

Qualitative Free Text Responses Report

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Executive Summary

From 30 November 2023 to 31 March 2024, Torbay Climate Partnership (TCP) ran its consultation on the 'Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan.' This is the TCP's plan to accelerate local action to tackle climate change.

The TCP used a wide range of methods to engage with local people and to ensure there was a representative response.

There were three main surveys, a short version, for those that agreed with the proposal, a longer version and one for those who disagreed with the proposals put forward. The long version of the survey was available both online and as a paper version in libraries.

In addition, Tonic Creatives were commissioned to run a series of interactive engagement activities with local groups between December 2023 and March 2024.

Across the three online surveys there were 589 responses in total and 17 paper responses. Tonic also engaged with 1263 people, including 1063 face to face engagements. You can find a detailed report on their findings in Appendix 1 of the main report.

This document relates to the free text responses received from the surveys

It outlines themes of responses received and what the TCP has done to amend the Greener Way For Our Bay Framework and Action plan in light of these comments. It summarises what you said to the TCP and what they have done about it.

Methodology

Within all three surveys there were two opportunities to provide free text answers, meaning people could write anything they wanted.

These questions were:

- What issues do you care about? The issues you think society needs to address, whether in Torbay the UK or globally.
- Finally, please use this space to tell us any additional thoughts you have on the Greener Way for our Bay.

To understand these results to these questions, all individual responses to both questions were reviewed and categorised into themes. To ensure that these themes were truly representative of what people were saying, themes were not decided in advance, they were created from the data. This meant that to begin with, there were lots of themes. Using this method, the most popular themes from the responses emerge. The number of responses to a theme was then counted to create a numeric

value that can be used to show the results. For accuracy, prior to this publication, themes have been re-checked for consistency.

Within all three surveys there were two opportunities to provide free text answers, meaning people could write anything they wanted.

These questions were:

- What issues do you care about? The issues you think society needs to address, whether in Torbay the UK or globally.
- Finally, please use this space to tell us any additional thoughts you have on the Greener Way for our Bay.

Results – What issues do you care about?

All surveys asked:

- What issues do you care about?

91% of people who filled out the survey responded to this question.

The top ten themes that emerge were:

1. Environmental Issues, including climate change, protecting the natural environment, and taking action on these. (504)
2. Issues of social equity, such as homelessness, inequality, the housing crisis, and poverty (199)
3. Improving and maintaining our towns and roads and keeping them clean (136)
4. Improving public service and the welfare State including the NHS (107)
5. Law and order (101)
6. Values such as kindness, honesty, justice, and freedom (100)
7. Helping other people, such as the homeless, young people or those with disabilities. (88)
8. Economy (71)
9. Community engagement and community green space (70)
10. National and international politics (52)

Results – Additional thoughts on the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan

All surveys asked:

- Tell us any additional thoughts you have on the Greener Way For Our Bay Framework and Action Plan

70% of people who filled out the survey responded to this question.

The most common themes that emerged fell into three broad categories:

1. 42% were supportive of things that were already in the plan
2. 17% were making suggestions about things that they felt were missing from the plan
3. 41% were concerns about the plan, such as not enough is being done to tackle climate change or that climate change is a natural event and the plan is not needed

These three categories of responses were further broken down into sub-themes to show more detail about what people had to say. The next section looks at the sub-themes in each of these categories in turn by:

- summarising the most common responses
- Providing example of such responses
- Providing and overarching response to the theme from the TCP
- Outlining any actions taken by the TCP to address the issues raised

Results - Support Category

Comments were placed in the support category if they were endorsing or suggesting things that were already in the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan. The top ten most popular support themes where:

1. The plan needs more communication/exposure/buy in (72)
2. A just and fair transition with financial support needed (54)
3. Prioritise cycling and walking (52)
4. Improve public transport (50)
5. Look after our blue and green environment (47)
6. General support for the plan (46)
7. Support for energy saving in buildings especially new builds (29)
8. Systemic planning required (23)
9. Increase and promote recycling (23)
10. Develop or increase communal Green Spaces (20)

1. The plan needs more communication/exposure/buy in

The most common theme, by quite a margin was people talking about the importance of clear, frequent, and honest communication and the need to increase community buy in. People told us we need to do better at communicating and listening:

All decisions must include public consultation and transparency. Residents must know and understand what is planned, when it will happen and why it's being undertaken.

Honesty is required about the challenges and changes needed.

Very important to continue to involve communities and answer people's concerns

Some people felt

The public have not been consulted.

Others felt more effort was needed to spread the message to all sectors of society:

Much more needs to be done to engage the masses; posters, billboards, adverts in papers, large events.

Children need to be involved as children starting school now will be 30 for the best version of Torbay.

We need a strong social media presence consistently putting across positive messages. Go to where communities are, rather than where we would like them to be.

The TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments. The Torbay Climate Partnership is committed to community engagement. The creation of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan has involved several layers of public engagement. It began with ‘Climate Conversations’ with residents in 2022, and a questionnaire for local businesses. There have also been two public consultations, the last of which lasted 5 months and connected with nearly 2000 residents. However, the Torbay Climate Partnership is aware of the continued need for clear and regular communication. The Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan contains several actions around engaging businesses (Actions 6, 7 and 23) young people (Action 26) and the wider public (Action 1, 4, 18, 19, 20, 25) about both mitigation and adaptation to climate change. For example, Action 18 is about establishing a community repair café, Action 19 aims to develop local community based growing projects and Action 20 involves Local Motion bidding to make Torbay a Sustainable Food Place. Action 24 is a commitment to create more local community projects and groups, Action 25 is about working with partners to tell positive stories of action happening across Torbay and Action 28 acknowledges the need to review best practice innovative ways to encourage (but not enforce) behaviour change.”

Actions taken:

In response to these comments, the TCP have:

- Added a new action to the plan to ensure that all local campaigns are reached by all.
- Added a range of new community-based actions on local food and young person focussed climate action programmes.
- Added a monitoring progress section back into the plan to promote accountability and transparency.

2. A just and fair transition with financial support needed

The second most popular theme in the support category was about the need to support residents with the financial costs of the changes that need to happen. Many people told us there needed to be a just transition so that everyone was able to make changes. In this theme people were concerned that the most vulnerable in society would not receive the help they needed, or that actions taken would only benefit the well off, or that families and households who may not be considered vulnerable but who were nevertheless struggling financially would miss out on help. You told us you wanted to see more:

Financial support for those working poor to enable changes to be made commensurate with need.

If this happens, it will be better for the planet. I am afraid a lot of people locally do not have the money to change.

Roll out of affordable renewable energy sources to working families that own their homes

Social inequality is at the heart of climate change so unless this is tackled, progress is going to be painfully slow, and we don't have the time!

Need a fair and just transition

Proper funding and support to enable people to implement change in their homes, businesses and workplaces. Currently going green is a privilege for the well off and an increasing burden for the less wealthy.

Climate change, as we can see by the huge number of private jets the global criminal class took to COP 23, is nothing more than a massive wealth transfer.

It's to tax the poor. The wealthy will still fly, etc

The TCP response:

“Thank you for all your comments, your concerns have been noted. Torbay Council and the Torbay Climate Partnership acknowledge that it will take sustained commitment and work from all partners, and the public to effectively implement this plan. Action 29 of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan acknowledges the need to explore a broad range of finance models to help accelerate climate action from both public and private sources. Every effort has been made to ensure delivery partners are available to make the plan achievable and to share the financial load. Please be assured that The Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan has developed an impact assessment to make sure that actions do not impact negatively on residents of Torbay. Please contact Exeter Community Energy [HERE](#) for energy saving advice and assistance.”

Actions taken:

In response to these comments, we have:

- Made explicit references to who's document the Greener Way for our Bay is and how the Torbay Climate Partnership works so that people can be assured that where funding is available it will be sought across the public, private sectors and central government.

3. Prioritise cycling and walking over cars

The third most common theme was in support of active travel. People told us they wanted us to:

Massively encourage cycling - with the greater availability of e-bikes, hills are no longer a problem. Cycling is not only sustainable, but provides massive health benefits, and a healthier population is more productive and less of a drain on the public purse.

Better provision for cycling, walking and bus routes, so it is not necessary to own a car.

More provision for cycling. Electric bike scheme, E scooter scheme. dedicated joined up cycle network that stretches to all parts of the bay

They were also concerned about safety. People said:

Any measures that may make walking or cycling safer in the bay are very welcome.

Cycle lanes need to be bigger and prioritised, widen pavements to slow traffic and give more space for pedestrians.

Prioritise cycling and walking over cars.

The TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments. Research from Exeter University shows that transport is the second largest cause of Greenhouse Gas emissions (GHG) in the Bay (28%) after buildings (39%). The Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan aims to tackle this by working with partners to improve active travel options. Measures include a community electric bike hire clubs and the development of a new long-term plan for local travel. Please see Actions 9-16 of the plan for more details. The Council also have a long-term plan for improving walking and cycling in the Bay, the Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan. You can find it [HERE](#). Torbay on the Move works with adults and children, to promote safe active travel including access to cycle proficiency training. You can find out more [HERE](#). All relevant comments will be fed into the development considerations of the Local Transport Plan. **Please also be aware that the Local Transport Plan is out for consultation in October 2024.**”

Actions taken:

In response to these comments, the TCP have:

- Passed all comments on to the transport department at Torbay Council so they can be fed into the development considerations of the Local Transport Plan
- To continue deliver these actions and help address safety concerns, invited a representative of a 'Torbay on the Move' to join the Torbay Climate Partnership
- Invited a representative of a community cycling group to join the Torbay Climate Partnership

4. Improve public transport and reduce cars

Closely behind active travel, people were also keen to see improvements to public transport and a reduction in cars on the road and parked on the pavement. You told us you would like to see:

Electric affordable and accessible public transport to be implemented with multiple service routes and times.

Less cars, more green spaces, free public transport

Decent cheap bus service.

Push for 20mph as the default speed limit.

GET THEM TRAMS BACK!

Some felt there was

Extremely poor public transport at present.

Too many cars - streets are like parking lots.

The TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments. Research from Exeter University shows that transport is the second largest cause of GHG emissions in the Bay (28%) after buildings (39%). The Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and action plan aims to tackle this by working with partners to improve public transport. Measures include an affordable One Ticket option for all bus travel, community electric car hire clubs and the development of a new long-term plan for local travel. Please see Actions 9-16 of the plan for more details. All relevant comments will be fed into the development considerations of the Local Transport Plan. **Please also be aware that the Local Transport Plan is out for consultation in October 2024.** Although we understand the public desire to reinstate our traditional trams, financial and space constraints, make this an unlikely proposition in the short term.”

Actions taken:

In response to these comments, the TCP have:

- Passed all comments on to the transport department at Torbay Council so they can be fed into the development considerations of the new Local Transport Plan

5. Look after our blue and green environment

The fifth most popular theme in the support category was around the importance of looking after our green and blue natural spaces. People told us they wanted to see a greater focus on the needs of the natural environment. People told us:

Real green should prioritise the health of our rivers and sea

Plant more trees in the bay thousands

Encourage more Biodiversity.

More trees, woods, green areas, wild flowers and less grass cutting, to help & encourage wildlife & bees & for wellbeing.

Stop chopping down our trees!

The TCP response:

“Thank you for all your comments. Action 21 of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action plan involves the creation of a new plan to restore and protect nature. Action 22 is about working with the Marine Forum, Wild Planet Trust and other partners to protect our local sea grass. All comments will be carried forward to the nature plan. SWISCo and Torbay Council have carried out extensive surveying of tree cover in Torbay using innovative software called i-tree. You can access the latest report [HERE](#). The findings show that in 2022 Torbay had 458,800 trees which cover 18.2% of the area. SWISCo are aware of the advantages of planting trees for biodiversity and habitat creation, however, new trees also have to be capable of adapting to a changing climate. Using the context specific data collected through i-tree, SWISCo can now take all this into account, to ensure that the most appropriate trees are selected for each site and end-of-life trees are removed. You may be interested to know that the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) mapping has recently been updated by Natural England. Torbay now has 5 new areas of designated Ancient Woodland across Torbay. Ancient woodland and veteran trees are classified as irreplaceable habitats that are therefore strongly protected.”

Actions taken:

In response to these comments:

- All relevant comments will be fed into the development considerations of the upcoming Nature Plan
- Southwest Water to be invited onto the TCP to explore ways to increase water saving advice as part of the Action Plan

6. General support for the plan

The next most popular theme was expressions of support for the plan. People told us they approved and were happy to hear that action was being taken:

Excellent idea which needs to be carried through.

This sounds like a great project and makes me feel happy that something is being done.

I think it's a great idea and will hopefully be a successful way to bring the residents of Torbay together in the future as well as improving the bay.

I really love the idea and hope that it all works out.

I think that Torbay Council is doing an excellent job and should continue to care for and look after our environment.

I am delighted that there is a plan and will look forward to hearing about it being implemented over time.

This plan is needed to enable the area to be adaptable and resilient to the effects of climate change and to help support our push to a more sustainable future.

Changing the mindset of us humans takes time, you are doing a great job of helping people realise the seriousness of climate change. Your heads up campaign will help raise awareness even more - thank you.

This work needs to be prioritised so that it has sufficient resources to happen very quickly. The impacts of the climate and ecological emergency will increase in inverse proportion to the actions we take. We need to focus on the vision that Torbay will be a better place to live, for everyone, once these changes have been made.

I support this plan.

The TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments. Your support is greatly appreciated.”

Actions taken:

In response to these comments, we have not made any specific changes.

7. Support for environmental measures in buildings especially new buildings

The seventh most popular theme was about improving sustainability within the built environment, particularly new buildings. People told us:

Use the planning system to require the installation of solar panels on all new builds and extensions, both domestic and commercial

New houses should have mandatory photovoltaic cells and gardens/drives that are environmentally sound with regard to water run off and vegetation.

bird and bat boxes automatically built into new builds

Torbay Council needs to insist that developers stop cramming houses into new housing estates and leave space for both cyclists and vehicles.

You have many listed building in Torbay who are not being allowed to make use of solar panels on roofs and in garden. Heat pumps do not work in these building as double glazed glass isn't allowed. The planning system needs to have a caveat as Chelsea and Kensington does with clear guidelines to allow these carbon saving measures to be applied without clogging up the planning system

Why is there not a requirement for all new builds to be 0 carbon? ie no gas boilers, well insulated, heat pumps, solar panels, FSC timber framing.

The TCP response:

“Thank you for all your comments, your suggestions have been noted. Research from Exeter University shows that buildings are the largest cause of GHG emission in the Bay (39%). Action 2 - 4 of The Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan are about increasing energy efficiency in existing buildings in the Bay. Action 5, subject to government legislation, commits Torbay Council to strengthening rules required to make developments net zero carbon with EV charging points.”

Actions taken:

In response to these comments, we have:

- Added a” action led by Torbay Council, to develop new planning guidance on refurbishing homes and buildings, including historic buildings.

8. Systemic planning

The next most common theme in the support category was about the need to plan systemically in response to climate change. People said things like:

Put nature-based solutions to climate change at the heart of all decision making in the Bay

ALL aspects should be considered

Embed Sustainability into every policy, commissioning of services

Put the natural world first when considering any changes, improvements, etc

Make self-sufficiency and regenerative. approaches the easiest options.

I think it's important to ensure that new homes, business premises and public facilities (schools, GP surgeries, etc) are located in such a way as to limit the need to travel, increase the feasibility of travelling by foot or bicycle, and improve the financial viability of public transport by enabling shorter and multi-directional movement within the public transport network.

Others were concerned that certain aspects were not being considered:

It all comes out of the UN and is communism by stealth. It's all backed by elite bankers who always lie and manipulate for their own gain and the green solution is incredibly toxic to the environment.

Full implications to people and their wellbeing have not been considered

The TCP response:

“Thank you for all your comments, your concerns and suggestions have been noted. The Torbay Climate Partnership was developed to ensure we have a wide range of voices and perspectives involved in strategic planning. Please be assured that The Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan is developing alongside a full impact assessment to make sure that appropriate adaptations (including funding) are made for all residents of Torbay, and no harm is caused where possible. Alongside the Greener Way for our Bay Framework and Action Plan, Torbay Council is also working on an internal plan to achieve Net Zero. This includes carbon literacy training and actions to increase awareness of climate change throughout the council. The council has also just amended its Climate Impact Assessment Tool to reflect recent legal duties regarding biodiversity and to strengthen how the tool is used to support decision making. This tool will continue to be strengthened in line with national policy.”

Actions taken:

In response to these comments:

- A monitoring progress section has been reintroduced to promote accountability and transparency.

9. Increase and promote reduce, reuse, recycling

The next most common theme in the support category was about waste. People said:

I believe the best start to achieving net zero is reducing everything we use and consume.

More recycling bins in every town, beaches, parks and public areas.

Recycling bins around the bay to help recycle.

Enforcement of household waste recycling

I was very saddened when I took a piece of furniture to the recycling centre only to be told to put it in the skip with all the waste wood

Not enough practical actions such as bins, recycling of soft plastic etc

Why don't we have comingled recycling?

We need to improve our recycling (Wrapping paper, soft plastic, ink cartridges should all be recycled)

We need adequate recycling/rubbish collection receptacles in places like Ellacombe where lots of residents only put out bin liners as they lose the rubbish sacks as there is nothing to attach them to. Plus encouraging residents to put their nets on the recycling bins (or order more), as their rubbish flies away in the wind.

The TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments and suggestions. Action 17 of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan includes partners SWISCo to help residents to reduce waste and increasing recycling. SWISCo have recently redesigned their box nets, to increase usage and reduce litter. Unfortunately, community skips are being removed from carparks due to vandalism, including arson, however, SWISCO are actively looking at ways to increase the variety of items that can be recycled through curb side collections. New recycling boxes can be requested [HERE](#). Comments suggesting more public recycling bins were passed on and SWISCO representatives explained that currently, these bins have proved ineffective because most of the collections are contaminated with nonrecyclable material. SWISCO are aware that there is work to be done to raise awareness and they are actively seeking innovative solutions. You may be interested to know that SWISCO has litter pickers and equipment available for community organisation litter picks. You can find out more [HERE](#). Action 18 of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan is about establishing a community repair café” It should also be noted that to achieve the national recycling target in the Action Plan more support will be needed from central government. Action 30 includes lobbying central government

Actions taken:

No further action is being taken in response to these comments.

10. Develop or increase communal Green Spaces

People also told us they were keen to see more public green spaces and communal land being used to support nature. People said they wanted:

Set up groups of locals to care for local green spaces including turning grass verges into habitat's (so that they become advertisements for what we can do in our gardens)

“Create new pocket parks”

*we need long-term thriving neighbourhoods that promote active healthy lifestyles
don't close down play areas - these areas are vital breathing space for us and wildlife
Our high streets need to be greener and cleaner.*

Improved green space access for all.

The TCP response:

The Torbay Climate Partnership would like to acknowledge these ideas and respond:

“Thank you all for your comments, your suggestions have been noted. The Torbay Climate Partnership appreciates the need for community green spaces and growing spaces. Action 19 is about the creation of more local community based growing projects. Action 21 involves the creation of a new plan to restore and protect nature. Your comments will be fed into the development considerations of the new Nature Plan.”

Actions taken:

In response to these comments:

- All relevant comments will be fed into the development considerations of the upcoming Nature Plan.

Results - Suggestion Category

Comments were placed in the suggestion category if they were endorsing or suggesting things that were not currently covered in the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan. Overall there were less of these comments. The top five most popular suggestions were:

1. To deal with litter and clean up the area (33)
2. To tackle environmental pollution (29)
3. To stop building, especially on green spaces (23)
4. To focus on the town centre (22)
5. To improve traffic flow, roads and parking (19)

1. To deal with litter and clean up the area

The most popular topic in the suggestions category was about litter and cleanliness. People said they wanted:

Rubbish collection points along the coastline encourage others to use a picker when going for a walk along the beach.

Use deterrents for littering that work and generally encourage pride.

Anything the council can do to promote a cleaner future would be great

Dog poop is a big problem on streets, in parks, on the beaches.

Keep the area clean, tidy and pleasant to look at

More rubbish bins, emptied more regularly

The TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments. Whilst dealing with litter is outside the scope of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan (as this plan is about accelerating local action to tackle climate change only), SWISCO is a partner of the Torbay Climate Partnership and is working hard to reduce litter in the bay. Each day 40-55 people empty a minimum of 860 bins, including all dog waste bins daily. If you do still find a problem with litter, dog waste, graffiti or fly tipping you can report it directly to SWISCO [HERE](#). They will then send the closest team to the area to deal with it. Your comments have been passed on to SWISCO.”

Actions taken:

As action is already happening no further action is being taken in response to these comments.

2. To tackle environmental pollution and reduce waste

The second most common suggestion was around the need to tackle environmental pollution. Some were also concerned about pollution related to green technology.

People said:

Work on pollution

there are other forms of pollution that we need to stop like putting chemicals etc into the sea,

If the powers that be were actually concerned about our health, they would stop the poisonous chemtrails for a start

Real green should be about reducing genuine pollutants such as plastics, heavy metals, industrial waste, pesticides., synthetic chemicals.

Reduce pollution and stop discharging sewage into rivers and the sea

Looking after our planet Doesn't Mean banning Fossil Fuels or Irresponsible mining & chemical pollution to make EV Batteries

The TCP response:

“Thank you for all your comments, your concerns and suggestions have been noted. Though the Torbay Climate Partnership agree that it is vitally important, tackling pollution is outside of the scope of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan. The Partnership also acknowledged that mining associated to the manufacturing of electric vehicles can cause considerable pollution and environmental harm. However, great efforts are being made to reduce the environmental impacts of electric vehicles, and over their whole lifecycle they still have significant benefits for the environment and air quality.

Regarding pollution on our beaches, South West Water and the Environment Agency are part of BeachWise, a coastal community partnership formed to promote safe enjoyment of our region's beautiful beaches and clean bathing waters. You can find more information [HERE](#). More information on sewage discharge and efforts to reduce this are [HERE](#).

Actions taken:

As action is already happening no further action is being taken in response to these comments.

However, South West Water will be invited to join the TCP.

3. To stop building, especially on green spaces

The third most common theme in the suggestions category was a plea to stop building especially on green spaces. People said:

Don't build on urban green spaces that hold public use value, formal or informal

There should be no more outward expansion of Torbay

No more building of houses or factories.

Stop new building to protect our green belts.

We need to lobby government to ensure that we have powers locally to insist on brownfield over green spaces

I am very concerned about increasing house building without the infrastructure to support it - from water and sewage , to jobs , health care and education .

Block the hideous overdevelopment of soulless housing

The TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments, your concerns and suggestions have been noted. Planning rules around house building are outside of the scope of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan and mainly covered through Torbay’s Local Plan ([HERE](#)). The Government sets housing targets for each local planning authority (Torbay Council) using a formula called the Standard Method. This response is from Torbay Council who are a member of the TCP. Torbay’s housing requirement based on the Standard Method is for around 600 new homes per year¹. However, due to the lower number of housing completions in recent years, an additional buffer of 20% is required, meaning that Torbay’s housing requirement is for around 720 new homes per year. Notwithstanding that local planning authorities are required by Government to plan for new housing growth, a sufficient supply of new housing is important in ensuring that local people can access good quality homes that are affordable on local incomes, and that places have a balanced demographic composition with enough working age people including young families.

The Torbay Local Plan and the three Neighbourhood Plans allocate certain areas of Torbay (known as Future Growth Areas) for new housing development along with supporting infrastructure, employment land and open space (see Policies SS2 Future Growth Areas and SS9 Green Infrastructure of the Local Plan). The Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plans all have as a key focus the regeneration of urban areas and the use of brownfield land for new housing and jobs (see Policies SS5 Employment Space and SS12 Housing of the Local Plan). Over the Local Plan period from 2012/13 to 2022/23, 64.2% of the new housing in Torbay has been provided on brownfield land. The Council is currently working on updating the Torbay Local Plan, and the next Local Plan will continue to have a strong focus on brownfield development and urban regeneration. Further public consultations on the next local plan will be carried during 2024/25 and 2025/26.

There are however some benefits in allowing some greenfield development in carefully planned areas. Greenfield development consistently provides higher proportions of affordable housing and developer contributions towards new infrastructure than brownfield development where building costs are typically higher. New greenfield development also provides an opportunity for homes with higher standards of energy efficiency, good active travel and public transport links, well planned public open spaces, and biodiversity net gain.

Local planning authorities are required by Government to grant sufficient planning permissions for five years’ worth of new housing (called a ‘five year housing land supply’). Given that Torbay currently only has a 2.17 year housing land supply, the ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ applies to applications for new housing, where considerable weight needs to be given to the benefits of new

¹ This has recently been changed in light of the new Government’s housing target. It now proposes just under 1000 homes need to build per year. However, this is subject to exceptional circumstances being made to justify lower annual build rates.

housing delivery. Applications for new housing need to be considered according to a 'tilted balance', and the Council needs to have very clear reasons in order to be able to refuse new housing."

Actions taken:

Given Torbay Council is currently working on updating the Torbay Local Plan, and the next Local Plan will continue to have a strong focus on brownfield development and urban regeneration, no further action is being taken in response to these comments.

4. Focus on the town centre

The next most common theme in the suggestions category was about action that should be taken to improve the town centres in the Bay. People said:

Invest in the deprivation areas of Torbay and TQ town centre to encourage community pride and togetherness to face the anxiety that climate change brings for everyone who is struggling financially, emotionally and through isolation.

There is no point in farting about with "green" if people can't afford to work, live and play at a reasonable cost.

Sort out the Town Centre and everything else will follow as the local economy will benefit exponentially.

Encourage local entrepreneurs to fill empty shops, creating a vibrant, independent shopping experience.

Also tackling the crime in Torbay and cleaning up the streets. It's currently shameful. This then has detrimental effects on local businesses as no one wants to venture into these areas.

Getting a high street where people want to shop, gambling shops should not be in the high street.

TCP Response:

"Thank you all for your comments. Whilst tackling crime and economic regeneration are outside of the scope of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan, you can find more information on TCP partner, Torbay Council's current regeneration plans, see [HERE](#). You can find the Councils Local Plan [HERE](#)."

Actions taken:

No further action is being taken in response to these comments.

5. To improve traffic flow, roads and parking

The fifth theme in the suggestions category was about roads. People said:

Fix our roads.

Sort the traffic, live in Brixham spend hours per day in traffic.

We are stuck with motor traffic for at least another 10 years, better planning is required for the free uninterrupted and efficient flow of traffic in order to preserve our environment.

Reduction in parking costs to encourage economic growth.

Increase parking charges for non-residents.

THE ROADS/PARKING IS AWFUL. PEOPLE PARK ON JUNCTIONS, VISIBILITY IS POOR. ROADS ARE LITTERED WITH WASTE/LEAVES. STREET CLEANING CAN'T HAPPEN BECAUSE OF CONGESTION.

Stop demonising car drivers, stop making driving and parking more difficult

Work on new road surfacing scheme based on Netherlands to lead the way in recycling plastics to provide road surface - which might go some way to avoiding the embarrassment of potholes we have.

If you start putting cycle lanes in it slows down traffic, causes traffic jams and doesn't help the working class

TCP Response:

“Thank you all for your comments and suggestions. Your concerns have been noted. Whilst tackling traffic flow and parking is outside of the scope of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan, research from Exeter University shows that transport is the second largest cause of Greenhouse Gas emissions in the Bay (28%) after buildings (39%). The Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and action plan aims to tackle this by working with partners to improve public transport and active travel options. Measures include the development of a new long-term plan for local travel. Your comments will be fed into the development considerations of the new Local Transport Plan being developed by the TCP’s partner Torbay Council. Concerns around road safety have been noted. We are aware that, tragically in 2022 pedestrians were involved in nearly 40% of serious road traffic accidents. You can find more information [HERE](#). Please be assured that partners across Devon and Cornwall are tackling this important problem. You can find out what we are doing [HERE](#).”

Actions taken:

In response to these comments, the TCP have:

- Passed all comments on to the transport department at Torbay Council so they can be fed into the development considerations of the new Local Transport Plan

Results - Concerns Category

Comments were placed in the concerns category if they were raising an issue that people were worried about in relation to the Greener Way for our Bay Framework and Action Plan. The top ten most common themes in the concern category where:

1. Doubt in the plan/the council/the government commitment (90)
2. Climate Change is natural (60)
3. Not enough action is being taken (58)
4. A request that we examine/follow the science (44)
5. Cost Concerns (38)
6. Climate Change is a hoax (34)
7. Concerns about electric vehicles (32)
8. CO2 is needed by plants (27)
9. Plan is a waste of money (26)
10. Freedom Concerns (21)

1. Doubt in the plan/the council/the government commitment

The concern most frequently expressed was doubt in the plan, the council or the likelihood progress being made. People said:

I think the 10 actions (and the action plan) read more like objectives. They all need backing up with specific and time based actions with clear measurable outcomes. Without that a Green Way may become meaningless in a few years, consequently devalued and ultimately replaced or abandoned.

Action is key - not money wasting ideas that don't work or never happen

Stop paying for pointless surveys and studies, put the money into action. We do not need more reports.

I disagree with the premise of a climate partnership, there is no climate emergency. Stop pointless job creation in the council.

Businesses are already working to reduce energy consumption to achieve a reasonable rate of return on investment. They don't need overpaid council employees telling them how to turn off the lights.

Just like the liar politicians said 2 weeks to flatten the curve. All lies and they haven't got anything right yet.

I am worried that the main council and other groups (Tourism BID, local businesses and our MPs) do not feel invested in the need to take substantial action, therefore Partnership and council are fearful of the anti-climate change trolls and lobby groups.

This is a useless survey that will mostly be answered by sycophants and woke idiots.

An accountable council that is audited on spending.

Independent committee needed to oversee councils' proposals and allocation of funding.

TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments. Your concerns are noted. Torbay Council and the Torbay Climate Partnership acknowledge that it will take commitment and work from all partners, and the public to effectively implement this plan and that we are only able to influence our local area. Alongside the Greener Way for our Bay Framework and Action Plan, Torbay Council is also working on an internal plan to achieve Net Zero. This includes carbon literacy training and actions to increase awareness of climate change throughout the council. The council has also just amended its Climate Impact Assessment Tool to reflect recent legal duties regarding biodiversity and to strengthen how the tool is used already to support decision making. This tool will continue to be strengthened in line with national policy.

In addition, all actions within the action plan are deemed deliverable, and where funding is required to deliver the actions, this is included as part of the action.

The TCP also amended the Torbay Climate Emergency Action Plan (TCEAP) to try and address some concerns over deliverability. This already reflected in the GWFOB FAP. These changes included:

- In light of concerns about speed, affordability/costs and speed of transition, the 2030 carbon neutral target within the TCEAP has been amended to now be in line with national 2050 net zero targets. This is to avoid any additional costs that could be incurred by moving faster than central government and without their financial support. “

Actions taken:

In response to these comments, the TCP have:

- A new action has been added to the GWFOB FAP to ensure that all local campaigns are reached by all.
- A monitoring and progress section has been added back into the plan to promote accountability and transparency.
- Explicit references has been made to who's document this is and the governance of it in order to promote trust.

2. Climate Change is a natural

The second most frequent concern was that Climate Change was a naturally occurring event and that the Torbay Climate Partnership were over reaching People said:

Man made climate change does not exist. Trying to change the weather is like trying to hold back the tide.

mother earth has been changing for billions of years

It's called the weather.

Many scientists believe this is a natural event

We live on a dynamic planet and the climate has and always will change.

it happens every 300 years

I believe in Climate Change. But, it's been going on since the birth of the planet! We should be taking sensible steps to use our resources wisely, but not be playing King Canute.

There is no climate emergency.

Many eminent scientists, eg, Clintel and the CO2 coalition, disagree that there is a climate emergency.

TCP response:

“Thank you for all your comments. Your concerns are noted. It is acknowledged that the planet has gone through warming and cooling cycles in the past. The TCP and Torbay Council has developed a statement on why it believes climate change is important and has been adequately proven to be related to anthropogenic carbon emissions. It can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions on [this](#) page.”

Actions taken

No further action is being taken in response to these comments.

3. Not enough action is being taken

The next most frequent concern was that not enough action was being taken and without adequate urgency. People said:

I'm Torbay (and nationally) we need to take climate change much more seriously not just give it a nod.

There's a long way to go to make the make the bay more sustainable and less dependent on private vehicles.

There are so many lies being spread online and by MSM which need to be challenged.

What we need to do is much more profound

Torbay is 30 years behind as is the rest of the world.

You haven't done enough. I want you to put 75% of your budget that you're not using on employees and spend it on the climate.

Please get on with it. This is 20 years late. An inconvenient truth is 20 years old

We need the overt support of the likes of our MPs and councillors.

What we need to do is much more profound

We can make things happen now! Not in 2050!

TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments. Your support is appreciated and your frustration at the speed of action is acknowledged. The new target date was suggested considering recent evidence from the University of Exeter, due to concern about deliverability. Torbay Council and the Torbay Climate Partnership acknowledge that it will take sustained commitment and work from all partners, and the public to effectively implement this plan. Every effort has been made to ensure delivery partners are available to make the plan achievable.”

Actions taken:

A monitoring progress section has been added back into the plan to promote accountability and transparency.

4. A request that we examine/follow the science

The fourth theme in the concerns category was people saying they felt that the science of climate change was uncertain. People said:

Human effects on climate is only a hypothesis and not settled consensus science

Honesty is required about the challenges and changes need to be driven by science and not manipulation of data.

There was no real scientific debate about covid nor we have any unbiased scientific debate regarding climate change.

The public have only received one side of the climate change debate.

The theory of man made climate change is very weak and is well countered by significant scientific evidence.

Man-made climate change is unscientific

I have huge concerns that only one perspective, that of the IPCC is being considered here. There are many contrasting perspectives that are not being listened too or discussed.

There is no evidence that humans affect climate by carbon to any significant amount.

TCP response:

“Thank you for all your comments. Your concerns are noted. A 2021 study concluded that over 99% of scientific papers agree on the human cause of climate change. You can read it [HERE](#). This does not exclude the possibility that others disagree. The TCP and Torbay Council has developed a statement on why it believes climate change is important and has been adequately proven to be related to anthropogenic carbon emissions. It can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions on [this](#) page.”

Actions taken

No further action is being taken in response to these comments.

5. Cost Concerns

The fifth theme in the concerns category was comments relating to the cost of climate action. People said:

Seek value for money.

Companies should provide funding.

The biggest expense by far is council tax it's not, heat or eat, it's council tax and eat, heat I am scared of the cost.

Stop paying for pointless surveys and studies, put the money into action.

Spend money in 2024 not on climate change officers

Any monies allocated to CO2 reduction should be spent on repairing the road surfaces

Provide data that drives business case, full planning, budget, resourcing, risks and issues, delivery, implementation, and cost benefits.

Use this money instead to help those with mental health

The whole green agenda is just spaffing money away while fundamental infrastructure is left to crumble.

Ensure money is not wasted on schemes when we have so many people who need more financial help

The cost of this will outweigh the benefits.

TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments, your concerns have been noted. Action 28 of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plans acknowledges the need to explore a broad range of finance models to help accelerate climate action from both public and private sources.”

Action taken:

No further action is being taken in response to these comments.

6. Climate Change is hoax

The next most common theme in the concerns category was people saying they did not believe in Climate Change. They said:

It is all a scam and should be scrapped completely

It all comes out of the UN and is communism by stealth. It's all backed by elite bankers who always lie and manipulate for their own gain

It is easily verified that the theory arises from Think Tanks pay rolled by Global institutions such as the WEF, the UN, and the politicised aspect of the IPCC.

We are being constantly lied to keep us in fear and submission.

An utterly stupid idea that will improve nothing. CO2 does not control climate.

Green ideas are just a money grab.

I believe Net Zero is a ploy to curtail our freedoms and our rights. I believe many of our politicians are betraying the people and are serving the WEF agenda

It's all a scam to control people and destroy their freedoms. Council spending our money on ridiculous schemes erecting dangerous 5G masts and LED lighting instead of repairing potholes and looking after public buildings

It can be proved that climate change does not exist.

TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments, your concerns have been noted. A 2021 study concluded that over 99% of scientific papers agree on the human cause of climate change. You can read it [HERE](#). This does not exclude the possibility that others disagree. The Council has developed a statement on why it believes climate change is important and has been adequately proven to be related to anthropogenic carbon emissions. See [HERE](#). Please be assured that The Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan is developing alongside a full impact assessment to

make sure that actions are beneficial all residents of Torbay, and no harm is caused. Every effort has been made to be transparent and to ensure delivery partners are available to make the plan achievable. In response to concerns about accountability, clearer details on ownership, governance and progress monitoring have been added into the new version of the Greener Way for Our Bay document.”

Actions taken:

In response to these comments, the TCP have:

- A monitoring and progress section has been added back into the plan to promote accountability and transparency.
- Explicit references have been made to who's document this is and the governance of it in order to promote trust.

7. Concerns about electric vehicles

The seventh most common theme in the concerns category was worries about electric vehicles. People said:

Battery operated vehicles ARE NOT CLEAN. Do you not realise that mining is one of the most polluting industries in the world?

Electric vehicles are not sustainable, they are expensive to buy and run, the batteries do not last, and battery production is not regulated and the working conditions in those countries are unsafe.

Electric cars are dangerous

Replacing petrol or diesel vehicles with electric ones will not encourage active transport.

My biggest concern is it's not safe to walk or cycle. When walking there's the risk of electric scooters and bikes on the pavements which is dangerous

By zero emission I assume you mean electric buses. This is not the future. If we are being asked to cut of electricity usage in a house, how is the country going to cope with all this ridiculous extra usage.

The electric car is useless for long journeys. Tourists will not be arriving in them

Electric cars don't pay Road Tax yet the increased weight of the car is ruining our roads.

There are millions of spent electric vehicles sat in fields overseas wasting away, seeping chemicals into the ground. How will all of this be recycled

TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments, your concerns have been noted. According to research, an electric vehicle over its whole lifetime (from manufacturing, use and through to disposal) creates less greenhouse gas emissions than a traditional combustion engine. Any greenhouse gas emissions generated through the charging of the electric vehicles are offset overtime as a result of the lower emissions per kilometre used when driven. The carbon dioxide emissions used to power electric vehicles will also continue to decrease as our national electricity grid continues to generate more electricity from renewable and low carbon energy. This is evidenced in countries like Sweden, which creates most of its electricity through renewable energy sources, enabling an electric vehicle to further limit its Greenhouse Gas emissions over its lifetime. In the UK, this additional power required to charge electric vehicles is factored into national plans. 95 percent of Great Britain’s electricity is set to be low carbon by 2030 (Energy Security Strategy, UK Government 2022). The Torbay Climate Partnership acknowledged that all mining causes considerable pollution and environmental harm and that producing lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles uses more materials than producing traditional combustion engines. There are new initiatives being introduced by the UK Government to tackle this and limit the carbon footprint of extracting and refining lithium. For example, projects to explore mining lithium in Cornwall have received funding and investment. The Automotive Transformation Fund (ATF) is supporting several initiatives to develop lithium refineries within the UK, further shortening the processing of lithium. Ten gigafactories are set to be built within the UK to meet the demand for electric batteries, which by 2040, will each be producing 20 GWh per year of batteries. There is also consideration for the recycling and repurposing of ion-lithium batteries, for, for example, the storage of energy.”

Actions taken:

No further action is being taken in response to these comments.

8. Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) is needed

The next most common theme in the concerns category was to do with Carbon Dioxide (CO₂). People told us they were worried that reducing CO₂ would lead to harm. They told us:

The world needs carbon dioxide to grow things. No carbon dioxide, no food.

CO₂ is the gas of life and current levels of 0.04% it's actually low.

CO₂ and warming are beneficial. A green planet is a happy planet, CO₂ and warming are making the planet greener

There is absolutely nothing whatsoever green about demonising CO₂ as a pollutant! It is the gas of life, a plant food, and is fundamental to ALL life on earth for goodness sake.

CO₂ is not a "greenhouse gas": it is the food of plant life

Carbon is life and plant life consume carbon and make oxygen for us.

We cannot survive in a carbon neutral environment

If we omit CO₂ the plants and humans will die!

TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments, your concerns have been noted. It is also acknowledged that CO₂ is vital for life. Carbon is a primary component of all living organisms. Approximately 45–50% of all dry biomass consists of carbon. The carbon cycle is vital to life on earth and involves the movement of carbon between the atmosphere, oceans, land, and living organisms. Atmospheric CO₂ is captured by forests, soils, and ocean plants and algae during photosynthesis, transforming it into organic matter that animals then eat, to build their bodies. When animals exhale or plants and animals decompose or are burned, CO₂ is released back into the atmosphere. Climate is affected when the balance between the CO₂ in the atmosphere and the Carbon in plants and animals is disrupted. Net Zero does not aim to reduce CO₂ or Carbon to zero, it aims to reduce the amount of atmospheric CO₂ emitted by human activity (largely through burning fossil fuels, which are ancient plants and animals) to pre-industrial levels so that natural checks and balances (such as photosynthesis) can maintain our vital earth systems. The Council has developed a statement on why it believes climate change is important and has been adequately proven to be related to anthropogenic carbon emissions. It can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions on [this](#) page. Please be assured that The Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan is developing alongside a full impact assessment to make sure that actions are beneficial for all residents of Torbay.”

Actions taken:

No further action is being taken in response to these comments.

9. Waste of money

The next most common theme in the concerns category was people saying action on climate change was a waste of money:

It is immoral to spend so much time money and effort on trying to fix a non existent problem

Money wasted on the fake " green" agenda

Not needed, too expensive, paying lip service to people who have no scientific background. In short, PATHETIC!

There is so little that you intend to do that you're wasting taxpayers money.

There is a lot of hype involved and people and organisations are profiteering from it.

TCP response:

“Thank you all for your comments, your concerns have been noted. Action 28 of the Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plans acknowledges the need to explore a broad range of finance models to help accelerate climate action from both public and private sources. Research from University College London predicts that by 2100 global GDP could be 37% lower due to the effects of climate change. Such a drop would have devastating impacts on social stability. See [HERE](#) for more information. However, according to a recent London School of Economics report, although investing in the net zero transition could cost up to 2% of UK GDP, it is expected to have net benefits of up to 4% of UK GDP, due to co-benefits like improvements to health and economic growth. You can read the report [HERE](#). Therefore, the cost of acting on climate change is far less than the cost of not acting and is likely to convey significant benefits.”

Actions taken

No further action is being taken in response to these comments.

10. Freedom Concerns

The tenth most common theme in the concerns category was people saying they were worried about implications for their freedom:

I believe Net Zero is a ploy to curtail our freedoms and our rights.

Those meant to be representing those they should be serving need to be held to account and the press stranglehold on free speech has to be removed.

I do not wish to live in a world of surveillance and control

Concerns about restrictions on travel and freedom of movement.

TCP response

“Thank you for your comments, your concerns have been noted. Torbay Council and the Torbay Climate Partnership are guided by the latest scientific advice from Exeter University and the government. Please be assured that The Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan is developing alongside a full impact assessment to make sure that appropriate adaptations are made for all residents of Torbay. There are no plans to enforce actions. There is also no plan at a local or national level to restrict free movement.”

Actions taken

No further action is being taken in response to these comments.

What Three words would you use to describe your best version of Torbay

Aswell as the free text questions, all three surveys also asked:

- What three words would you use to describe your best version of the Torbay of 2050?

Tonic Creatives also asked people this question. From all these responses a word cloud was created. A word cloud is a visual tool that shows the most common words in a text, with more frequent words appearing larger. They are helpful for quickly identifying key themes or topics. This is the word cloud created:



The TCP response and actions taken:

As can be seen from the above, 'Clean', 'Green', 'More', 'Safe' and 'Sustainable' were the most popular comments for the best visions for Torbay.

Of these 'Clean' and 'Green' is covered through TCP partners SWISCo existing actions as explained above. 'More' has been addressed by working with TCP partners to add in additional actions such as:

- Added a new action to the plan to ensure that all local campaigns are reached by all.
- Added a range of new community-based actions on local food and young person focussed climate action programmes

- Led by Torbay Council, action added the development of new planning guidance on refurbishing homes and buildings, including historic buildings.
- Added a new action to ensure all local campaigns are reached by all.
- Explore a Torbay-wide buying scheme(s) for solar panels

All the actions within the Action Plan will help create a sustainable Torbay.