

EXTRAORDINARY FULL COUNCIL

Torridge District Council has announced that it has been awarded just over £20,070,000 in capital investment with £250,000 revenue funding to support several projects to benefit residents across the district. The projects announced by government, are being funded as part of the Community Regeneration Partnership Scheme (previously known as Levelling Up Partnership) and will support the council's strategic ambitions and deliver lasting benefits to Torridge. We are very pleased to have been awarded this government funding for our communities.

The capital projects being supported by the Government are geographically spread across the district and cover a wide variety of themes:

- ***Bideford Business Park (£2.6m)*** - acquisition and development toward high value manufacturing and engineering facilities.
- ***Bideford Pannier Market (£1.475m)*** - modernisation and improvements to make fit for future and wider use.
- ***Hatchmoor Industrial Estate (£1.6m)*** - The project will design a scheme, achieve the necessary consents and then deliver the services and infrastructure to site for future development of workspace for high value manufacturing and engineering facilities
- ***Holsworthy Agri-Business Park (£7.3m)*** - development of Agri-related innovation, retail, and professional space.
- ***Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre (£2m)*** - additional funding to support the build.
- ***Agri-tech nutrient pilot scheme (£0.3m)*** - testing the adaptation of a slurry condensing unit to recover nutrients and reduce the pollutants going into rivers.
- ***Westward Ho! Water Quality Monitoring Buoy (£0.1m)*** - Installation of water quality monitoring buoy to provide real-time water quality data for beach users, tourism businesses and for managers of environmental systems.
- ***Cleave Wood, Bideford (£1.2m)*** - The design and delivery of site servicing and infrastructure as a first phase of a residential scheme in response to local housing needs.
- ***Social housing decarbonisation and EPC rating improvements (£1.5m)*** - pipeline of works to improve 57 properties with E & F ratings to C or B.
- ***Bideford Hospital (£0.75m)*** - reconfiguration site to create a "Community Health & Wellbeing Hub" with multi-purpose space.

- ***The Globe Hotel, Great Torrington (£0.52m)*** - Initial capital works on Grade II Listed long-derelict hotel to redevelop into an 11-bedroom hotel and restaurant (in a town with neither) with a strong training presence.
- ***Holsworthy Manor Offices (£0.725m)*** - Phased redevelopment inc. decarbonisation, remodelling to enable improved accessibility, flow and to increase opportunity for flexible community space (for example, co- working)

The ability to achieve such a diverse spread of projects and themes was made possible through the establishment of the Torridge Place Board. The Board, made up of 20 representatives from a cross section of local businesses and services, was established in February 2024. Since then, it has been responsible for steering a potential programme of works, designed to improve the long-term economic opportunities for the region and deliver positive environmental and health benefits to those people living in Torridge.

Notice of Motion

Cllr Thomas proposed a Motion to support Proportional Representation (PR) which would ensure all votes count, have equal value, and seats won match votes cast. The introduction of PR IN Scotland has increased turnout by 44.8% at the last election in 2022. In Torridge, the average turnout was 33%. It was proposed that the UK Government bring forward legislation to run using a PR voting system and TDC write to the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition to support PR.

After short discussion and a recorded vote, the Motion was passed 19 for and 10 against.

External Overview and Scrutiny Committee

We had a very constructive and excellent presentations regarding Arts, Music, theatre and creativity from the Chief Execs Emma Marston, the Plough Torrington, Harriet Copper from the Burton Art Gallery in Bideford and Phil Parker co/founder Director of Artmakers in Bideford and some public speakers! There was a lot of interest and highlighted the importance of Arts and the creative industries in our community for young, old, and reaching out to those with physical and mental disorders, particularly in these troubled times. Involving young people, schools, workshops, plays/theatre, comedy, and being creative by nature, and working with TDC, and NDC, Arts Council, Lottery, and others for funding.,

The Plough in Torrington has a Youth Theatre with 70 members. Between June - August this year there are 29 shows, and 13 venues scheduled including Panto this April. The Plough has 65 volunteers with 7 full time staff currently. It is 50 Years Anniversary of the Plough so watch this space! A better bus service between Barnstaple, Bideford, and the Plough would help especially in the evenings.

Burton Art Gallery in Bideford is 75 years old in October and had over 149,000 visitors including from many parts of UK and overseas. The Burton Gallery is somewhat hidden by trees along Kingsley road and Victoria Park though like the Plough recognises the importance of youth/schools and had 19 school visits. The upstairs gallery is to be developed, and the adjoining Cafe Du Parc does very well with ground floor access to the Burton. Fantastic ceramics, art along with famous artists are on show and noted internationally with free entrance to their galleries.

Artmakers Exhibition is located 1st Floor The Quay Bideford.. Artmakers has a virtual gallery made up of over 200 local artists. Workshops, working with mental health, textile artists and largely voluntary! We are very fortunate to have so much creativity here in Devon. Something we need to be shouting about and there was also discussion about the impact large murals could have in our towns in Torridge. Is a mini-Melbourne a future possibility for Torridge?

Best wishes,

Cheryl

Cllr Cheryl Cottle-Hunkin

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Lead member for Culture and Community Engagement,

Chair of External Overview and Scrutiny,

Torridge District Council

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