



TORBAY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY Newsletter

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Torbay and South Devon Employment and Skills Board

The Torbay and South Devon Employment and Skills Board (ESB) is an important new initiative, which has been set up to raise the skills, aspirations and productivity of the Torbay and South Devon workforce and to support the growth of a vibrant and successful local economy.

The ESB was established in early 2009 by the Torbay Development Agency (TDA) and is financially supported by Torbay Council and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

It is an employer led, employer focussed body designed to ensure that employers are ideally positioned to guide and influence the skills priorities for the area.

In order to be effective, the ESB will focus on three priorities in 2009-10:

- Raise the skills levels, aspirations and capabilities of the current workforce.
- Increase the number of workers by increasing the opportunities for people seeking employment who are currently out of work.
- Increase skills levels and opportunities for young people.

A number of skills projects have already been funded for 2009-10 including:

- Supporting Connexions to deliver the 'Torbay Employers Apprenticeship Reward Scheme'. This provides a small financial incentive to local employers who take on an apprentice for the first time or have not engaged an apprentice for a minimum of 2 years.
- Delivering a series of topical 'Best Practise' events in partnership with Beacon South West and Business Link. These advise and support ambitious companies to help them survive and grow in the economic downturn.
- Supporting a series of 'boost' events in Torbay addressing challenges in the retail and hospitality sectors.
- Supporting a 'Location Model Study' for Torbay, in association with Skillsmart Retail and the LSC, to develop industry information. This will help small retailers understand their local markets, highlight potential training needs and indicate how the retailers are perceived by their customers.

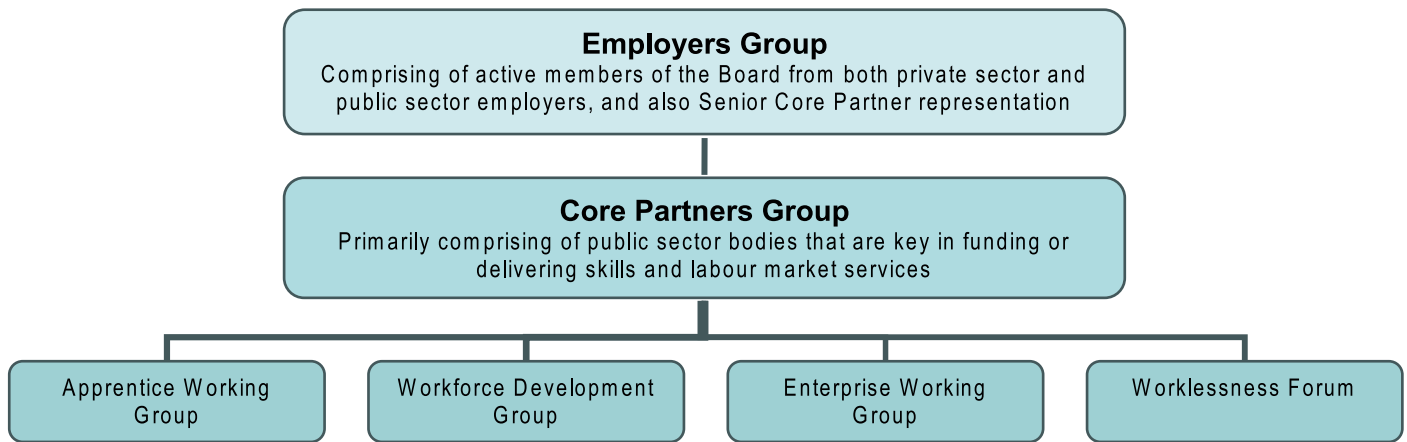


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- Supporting the delivery of a series of 'Creative Thinking Workshops', which explore and develop creative thinking while applying practical techniques for businesses to use everyday.
- Supporting South Devon College to deliver a variety of leadership and management courses as well as programmes to address the shortfall of skill levels in the current workforce.

The ESB has been strategically positioned within the Torbay Commissioning Model and has a working structure:



A private sector Chair will take up the position and lead forward the Board from January 2010. Gareth Brocklehurst, who is the owner and manager of G.A.P. Recruitment in Paignton and Newton Abbot, will serve for an initial term of 18 months.

Gareth said: "Through operating a private sector business in Torbay, supporting and introducing a broad range of work seekers to local employers, my experience demonstrates that increasing skill levels is key to improving wages, business productivity and overall economic performance. I believe there is a definite need to deconstruct the public sector terminology in order to engage the local employers with partners, who can support their training and staff development requirements and help their business ambitions to prosper.

"There is already much support on offer, but the private sector is either not aware or is confused with the choices on offer. My challenge as Chair of the ESB is to promote the creation and development of strong partnerships between the private and public sector to encourage and achieve personal and business aspirations, retain and improve local skills, and focus on the employability of the younger work seekers, with the ultimate aim of achieving economic prosperity."

For additional information on the Torbay and South Devon Employment and Skills Board please visit <http://www.torbaydevelopmentagency.co.uk/>

STOP PRESS!

Breaking News – Torre Abbey

As we go to press it has been confirmed that the £2.9 million second phase HLF bid, prepared by the TDA on behalf of Torbay Council, has been successful. A development grant of £124,000 has been awarded to proceed to the next stage and work will commence shortly.

The second phase of restoration overall involves restoring the south range of the Abbey, particularly the leaking mid-18th century lead roof and the rotten lintels over the south elevation windows and doors. During this second phase of works some of the period rooms will be furnished and there will be more information provided in the form of touch screen guidebooks, audio guides and museum panels. This will transform the quality and standard of interpretation at the Abbey. More information to follow in due course.



Mayors Vision

As part of the Strategic Car Park/Transportation study, Atkins is currently gathering data, such as understanding the nature and level of existing traffic and travel patterns as well as looking at parking demand and supply. Traffic surveys, auditing and analysing existing parking stock, and key strategic routes are also underway. The results will be included in a current situation report, which should be completed at the end of December.

Urban Initiatives work is still continuing working on the Building Heights Strategy and a meeting will be held towards the end of November 2009 to review the work it has undertaken so far. After this meeting it will be able to produce the draft policy documentation during December and work can begin in earnest on preparing the exhibition events. The intention is to hold the exhibition over 3 days, an event in each of the three towns, asking for feedback on the draft strategy. Once feedback has been received the final report should be available in March 2010.

Urban Initiatives has also produced a draft 3D model and work continues on improving this. Once the model has been completed it will be a useful tool for the planning department and development control.



Mayors Vision project updates

TORQUAY

The Hub

The planning application was approved in September and preparation work is ongoing in Tor Hill House. A communications strategy is now underway with meetings planned with ward councillors and the Community Steering Group. The first edition of a staff key information guide to the Hub has also been published.

Contractor walk-through briefings have taken place; tenders are to be submitted in late November and an appointment made in December. The remainder of the professional team required to deliver this scheme will also be in place in December.

Work on the planning application for the business centre is ongoing and will be submitted shortly. A public consultation exercise will also be carried out

Further engagement with both key stakeholders and staff will occur in the New Year.

RICC – Riviera International Conference Centre

The TDA and local authority is in contract negotiations with the Development consortium, who has been recently strengthened by the identification of a funding partner. This partner is willing to make a long term investment in the hotel and conference facilities, which are proposed within the developer's scheme. The proposal for the hotel to be operated under the brand name of the leading chain remains unaffected by this addition to the developer's team.

Terrace car park & Royal Garage site

The owner of the Royal Garage site continues to work with architects to produce designs, which will meet the requirements of planning and development control. Various public communication events outlining ideas have been held, and work continues on developing ideas.

The information from the Building Heights Strategy and Strategic Car Park & Transportation study will provide key information that will assist with the development of this site.

PAIGNTON

Paignton Town Centre Developments

Torbay Council was unsuccessful in its attempt to purchase the Crossways centre. Contracts have been exchanged and the TDA looks forward to working with the purchaser to assist in the regeneration of this area.

An architect's study and master plan has been undertaken to see how best the Station Lane area can compliment the new Paignton Community Library.

Paignton Community Library

Construction on the new Paignton Community Library is now well underway. The period leading up to Christmas will not deliver substantial visual progress above the hoarding, because the attention is being given to the internal structure. However, by February the building should incorporate windows and significant external cladding. Although the project is now visible to those passing on Great Western Road it is also possible to view the emerging construction from road level. The main contractors, BAM, have provided portholes onto the hoarding,

which has enabled pedestrians to view the project taking shape.

The new library with its impressive design has been funded by the Big Lottery Fund and Torbay Council. The building will incorporate centralised facilities for a number of agencies including library services, community police, Connections, South Devon College (Adult and Community Learning), as well as office accommodation for SureStart. The new library will open in September 2010.



Paignton Green Playground

The community partnership will be undertaking public consultation on a new playground's design during November. It follows a recent Roundham and Hyde Community partnership public meeting, where major event users of Paignton's middle green were able to speak to the playground's designer about the playground's location and the green's future usage.

A planning application will be submitted during November with a decision expected in December. This will enable the stage 2 submission to be submitted by the deadline date of Sunday 31 January, 2010.

Paignton Harbour

Once approval on the appropriate procurement route has been received further viability work will be undertaken. Further information will be available shortly.

Oldway

Torbay Council, the TDA, and the selected developer have entered into an exclusivity contract and there is good progress with advancing the agreement to lease, which will enable the development to proceed. The preferred developers, who will undertake the development and own and run the hotel, have commenced the stakeholder consultation and draft design work that is a precursor to the submission of a planning consent.

Broadsands

A project board has been formed to manage the feasibility work that has commenced following the decision of the Mayors Vision Programme Board and the council's Joint Executive Team (JET) to support the aims of the project.

The proposals intend to create a high quality sailing facility

at Broadsands. The sailing centre would provide facilities for Paignton Sailing Club, South Devon College, other education based users, local residents and visitors to the Bay. A key priority of the project is to encourage more young people to take up sailing and other water sports activities, particularly those who would not normally consider sailing as a sport that is available to them.

Environmental considerations are a key aspect of the project. The project mandate makes a clear commitment to maintain and improve the existing public enjoyment of the beach as a bathing beach. It also makes a commitment to protect and improve the environment and settings of the Broadsands area.

Public consultation has commenced and the draft proposals are expected to be made available for public consultation before Christmas.

BRIXHAM

Brixham Town Centre

Tesco has now re-confirmed its desire to be involved in this exciting project. Negotiations are continuing.

Fish Market Brixham, Phase 2

The main steel frame and external cladding for the Phase 2A of the new fish market building is complete as is the mechanical and electrical works. This part of the new fish market is now being used. This has allowed the planned works to the old fish market building to commence. The tenant for the first floor offices has moved in.

The front end of the existing fish market building has been handed over to the contractor. It has completed asbestos removal activities and has commenced demolition works.

The removal of the canopy to the existing fish market building is nearing completion.

The Phase 2 works are due for completion in August 2010.

Freshwater Quarry / Oxen Cove / Northern Arm Breakwater

Consultants are to carry out a review of activities, which can be carried out at these sites, to reduce the level of risk to any proposed development, irrespective of what development has been appointed. A workshop to assess the scope of possible activities and their impact on the value of the any potential development has been undertaken. The consultants report is expected in the New Year.

Sea Change Programme

Cockington

The Board approved the new build design and the appointment of Wates Construction Limited as the main contractor at its meeting on Thursday 5 November. Full stage D reports, including the transport assessment, will be presented for approval at the December meeting. The planning application will be submitted immediately after. Detailed design works are progressing well and the enabling works package is expected to be undertaken before Christmas. Full mobilisation will be triggered when prices are agreed on an 'open book' basis.



Berry Head on the Edge Project - Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust

The Guardhouse Visitor Centre and Cafe are nearing completion and work is continuing on the public toilets and training room in the main car park. When the spoil was removed from the Southern Fort moat, a central pier and slots in the wall were discovered. These clues enabled Exeter Archaeology to produce a drawing showing how the original drawbridge would have been constructed. Some of these features have been incorporated into the design of the new bridge and English Heritage approval has been received for the new design.

Children's Services Capital Programme - Schools

Roselands Phase I

Detailed design for the replacement of mobile classrooms is now in progress. The Project Board has given approval to initiate the tender. The anticipated start on site is late May 2010.

Kings Ash School

Practical completion has been achieved and final snagging is proceeding.

Torquay Community College Project

The project is on line for partial occupation in late 2009, with demolition of part of the existing building starting in January 1010.

St. Cuthbert Mayne

The Governors are in discussion with the Dioceses about the next steps. The basics of the feasibility study have been accepted and further design will follow.

Further TDA projects

My Place

The architectural approach to the design of this project was derived from consultation with, and the active participation of the young people. It is heavily influenced by its seaside location. The main accommodation of the building adopts the massing of beach huts in natural cedar boarding. The adjoining sport hall "washes" the beach huts in the form of a wave silhouette continuing the overall dynamic theme of its functional use.

The buildings users interact from the inside to the outside bringing a very Victorian ethos of beach huts to a very modern sporting dynamics of skateboarding, BMX riding and wall climbing.

The setting for the building in its hard and soft landscaping enforces the theme of playing in the sand and the sea,

This project has now achieved its first milestone when councillors unanimously approved the planning application at the meeting of the Development Management Committee on the 23rd November 2009.



South West Innovation Centres

With a recent rise in demand for the South West Innovation Centres (SWIC), it is expected there will be five desks left at Vantage Point with Lymington Road by Christmas. The Watermark is 100% full.

SWIC has just submitted a bid to become the operator for the Okehampton Business Centre, which as a BREEAM Excellent building and is the winner of numerous environmental awards. It currently only has five out of its 16 units occupied. Discussions continue with South Hams District Council and Teignbridge District Council to operate more existing and potential Innovation Centres in the sub region. Our South West consortium is a step nearer to winning our bid for high growth mentoring and coaching, with more work needed to strengthen our case. Our mentor group would deliver the service for the Western Peninsula covering part of Somerset and the whole of Devon.

During October an application was submitted for the Business Incubation Champion Award for the UKBI Conference in December, and it has been shortlisted.

Global Entrepreneurship Week 2009 and South Devon Excellence Awards

Last week saw the fourth annual event promoting National Enterprise, now renamed Global Entrepreneurship Week. It was held at South Devon College. For the third successive year we have promoted the South Devon Excellence Awards and this year the TDA became a major sponsor of the event.

There were ten awards presented to Best New Business (sponsored by SW Innovation Centres), Best People Development, Best Marketing Campaign, Most Innovative Company, Best Customer Service, Best Social Enterprise, Best Community Impact, Best Green Business, Best Accommodation Provider and Best Tourism/Leisure Attraction. The Winner of Winners award, which was sponsored by the TDA, was made to Combe Pafford School. As the winner of the Best Social Enterprise award it deserved the overall title.

This year's attendance at the awards ceremony topped 130, and dinner attendance was up by 24%. Over 600 people attended the week's events. For further information please visit: <http://www.swinnovationcentres.co.uk/sdea/excellenceawardsprevious.php>

Energy & Environment

As part of gearing towards the Governments new energy saving scheme 'The CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme', the energy team are working on installing automatic metering reading (AMR), or Smart metering, into the majority of municipal buildings and schools. Phase one is to replace the old fashioned electricity meters.

AMR is the next generation of meters, where data is automatically collected about consumption, diagnostic, and status data from electricity and gas meters. That data is then transferred to a central database for customers to troubleshoot and analyse. The information is also communicated to energy suppliers from the real-time data transmitted at frequent intervals. The advantage of this is that billing will be based on near real time consumption rather than on estimates based on previous or predicted consumption. This timely information, coupled with analysis, can help Torbay Council better control the use of electric energy and gas usage. These new meters not only aid us in achieving our carbon reduction and energy saving targets, but the voluntary installation of AMR meters is one of the factors measured in the early action metric of the carbon reduction commitment scheme. This gives us a potentially better position in the league table.

For more information on this initiative and others please contact the Energy Team on 01803 208988 or visit: http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/lc_uk/crc/crc.aspx



Policy developments

The early part of 2010 will see a number of new developments. The TDA's new inward investment programme will be implemented from early 2010. The programme will bring together a proactive response to enquiries from all forms of new businesses; however, it will prioritise businesses in the advanced technology, healthcare, and food and drink sectors. Torbay will also aggressively chase public sector relocations responding to the planned second phase of moves out of the South East.

Following Royal Assent to the Local Democracy and Economic Development bill in November, the TDA will also begin preparing the economic assessment duty for Torbay. This assessment will provide a rigorous overview of the local economy and will take into account key statistics, views from businesses and views from stakeholders. It will help to shape local economic development policy and inform regional and national partners of the needs of Torbay. Concurrently, the TDA will also be refreshing the economic strategy to ensure that it remains appropriate to our current economic conditions. A workshop to discuss the strategy is proposed for late February to inform partners of the issues facing the economy and to ensure that the revised strategy is prioritising the right areas.

Also coming in the New Year will be a programme of business support workshops. These workshops will be delivered with Business Link and other partners and will offer businesses access to a host of events from information for would be entrepreneurs, to making better use of ICT, recruitment, business law, exporting, and use of social media and managing of cash flow.

EU Competitiveness programme

Torbay has secured an additional £7.5 million to help support the development of an enterprise culture in Torbay. A priority under the EU Competitiveness Programme means that Torbay has applied for, and has been successful in, securing funding to address urban enterprise.

The objective of urban enterprise is to increase the level of enterprise/social enterprise activity in Torbay's most deprived neighbourhoods. There are five key strands of activity:

1. Small scale infrastructure
2. Creation of new commercial/social enterprises within under represented groups
3. Access to finance
4. Accessing business support services
5. Opportunities from environmental improvements



The TDA will shortly be commissioning providers to deliver a range of products and services under the above strands aimed at helping local people develop business ideas and support the establishment and growth of new businesses. Whilst Torbay is recognised as having an enterprise spirit, many new businesses fail to survive. Through a range of advice and training, mentoring, support, access to finance and appropriate infrastructure, the TDA intends to develop a culture of enterprise and further develop the local economy.

The commissioning will start soon and contracts are expected to be granted in early spring 2010.

Business Boost

Small businesses are the lifeblood of the local economy and the TDA is well aware of the need for those businesses to receive appropriate support to survive through the economic crisis and prepare them for future growth.

The TDA is currently developing a series of business support programmes ranging from pre-start up to understanding VAT, marketing to management.

These programmes will be delivered across the Bay from early spring 2010 and will be designed to equip local businesses with greater understanding on business issues as well as stimulate ideas for business improvement, development and growth.

Each business support programme will be subsidised by the TDA, therefore, the cost to local businesses will be minimal and the benefits great. The full programme of business support programmes will appear on the TDA website soon.