of Torbay’s location for creative businesses as a whole as well as artists, musicians and singers
- the need for the strategy and the actions that flow from it to link with the aspirations and priorities of regional funding bodies in order to make things happen. (It is worth highlighting here that Culture South West – the Regional Cultural Consortium – have responded positively to the draft strategy)

- recognising the recent reorganisation of support for cultural activities within Torbay Council and how the role of that team will link to the strategy.

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

23. Overall, the key features of the draft strategy have held up well during the public consultation, with a general level of support for its main elements. Inevitably, not everyone has agreed with all aspects of the strategy. The preceding paragraphs have highlighted a number of points that have emerged during the consultation which can be reflected in the final version of the strategy. Also a small number of respondents raised specific drafting points which can be incorporated in the final version. But, in overall terms, the public consultation has recognised and endorsed the main thrust of the draft strategy and what it is setting out to achieve.
24. Subject to the views of the Core Team, it is not therefore recommended that major changes are made to the overall form and content of the final version of the strategy. Instead, it is proposed to incorporate the points identified in the earlier paragraphs in a final version of the strategy, along with any specific drafting points raised by respondents.
25. In terms of next steps, alongside the production of an agreed final version of the strategy, there are three key areas which the Core Team will wish to consider at this stage:
 - further discussion about the proposed “Cultural Champion”, given the views which have emerged and are summarised at paragraph 20
 - arrangements for publishing and announcing the strategy (given the Core Team’s earlier decision not to have a formal launch of the strategy)
 - how to begin the process of carrying forward the strategy. In particular, the development of the new Cultural Forum/Partnership as the focus for future cultural activity and how the Forum will link to the overall work of the Local Strategic Partnership for the area.

NOVEMBER 2003