



Bideford Coastal Community Team

Economic Plan

January 2016

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline our plans for economic growth through the development of tourism and the visitor economy in the town of Bideford. This plan is set in the context of Bideford's remarkable heritage and its expansion as a rural centre and focus for development within northern Devon. It has been prepared by the Bideford Coastal Community Team (CCT) based upon local consultation and many previous studies which enabled prioritisation both of the range of issues to be addressed and the key projects to tackle them.

2. Context

This section incorporates analysis from the various reports and studies listed in Section 3.2.

2.1. *The local area*

The focus of this plan is the town of Bideford in North Devon (see Fig. 2.1) Bideford has been described as the 'real Devon', rich in authenticity and local pride and built on independent foundations. The people who live and work here are especially attracted to the wild natural, elemental landscape of north Devon and the Atlantic coast. The town lies on the River Torridge estuary at the principal river crossing in a beautiful setting, surrounded by attractive countryside with a coastal hinterland protected as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and within the North Devon UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Bideford owes much of its heritage and development and to its long history as port for international trade and for ship-building. In the 16th century, Bideford was Britain's third largest port and a major contributor in providing ships for the defence of the country. There are over 250 listed buildings in the town's three Conservation Areas. The town's location and topography act as both a constraint and opportunity for the development of maritime related activities and for the promotion of quality all-year-round tourism based on the environment and heritage, both maritime and terrestrial.

Bideford's location is peripheral with poor access to the rest of Devon and further east. Flood risk has curtailed a number of regeneration opportunities. Bideford is still a working port today, although on a much reduced scale, and a key feature of the town is the regular presence of moored freighters and ship movements on the town centre quay, a rather unique situation in modern marine activity.

In functional terms, this strategic rural centre plays a complementary role to Barnstaple, 8 miles away which is the area's main location for Further and Higher Education, the District Hospital and most comparison shopping provision. Bideford itself had a population of 17,107 in 2011, boosted by the nearby settlements of Northam (5,427), Appledore (2,814), Westward Ho! (2,112) and Instow (1,501), a total of 11,854. The area's population has increased significantly during the past couple of decades, Bideford's residents being 28% greater in 2011 than in 1991, and is projected to accommodate a further 4,161 houses during 2011-31, with a further 1,782 in Northam.

Levels of affluence vary substantially within and between the three wards in the town. The overall picture is one of a relatively low waged, low skilled, low productivity economy, and 16% of the town's residents fall within the 25% most disadvantaged in England and average household incomes in Torrington are 19% below the GB average. However, there are also relevant numbers of 'affluent greys' both as residents and regular visitors. Despite sale prices being higher than the national average, the general quality of housing is poor.

In recent years, there have been a number of investments, both by the public and commercial sectors, such as the rebuilt Bideford College, tidal defences and enhancement of The Quay, J D Wetherspoon, extensions to Atlantic Village and various housing schemes; and there are key development sites within the town with potential to transform Bideford (see Fig. 2.2). However, many of the community's aspirations remain unfulfilled, with increased frustration through plans not being delivered. With so many independent spirits, this experience can feed cynicism but can also, by instilling confidence, embolden determination to work together to improve the quality of life enjoyed by all. Consequently, the Coastal Community Team offers an opportunity to consolidate previous proposals and articulate practical means of promoting an image of Bideford as a truly inspirational and wonderful place to live and visit.



Figure 2.1 Bideford & Northam wards



Figure 2.2 Key development sites within the town from Terence O'Rourke (2007) *Bideford Regeneration Framework*

2.2. Community context

The population of Bideford and the surrounding area has grown substantially over the past 25 years and is projected to continue to grow at a similar rate of 1.5% pa to 2031, with greater house building. During 1991-2011, this rate of growth translated to an average increase of 180 people and 103 homes pa and from 2011, house construction is planned to average 208 pa in Bideford and 89 in Northam. Most of past and projected growth is due to high in-migration. However, the age balance is shifting towards the more elderly, which will have gradually more impact on both care services required and employment requirements. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment conducted in 2013/14 by the Public Health Intelligence Team for Bideford and Northam highlighted the following areas where there were statistically significant differences with Devon rates:

- Birth rate: 65.8 births per 1,000 females, (Devon rate c58) (statistically higher)
- Life expectancy: 81.4 years, (Devon rate 82.3) (statistically lower)
- BME population: 1.6% (lower)
- Youth offending: 13.5 per 1,000 children 10-17 (higher)
- 5 GCSEs A-C: 51.3% of DCC pupils, (Devon rate 58%) (lower)
- Aged 65+ community based care: 61.4 per 1,000 (higher)
- Learning disabilities: 2.3 per 1,000 in care homes, 5.8 in community care (higher)
- Mental health: 13.1 in community based care (higher)
- Domestic violence: 12.4 per 1,000 pop. (higher)
- Hospital admissions: 2560 per 100,000 all emergency, 2235 alcohol related (higher)

Both the Bideford Community Plan in 2009 and the North Devon and Torridge Local Strategic Partnership in 2010 reflected long term issues needing greater action for the well being of the community. These may be summarised as:

- Education and training:
 - establish a vocational training centre,
 - support apprentices, skills training,
 - training and mentoring in the community.
- Environment:
 - develop green infrastructure,
 - promote low carbon homes.
- Infrastructure:
 - dual Bideford-Barnstaple link road,
 - improve public transport,
 - improve design standards,
 - create walking and cycling route to Appledore.

- Access to services:
 - create community hubs,
 - improve and promote access to sports facilities,
 - develop a sense of place through heritage understanding, awareness and promotion,
 - improve health care facilities.

Key issues to highlight, therefore, include community care services for elderly people and training, volunteering and active recreation opportunities for young people, within a sustainable environment.

2.3. The local economy

The most prominent sectors of the north Devon economy are retail, health and social work, accommodation and food, manufacturing, education and construction which together account for 75% of employment (drawing on data from the 2011 census and the Bideford Town Study of 2011). In Bideford, manufacturing is dominant. While less than 6% of the workforce is in hotels and restaurants, less than the Torridge and Devon figures, the annual value of the tourism market is estimated at £26.3m, roughly half each coming from holiday makers and day visits. In 2005, the Torridge Retail Study indicated that Bideford had 42,000m² of retail floor space in 227 units, a little more than half the corresponding figures for Barnstaple. Since then, there have been increases at Atlantic Village (an edge of town shopping complex) and decreases in the town centre. The CACI economic research in 2010 estimated Bideford's retail catchment as covering over 84,000 people, spending £213.3m pa on comparison goods, of which Bideford town's market share was a mere 4% while Atlantic Village claimed 54%. Particular shortages consistently highlighted are in clothing, restaurants and local produce outlets.

The Vision for the North Devon and Torridge economy in the Local Development Framework Plan draft is for *"a diverse and resilient economy that can adapt to challenges and maximise opportunities, underpinned by an appropriately skilled workforce and effective infrastructure."* Visitor numbers and spend are regarded as one of the key economic drivers. Furthermore, town centres will be protected and enhanced by focusing developments for retail, leisure, office and cultural facilities within defined centres, with positive management of regeneration measures. Also, high quality tourism development will be promoted to encourage a year round industry which is sustainable and avoids damaging natural and historic assets. The emphasis will be on enhancing quality and repeat visits.

In Bideford, relatively low wages, low skills and low productivity are fundamental issues requiring a range of long term solutions. While the impact of relevant, structural investment in property in the town is awaited, means of enhancing the sense of place and attractiveness of the town are being actively pursued. Public realm improvements, heritage promotions, upgraded sports and recreation facilities, cultural events

and volunteering leading to transferrable skills and improved self-esteem, can all play a part in developing community pride and taking visitor experience to a higher level.

2.4. Related initiatives

The scale of housing development envisaged should not be underestimated in terms of the increased demand for local services and the economic benefits which will flow from such provision. Also, release of 30 hectares for employment land, with the bonus of Assisted Area status (achieved 2015), should entice more manufacturing and other industrial activity, in turn raising demand for higher skills and boosting income levels.

Of more direct relevance to the themes of this Plan are the regeneration initiatives in and close to the town, and there are a number of key development sites and projects which together could have a transformational impact on the town. Expansion of the Burton Art Gallery and Museum to embrace the library and create a cultural hub adjacent to Victoria Park, which could be expanded with conversion of part of the livestock market site to recreational/education/training uses, with some enhancement of The Pill just across the road, would in combination establish a vibrant locality, attractive to every generation. Being adjacent to the north end of The Quay and beside the largest car park in the town, provides the perfect platform to make this a prominent, all weather and all-year-round destination in its own right as well as being the main visitor gateway to Bideford and the surrounding area.

The Burton 'cultural hub', Victoria Park and The Quay also are the most obvious springboards from which to connect, virtually and physically, with the UNESCO Biosphere reserve and North Devon Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Torridge Estuary Study in 2014 made a compelling case for a more coherent approach to protecting, managing, promoting and marketing the estuary which forms the third theme of the Tourism Sector Development Plan, joining the coast, estuary and countryside. Adoption of this theme as part of this Economic Plan would provide a framework to attract relevant stakeholders both in Bideford and in Northam, Westward Ho!, Appledore and Instow.

Another regeneration site alongside the estuary is Brunswick Wharf on the east side of the Long Bridge. As with many other communities which have grown up around an estuary, the river divides just as much as it unites and conscious efforts need to be made to encourage people to cross to either side. So the proposed mixed use development of Brunswick Wharves and its waterfronts will be both intrinsically valuable as well as creating a more attractive entrance to East-the-Water and towards the town.

Another important linkage ripe for improvement is that between the main shopping area and the Pannier Market. Redevelopment of Bridge Street would help to achieve this, as well as providing new homes.

3. Methods

3.1. About the Coastal Community Team

This Plan has been developed by the Bideford Coastal Community Team (CCT) as an action plan for development of the visitor economy and sustainability of Bideford. The CCT is led by Torrington District Council, supported by other members of the Bideford Partnership, notably Bideford Chamber of Commerce, Devon County Council, and Bideford Town Council.

Members of the team include representation from:

- Torrington District Council
- Bideford and District Chamber of Commerce
- Bideford Town Council
- Business of Bideford
- Bideford 500
- Devon County Council
- Burton Art Gallery and Museum
- Voluntary sector partners

3.2. How our Plan was developed

The focus of this Plan has been shaped by numerous studies and project proposals, backed up by a wide variety of public consultation, during the past five years in particular. These reports include:

- Publication Draft North Devon and Torrington Local Plan, 2014
- Northern Devon Economic Strategy 2014-20
- UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Vision and Strategy
- Joint Delivery Team Business Plan 2011

- Bideford Town Study, Core Strategy Evidence, 2011, Torridge District Council
- Torridge Estuary Study 2014
- Bideford Chamber of Commerce Vision and Action Plan 2011
- Bideford Bay Marketing Strategy 2013
- Building Bideford's Cultural Offer: feasibility study 2015 by Hilary McGowan for TDC/DCC
- Bideford, Westward Ho!, Appledore: Economic Research 2010, CACI for North Devon+
- Bideford Parking Study 2010
- Census Profile: Bideford and Northam Town Area, figures at 2011, DCC
- Bideford and Northam area baseline profile, using Mosaic data from 2009, DCC
- Bideford area Town Profile, data from 2010/11, DCC
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Town Profile for Bideford/Northam 2013-14, Public Health Devon/Devon County Council

Distillation of these reports and the supporting evidence has informed the CCT's discussions, which have prioritised selected the four main themes of the Plan and the initiatives proposed in the light of current circumstances. The Team has then elaborated upon and refined the projects presented in this document and invited consultation on the range of initiatives proposed.

4. Our Plan – aims & objectives

The aim of our Economic Plan is to contribute towards repositioning Bideford as a quality, vibrant all-year-round resort with a unique character, offering a range of quality and diverse visitor experiences.

Our key **objectives** are:

- To increase foot fall into the town from local residents and the surrounding area all year round,
- To increase the number of visitors into Bideford during all times of the year,
- To increase return visits as a result of visitor satisfaction,
- To increase spend within Bideford at the various outlets, museums and heritage attractions, leading to increased business and employment opportunities,
- To make Bideford and the surrounding area a more successful and vibrant place to trade, a more sustainable place to operate and a more pleasurable and rewarding place to visit and live.

Consequently, the Plan concentrates on the following subject areas:

- *Marketing and events*: to promote a positive, joined up image of Bideford,
- *Public realm*: to provide better signage on main routes to encourage passing visitors, and within the town to encourage longer stays, together with enhanced presentation of public spaces along the main pedestrian flows,
- *Visitor management*: to improve the main visitor services and facilities,
- *Town management*: to create a Town Management Team drawn from all the partners with the authority to drive forward this Plan.

5. Community needs and supporting data

Demography – Bideford has grown significantly and is forecast to continue to do so

- Bideford’s population grew by 28% between 1991 and 2011 to 16,610 and is projected to grow at a faster rate during 2011-31.
- Though currently with an age structure slightly younger than that of Torrington and the rest of Devon, this is projected to change over the next 15 years as life expectancy increases and there is further in migration of older people.

Income – generally, a low income economy, but with some wide variances

- Incomes are around 12% less than the Devon average and only two thirds of the national figure (in 2011). Average income levels vary by 9% between the three wards of Bideford and yet the ward with the highest average also has the highest proportion (25%) of households with incomes below £15,000.
- Proportions of residents receiving benefits are substantially higher than the Devon averages:
 - Income support 6.3% cf. 3.9%;
 - Job Seekers Allowance 4.3% cf. 2.0%;
 - disability living allowance 5.7% cf. 4.2%;
 - 65+ attendance allowance 19.3% cf. 17.3%;
 - 60+ pension credit 22.4% cf. 15.3%.
- Deprivation: the main barriers are income, employment, skills and skills training and the living environment, concentrated in small localities in each ward. 11.4% of children are in poverty and 6.7% of households in fuel poverty.

Education & skills – skills levels are below average

- 69% of school pupils obtain 5 or more GCSEs A-C compared with 74% in Devon and 80% nationally;
- 39% of the working age population have less than a Level 2 qualification (cf. Devon 34%) and 22% have Level 4 or higher (cf. 28%).

Economic activity – patterns in line with the district and county averages

- 15% employed part-time, 31% full-time, 14% self-employed, 4% unemployed, 5% students, 20% retired, 9% looking after family/long term sick/disabled.

Employment – there are higher proportions of people in manufacturing and wholesale/retail than the Devon averages

- Manufacturing 12.8% cf. Devon 8.4%; wholesale/retail 20.3% cf. 12.2%, hotels/restaurants 5.0% cf. 10.1%; business activities 14.5% cf. 11.5%.
- 20% of the workforce is a manager or in a professional occupation compared to 24% in Devon and 20% are in skilled trades compared to 16%.

Tourism activity – tourism and leisure are important economic drivers in Bideford and the surrounding area for the income generated and the sense of place and civic pride which are reinforced. There is potential for Bideford to win a greater market share

- Tourist market spend in Bideford town estimated at £26.3m pa, £12.1m contributed by holiday makers, £12.3 by day visitors and £1.9m by visitors to friends and relatives (from CACI study, 2010);
- Tourism income is earned by retail £6.1m, catering £8.2m, entertainments/attractions £2.8m, accommodation £5.2m and travel £4.0m;
- Bideford town's share of the North Devon and Torridge tourism market of £363.3m is 7.2% plus 15.8% at Atlantic Village;
- Day visitors account for 75% of visitors and 37% of spend, overseas visitors are 2% numerically and contribute 8% of the income;
- Particular visitor 'likes' are the ambience of the town and local scenery, with 94% rating their visit good or very good;
- Dislikes are untidy/unclean areas, vacant units, cost of car parking, traffic and the hills within the town.

Retail market – Bideford town's market share of comparison goods is just 4%, and 25% for food and drink:

- Bideford's catchment population for comparison goods shopping numbers 84,362 with spend of £213.3m; it's market share is 4% with Atlantic Village taking 54% and Barnstaple 30%;
- The food & drink catchment is 146,339 people with spend of £136.8m and Bideford takes 25.5% market share;

- The catchment population is polarised between 'affluent greys' 25% and 'Blue Collar Roots' 21% (with the UK averages being 8% for each); this contrasts with the town having 5% 'premium' retailers and 33% 'value' retailers;
- Compared with benchmark towns, more comparison goods shops would be expected and fewer multiples (currently 20% compared with benchmark of 13%);
- Particular scope for more clothing shops and more and better quality restaurants.

Community issues - Bideford has a good number and range of community facilities, health services and public transport but with considerable potential to upgrade. Housing standards are relatively poor

- While these facilities and services are broadly satisfactory currently, the scale of proposed growth of the town will necessitate significant additions and enhancements;
- Popular support for creating more 'community/neighbourhood/volunteering hubs';
- Demand for improved access to sports facilities;
- Scope to make more of the heritage of the town and the river environment;
- Need to improve skills and training opportunities for young people;
- Need to provide volunteering opportunities to reduce loneliness and lack of motivation;
- House prices have fallen to near the national average which is little more than two thirds the Devon average, reflecting the predominance of 19th century terraced housing.

6. SWOT analysis of the town's potential as a visitor destination

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Quay and commercial port • Maritime heritage and 250 listed buildings • Torridge estuary and Biosphere reserve • Victoria Park • Burton Art Gallery and Museum • Tarka Trail and links to Atlantic coast • Pannier market • Range of independent shops • Pedestrianised shopping area • Car parking • Atlantic Village • Growing population • Lies on the South West Coast Path 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail mix • Supply of visitor accommodation • Limited food & drink venues • Public realm • Berthing facilities • Steepness of town's topography • Car parking cost • Limited marketing resources • Lack of town management co-ordination • Limited co-operation with neighbouring communities • Low wage, low skill economy • Loss of market share to other centres • Limited awareness and interpretation of the town's assets
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural hub with Burton Museum and library • Heritage - both maritime and land-based • Regeneration of livestock market site • Enhancement of The Pill • Redevelopment of Bridge Street • Regeneration of Brunswick Wharf • Marine leisure activities • Public services by river transport. • Town Centre management • Joint promotions with neighbouring attractions • Events programme based on heritage, local food, literary connections, environmental assets • New housing developments • Public realm enhancements • New shopping and restaurant provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further loss of market share to other centres • Flood risk • Insufficient resources to build momentum of new activity • Unwillingness to co-operate • Investors discouraged by past performance • Inability to act positively • Lack of coordinated approach

7. Our priorities

Our plan priorities respond to the identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within our visitor economy:

<i>Priority & rationale</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>What we want to achieve</i>
<p>(a) Marketing & events</p> <p>A more positive, joined up quality image of Bideford will be promoted to potential visitors as well as residents to increase footfall and improve visitor education and satisfaction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-ordinated, consistent and targeted promotion of events and the area's main assets. - Event programme covering New Year, water based activities, sport and recreation, literature, food, heritage. - Heritage trail and interpretive panels. - Testing of use of different media to assess impact and cost effectiveness while developing the skills to use innovative and effective social media etc. - Develop local heritage experiences leading to added engagement with the town and return visits 	<p>A more vibrant town centre with more visitors year-round, more business opportunity and more employment, (measured by numbers & value of visitors):</p> <p>Within 6 mths: co-ordinated approach across stakeholders commenced; programme of year-round town events created; marketing resource identified; other town's marketing activity reviewed; new marketing plan developed; social media activity commenced.</p> <p>Within 5 yrs: events established as regular town activities; established town marketing strategy, branding and annual activity; 1 new heritage trail implemented.</p>
<p>(b) Public realm</p> <p>Visitor satisfaction, education, experiences, and recognition of heritage sites will be improved through better signage and enhanced presentation of public spaces along the main pedestrian flows.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop programme of enhancements emanating from the Burton site to include Victoria Park and livestock market site. - Enhance area around the Pannier Market in anticipation of improved linkages with Bridge Street. - Devise series of improvements to create a seamless link between Brunswick Wharf and the main town. - Review visitor signage on main routes into town e.g. from Heywood Road roundabout - Initiate general tidy up, starting from Queen's 90th birthday celebrations. - Create interest in maritime history with strategically placed information panels and heritage ships. 	<p>Enhanced facilities and environment for visitors, businesses and residents within the town centre and along the Quay (measured by visitor satisfaction):</p> <p>Within 6 mths: new signage implemented on the main town's main approach routes; 1 key site within the town tidied up; 2 new uses of the Quay identified.</p> <p>Within 5 yrs: plans for the town's key development sites advanced/implemented ; signage strategy developed and implemented within the town centre; regular key site tidy</p>

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<i>Priority & rationale</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>What we want to achieve</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tidy up the river area to create an attractive and valued visual experience, linked to the Queen's 90th birthday. 	<p>programme in place; at least 4 new uses of the Quay implemented; leisure and recreation users of the river increased by 20%.</p>
<p>(c) Visitor management</p> <p>By targeted improvements to the main visitor visual experiences, services and facilities, negative factors noted by visitors will be corrected and satisfaction and spend levels greatly raised.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve signage from main car parks to the principal attractions. - Use displays and 'pop up' shops to disguise vacant units. - Encourage investment in new/improved shops, restaurants, Overnight accommodation. - Create more trails for walking and cycling, with quality environment/historic/wildlife interpretation. - Experiment with flexible car parking charges. - Provide a focus on high quality heritage interpretation and experiences - Co-operate with neighbouring centres to encourage more circulation of visitors between the town and Atlantic Village, Westward Ho!, Appledore, Clovelly etc. 	<p>Increased visitors across the town's main attractions (measured by footfall):</p> <p>Within 6 mths: visitor displays created in 2 vacant shops; trial outlined for flexible car park charging initiatives; town centre staff briefings commenced.</p> <p>Within 5 yrs: improved signage from the town's main car parks in place; pop-up shop facilities created in 5 town centre sites; opportunities for premium retail/eating/ accommodation promoted; new walking and cycling trail options identified; amendments made to car parking charges; 2 joint tourism initiatives developed with neighbouring communities.</p>
<p>(d) Town management</p> <p>Facilitate a dynamic Town Management Team to co-ordinate and deliver this programme of initiatives most efficiently and effectively and leverage the power of volunteers within the community to help get things done</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold briefings for staff of shops, food & drink outlets, attractions to explain the marketing initiatives and seek feedback. - Negotiate establishment of an executive Town Management team. - Delegate responsibility and resources to implement the marketing and events programme and appropriate elements of the Public Realm and Visitor Management programmes. - Through CCT partners, vigorously pursue the regeneration initiatives. - Work with relevant external agencies to attract investment into the town and to channel information and advice to the business community. 	<p>Discernible momentum created within the regeneration of the town through strong leadership, drive and communication (measured by implemented projects delivered on time):</p> <p>Within 6 mths: Town Management Team created; 3 key Quick Win projects commenced.</p> <p>Within 5 yrs: 5 medium-term projects funded and implemented; detailed plans for a further 6 projects in place; working relationships established with key agencies; CCT Economic Plan updated on an annual basis.</p>

8. Our plan

8.1. Marketing & Events

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
ME1. Events and town promotion	Joined up promotional strategy leading to improved profile, increased visits/return visits, stays and expenditure, businesses supported	Town Management Team (see TM1 below)	TBC	Leader 5, CCF
Description & rationale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a promotional strategy which includes better use of websites, TIC, social media, news reports with targeted and co-ordinated media promotions - Identify and commit funding towards marketing – employ an experienced Marketing Leader. - Develop contact lists and data base to support joined up working and improved marketing - Add website and social media contacts to all e- communication 		Resources required to deliver	Project management Match funding Bid writing (possible consultants)	
		Next steps & dates	Develop promotional marketing strategy QUICK WIN (within 12 mths)	

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
ME2. Events programme	Greater interest in the town, leading to increased visits, return visits, increased spend leading to new jobs	Town Management Team	TBC	Leader 5, sponsorship
Description & rationale: To develop a varied events programme designed to highlight the town's assets of the estuary/environment/history, walking and cycling routes, sports facilities, literary associations, local food production, arts and heritage, both maritime and terrestrial.		Resources required to deliver	Match funding project management Business sponsorship ND+ to offer business support through business support contracts	
		Next steps & dates	Leader 5 bid Immediate start, gradually building	

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Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
ME3. Heritage Trails & Interpretation Panels	Increased civic pride and sense of place, adding interest to visits and so increasing repeat visits and encouraging new.	Town Management Team, Museum, history groups, Chamber	TBC	Leader 5, sponsorship, heritage funding
Description & rationale: To educate and inspire the public to want to further research heritage. By developing a network of routes emanating from the cultural hub, more visitors would be directed to the car park beside The Quay and Victoria Park, reinforcing enjoyment of these assets and from where there is easy access to the town centre, museums.		Resources required to deliver	Leader 5 bid Local authorities Business sponsorship	
		Next steps & dates	Draw up outline of scheme Medium term activity (1-3 years)	

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
ME4. Testing the media	Increased visits and experience of the most effective channels for Bideford to utilise.	Town Management Team	TBC	TBC
Description & rationale: By experimenting with use of different media and measuring the impact, the Town Management Team will be better placed to target its resources to the most effective media in future years. Look at models used by other coastal towns.		Resources required to deliver	Project management Match funding	
		Next steps & dates	Seek advice on which communication route is most appropriate for which audiences; possible use of consultants QUICK WIN (within 12 mths)	

8.2. Public Realm

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
PR1. Bideford Cultural Hub	Enhanced visitor environment leading to increased return visits and satisfaction.	CCT partners	TBC	Leader 5, Lottery funding, S106
Description & rationale: Develop the cultural hub at Burton Museum and Art Gallery, to include the library, and adjacent sites at Victoria Park, the quay and the livestock market. This would become the main gateway to Bideford and would offer in close proximity high quality indoor and outdoor all year round attractions for active and passive quality recreation, appealing to and educating every generation.		Resources required to deliver	£4.5m for cultural hub, Local authorities, Lottery funding, s106.	
		Next steps & dates	All partners to support cultural hub development and devise plans for adjacent sites Timing TBC	

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
PR2. Pannier Market and Bridge Street	Improved linkage between the Pannier Market and the rest of the town centre, leading to increased use and business development.	CCT partners	TBC	Private sector, Leader 5
Description & rationale: The Pannier Market is a significant attraction to both local people and visitors and has the potential to deliver more if access issues could be improved. CCT partners will pursue redevelopment of Bridge Street which would help to achieve this (as well as building new homes). In the meantime, better signage and promotion and tidying up the route from High Street would stimulate greater use of the market as an outlet for local produce.		Resources required to deliver	Promotional input. Local business input/contribution Match funding HCA, local authorities	
		Next steps & dates	Develop action plan Short (signage) and longer-term (redevelopment)	

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Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
PR3. Brunswick Wharf redevelopment	Mixed use development and much improved gateway for East-The-Water and towards the town centre.	CCT partners and commercial co.	TBC	Private sector
Description & rationale: Planning permission is in place for redevelopment of this site. In anticipation, CCT partners and the Town Management Team will review related public realm improvements to lead visitors to Bideford Station environmental resource and across the Long Bridge.		Resources required to deliver	TBC Environmental bodies.	
		Next steps & dates	Draw up outline of possible works Longer-term initiative (>3 years)	
Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
PR4. Mill Street enhancements	Increased visitor numbers, longer stays, increased expenditure	DCC, CCT	c. £150k	TBC
Description & rationale: Public realm enhancements to Mill Street – a key shopping area within the town with predominantly independent shops, pedestrianised during the day, but let down by a run-down feel – to encourage increased private sector investment and business activity.		Resources required to deliver	Project management time, budget	
		Next steps & dates	Develop plans Longer-term initiative (>3 years)	
Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
PR5. Main route signage	Increased visitor numbers, longer stays, increased expenditure	CCT, TDC, DCC	TBC	TBC
Description & rationale: Review attraction signage on key access points into the town to encourage passing visitors to deviate and spend time within the town e.g. from Heywood Road roundabout		Resources required to deliver	Project management time, budget	
		Next steps & dates	Develop signage strategy Medium-term initiative (1-3 years)	

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Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
PR6. General 'tidy up'.	Improved visitor satisfaction and civic pride and increased visits, spend and investment.	Town Management Team, Harbour Authority	TBC	Commercial sponsorship
Description & rationale: The most frequently voiced criticism from visitors has been about untidy and unclean sites. With relatively modest resources, this could be addressed with resulting significant impact. The Queen's 90 th birthday celebrations are triggering a nationwide effort which could be a catalyst for Bideford to start this process. Visitors predominantly view from the quay, the river needs to be tidied and look valued as part of this initiative.		Resources required to deliver	Marine policy and action plan, promotional time, local business input/contribution, partner input, volunteer time	
		Next steps & dates	Agree action plan QUICK WIN (within 12 months)	

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
PR7. Kingsley Road Retail Development	Private sector investment, transformed area, increased and longer visits, increased	Town Mgmt Team, TDC, Football Club	TBC	Private sector investment
Description & rationale: Attract private investment into the town to add value to the core attraction for visitors and residents. Relocation of the Football Club would provide an opportunity to create new retail/leisure facilities close to the town centre with easy access and parking and would enhance the approach to the town.		Resources required to deliver	Project management time	
		Next steps & dates	Football Club and developer engagement Longer-term (> 3years)	

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Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
PR8. New Quay Uses	New business opportunities, increased visits and dwell time, increased expenditure	Town Management Team, Chamber, Harbour Authority	TBC	Leader 5
Description & rationale: Development of new commercial, maritime heritage and leisure activity on the Quay to increase use of the town's main focal point site as a key attraction resource and encourage increased visits to the town		Resources required to deliver	Project management, funding	
		Next steps & dates	Bring together working group, develop proposals Potential QUICK WIN (within 12 mths)	

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
PR9. Marine Leisure Activities	New business opportunities, increased visits and dwell time, increased expenditure	Town Management Team, Harbour Authority, Chamber	TBC	CCF, Leader 5
Description & rationale: Increase use of the river as a key asset of the town and its waterfront location. Development of the Harbour area to promote marine leisure activity, maritime heritage, maritime heritage events and marine business opportunities, including passenger boats		Resources required to deliver	Project management, marine policy and action plan, funding	
		Next steps & dates	Bring together working group, develop proposals Medium-term (1-3 years)	

8.3. Visitor management

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
VM1. Signage for pedestrians	Easier access between car parks and attractions, leading to greater visitor satisfaction and repeat visits.	Town Management Team	TBC	S106, local authorities
Description & rationale: There is a complex network of routes between the main car parks and each attraction and pedestrian movement would be easier with better signage (linked in with interpretive panels). This would encourage more visits to more attractions, longer stay, repeat visits and increased spend.		Resources required to deliver	Project management time, detailed local historic information, funding	
		Next steps & dates	Pedestrian access & signage strategy Potential QUICK WIN (within 12 months)	

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
VM2. Addressing vacant shops	More attractive street scenes and increased visitor satisfaction, longer stays and expenditure	Town Management Team with Chamber of Commerce, private landlords	TBC	Leader 5, S106
Description & rationale: 'Vacant shop units' was one of the main criticisms from visitors. (a) <i>Support businesses to fill empty shops</i> – provide incentives and support to assist local businesses to take on vacant shops e.g. business support, small grants, directories (b) <i>Pop-up shops & displays</i> - until there is greater demand from businesses, temporary displays and pop up shops could fill some of the shop fronts, leading to a more attractive street scene and providing an opportunity for local creative talent to be showcased. Show more historic views and activities to lead people to investigate further.		Resources required to deliver	Project management time, private sector support, funding	
		Next steps & dates	Establish working group, project management time, audit of vacant shops, engagement with shop owners Medium term activity (1-3 years)	

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Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
VM3. Encouraging investment	New shops, restaurants and overnight accommodation are needed to improve Bideford's attractiveness.	CCT partners	TBC	N/A
Description & rationale: The main deficiencies identified through the visitor survey were in clothing and other 'premium' shops, good quality restaurants and overnight accommodation. Positive measures will be taken to highlight these investment opportunities to potential providers.		Resources required to deliver	Targeted inward investment programme.	
		Next steps & dates	Develop programme Medium term activity (1-3 years)	

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
VM4. New trails and interpretation	Greater use of walking and cycling routes, and facilities/information and attractions en route.	Town Management Team	TBC	CCF, Lottery funding, Leader 5
Description & rationale: The Tarka Trail is an extremely well known and used route running close to the town centre and linking with the coast and other attractions in the area. Such patronage would be increased through provision of further routes, especially where they link with other attractions and have attendant quality interpretive facilities. The cultural hub would also be a hub for this extended network. The South West Coast Path runs through Bideford and should be recognised and promoted. Utilise excellent bus services for walk and ride tours; Bideford-Appledore ferry for walk and cruise tours.		Resources required to deliver	Project management time Match funding Research and design of trails Funding applications	
		Next steps & dates	Project scoping Medium term (1-3years)	

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Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
VM5. Car park charges	Enhanced visits, longer stays, increased visitor satisfaction.	TDC and DCC	TBC	TBC
Description & rationale: Another criticism from the visitor survey related to car park charges. Especially for the car parks most used by visitors, scope to introduce more flexible charging will be explored. Possible changes would be designed to encourage parking at late afternoon/early evenings and weekends, as well as longer stays. Opportunities for traders to give parking discounts to their customers would be promoted. Consider park and ride to include Appledore, Westward Ho!		Resources required to deliver	Project management time	
		Next steps & dates	TDC to discuss with Chamber Potential QUICK WIN (within 12 mths)	

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
VM6. Co-operation with neighbouring centres	Increased visits & expenditure	Town Management Team	TBC	Leader 5
Description & rationale: The visitor survey showed that 80% of visitors went to more than one centre. Consequently, a spirit of co-operation, rather than competition, will be engendered between Bideford town, Atlantic Village, Westward Ho!, Appledore and Instow, in particular. A variety of joint promotions will be developed to offer a broad range of packages to varying visitor types.		Resources required to deliver	Project management & volunteer time Match funding Leader 5 bid	
		Next steps & dates	Bring together key parties Medium-term activity (1-3 years)	

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Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
VM7. Staff briefings	Improved visitor reception.	Town Management Team	Mainly staff time	TBC
Description & rationale: Many promotional activities are undertaken without reference to the people most directly involved in delivering the visitor services. Consequently, as part of a 'Bideford for All' campaign, presentations will be offered to staff teams of retail and catering outlets as well as attractions and other key stakeholders to help them to appreciate the range of initiatives being undertaken, with the rationale, and to open up channels of feedback from those meeting visitors most regularly. Briefings will be supported by newsletters and training seminars and events geared to the local tourism, catering and retail workforces.		Resources required to deliver	Project management	
		Next steps & dates	Develop communication plan, create joined up thinking, engage stakeholders QUICK WIN (within 12 months)	

8.4. Town Management

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
TM1. Town Management Team	Creation of a virtual team with executive powers to drive these Plan activities.	CCT partners	TBC	TBC
Description & rationale: There are so many interrelations between the activities necessary to improve Bideford's performance as a visitor destination, it is essential that there is a close team ethic established between those from the partner organisations who are most directly involved in delivering the initiatives. This team also needs delegated authority to use the resources allocated to proceed promptly.		Resources required to deliver	Project management & co-ordination, creation of focused sub groups.	
		Next steps & dates	Creation of team QUICK WIN (within 12 mths)	

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
TM2. Delegation of responsibilities and resources	More efficient and effective delivery of town management services.	CCT partners	No additional resources	TBC
Description & rationale: Following on from TM1, the Town Management Team must be able to act promptly without having to constantly refer back to each parent body. Hence, the CCT partners will delegate budgets and specified authority to act to the Team executive.		Resources required to deliver	Project management & development	
		Next steps & dates	Agree policy QUICK WIN (within 12 mths)	

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Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
TM3. Regeneration initiatives	The major, structural regeneration initiatives will be prioritised jointly with all partners and pursued vigorously.	CCT partners	TBC	TBC
Description & rationale: There are at least 4 major, structural projects, each of which has the potential to significantly improve Bideford's performance as a visitor destination. CCT partners will agree how they can co-operate to attract the necessary resources for each of these projects sequentially. Such joint working and the encouragement of new initiatives will maximise the chances of success in the shortest time. This will also help to ensure that all key partners buy in to the total programme.		Resources required to deliver	Project management & co-ordination	
		Next steps & dates	Developing and scoping project ideas Early start required	

Key project (title)	What it will deliver (type of outcomes & outputs) SMART	Who will lead & key partners	Estimated cost	Possible funding streams
TM4. Co-operation with external agencies	Through linking effectively with external agencies and partners, resources will be maximised most efficiently and with greatest impact.	CCT partners	TBC	TBC
Description & rationale: While there is substantial experience within Bideford and the CCT partners, there are other agencies which can be called upon to provide specific input, to avoid the need for replication or reinvention. The Homes and Communities Agency, Arts Council, Sport England, English Heritage, South West Water, Environment Agency, tourism bodies and related funding sources are especially relevant. North Devon+ is an example, providing a route to business support and finance and enterprise training from the Local Enterprise Partnership's Growth Hub.		Resources required to deliver	Project management, operational partners, shared information with other coastal towns	
		Next steps & dates	QUICK WIN (within 12 mths)	

9. Barriers & risks to implementing our plan

Identified barriers/risks	How we will manage/overcome
Frustration from past, stalled projects	Launch of the well coordinated and informed Town Management Team and new branding for this Plan will demonstrate a fresh and realistic approach to delivery. This will include disseminating information to the public and researching public aspirations as ongoing activities.
Disenchanted community representatives	Very deliberate efforts will be made to communicate and collaborate consistently with business and community leaders; demonstration of positive, well considered plans.
Funding constraints	CCT partners will agree a programme of funding allocations and bids for external finance and enterprising approaches will be taken in conjunction with commercial interests.
Disagreements over priorities	An essential starting point for Plan delivery is consensus on the sequence of major projects and funding applications.
Insufficient project management time	Establishment of the Town Management Team with commitment to adhering to realistic time inputs is a vital starting point for Plan delivery. Utilisation of focused working sub-groups.
Lack of interest in the visual impact and heritage interest of the river	Bring together maritime and heritage partners to determine a river strategy and action plan in consultation with the Harbour Authority.
Government cutbacks demoralising people	Support Local Authority staff and create a positive vision. Delegate responsibility to achieve outcomes and reduce pressure.