

**Heart of the South West Joint  
Committee (Please Note – all  
public meetings are taking place  
virtually until further notice.)**



**Friday 29 January 2021**

**12.00 pm Teams online meeting**

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA**

To: The Members of the Heart of the South West Joint Committee (Please Note – all public meetings are taking place virtually until further notice.)

We are now able to enclose the following information which was unavailable when the agenda was published:

Item 7	Coastal Communities Plan (Pages 3 - 42) To receive the Presentation and Agreement of the revised Coastal Communities Action Plan by Anne-Marie Bond and Alan Denby from Torbay Council.
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Published on 28 January 2021

Julian Gale, Democratic Services, Somerset County Council, County Hall Taunton, TA1 4DY

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## **Heart of the South West Coastal Productivity Plan**

Lead Officer: Anne-Marie Bond, Interim Chief Executive, Torbay Council

Author: Daniel Newman/ Alan Denby, Director of Economic Strategy

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1. The Heart of the South West (HotSW) Coastal Productivity Plan (CPP) was co-developed by coastal authorities and stakeholders across the HotSW geography. Within the framework of the HotSW Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and Productivity Strategy the CPP sets out the local context, issues, and solutions to address the productivity challenges faced by coastal areas. A previous draft was presented to Joint Committee (JC) in early 2020.
- 1.2. The economic impact of Covid-19 on coastal areas has been significant, and the underlying structural challenges remain. Evidence shows that coastal economies are amongst the hardest hit geographies and that Covid-19 has further amplified their structural weaknesses. This has been particularly evident through the extent of the impacts on the tourism and hospitality sector and the reliance on these sectors within coastal areas. In April 2020 around 84% of employees within the UK hospitality sector were furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme<sup>1</sup>, and it is projected that as much as 25-50% of the UK holiday accommodation stock could permanently close down in coastal communities as result of Covid-19<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.3. Changes in the government's policy agenda and announcements during the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) suggest that there is a greater focus on tackling geographic inequalities and levelling up 'left-behind' towns and cities, including coastal areas.
- 1.4. The draft CPP has been updated to reflect the extent of the economic impacts on coastal areas resulting from Covid-19 along with changes to national policy. Additional solutions have been included to address some of the shorter term challenges and greater alignment with our natural capital to deliver inclusive and sustainable growth.

### **2. Recommendation**

2.1. It is recommended that:

- The Joint Committee supports and endorses the publication of the Heart of the South West Coastal Productivity Plan
- A Coastal Group is established to support delivery of the actions within the Coastal Productivity Plan
- The Coastal Productivity Plan is used to lobby Government and direct future policy on coastal issues particularly in the design of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

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<sup>1</sup> UKHospitality Survey, April 2020

<sup>2</sup> Hotel Solutions, From Survival to Recovery, An Assessment of the Prospects for the UK Hotel & Visitor Accommodation Industry 2020-2022, May 2020

### **3. Reasons for recommendations**

- 3.1. Changes in the Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers, followed by the national election in December 2019 and then the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 have resulted in the levelling up agenda and tackling 'left behind' areas being pushed up the Government's policy priorities.
- 3.2. The scale of the economic impact from Covid-19 on coastal areas in particular, and the continuing restrictions demonstrate the need for targeted interventions to address both the short term economic challenges resulting from lockdown and the longer term structural issues which continue to hinder the economic growth potential of our coastal areas.
- 3.3. Adoption of the HotSW CPP is intended to enable HotSW to influence government policy and programme design of the UKSPF which is to target:
  - Places most in need across the UK, such as ex-industrial areas, deprived towns and rural and coastal communities
  - People most in need through bespoke employment and skills programmes that are tailored to local need
  - Local businesses
- 3.4. The CPP sets out the context, issues, and solutions for our coastal areas to address the levelling up agenda and drive inclusive growth. It should form part of the plans and strategies which sets the future direction of the HotSW's economy and should therefore be adopted as a locally-owned document.

### **4. Background**

- 4.1. In October 2018 a Coastal Economy Workshop took place with key partners from across the HotSW that had an interest in the coastal agenda. It was agreed that a coastal strategy be produced which aligned with the Productivity Strategy and LIS, and which emphasised the need for inclusive growth.
- 4.2. An initial draft of the CPP was presented to JC in July 2019. The CPP was supported by JC however feedback included the need for wider consultation and input into policy recommendations from the HotSW coastal authorities along with widening the geographical scope to include all of the HotSW coastal areas.
- 4.3. In November 2019 an updated version of the CPP was presented to Chief Executives' Executive Group where the recommendation for external support to further develop the CPP was approved. The group also recommended that a Coastal Communities Task Force be established as part of the work. They also noted that any projects or activities identified as a result of the development of the coastal work should be reflected in the HotSW Productivity Strategy Delivery Plan/ LIS Implementation Plan, and should form the basis of HotSW bids into future Coastal Communities Funding.
- 4.4. Following the Coastal Communities Task Force Workshop in January 2020 and engagement with partners from all the coastal authorities, a final version of the CPP was prepared to be presented to JC in March 2020 for sign-off, however the meeting was cancelled due to the impending Covid-19 crisis.

4.5. Since then the CPP has been updated to reflect the economic impacts of Covid-19 on coastal economies and encompass a wider geographical scope of coastal areas across the HotSW. The impact of the economic damage on coastal areas from the Covid-19 lockdowns and continuing restrictions has been overlaid on the CPP, along with alignment of current government policy. The latest CPP includes:

- Covid-19 impacts on coastal areas
- Additional recommendations to reflect some of the emerging coastal challenges resulting from Covid
- Alignment to the latest policy such as the levelling up agenda and announcements in the CSR
- Additional coastal town's data

## **5. Equalities Implications**

5.1. There are no specific equalities implications associated with the recommendation.

## **6. Other Implications**

6.1. Legal:

There are no specific legal implications associated with the recommendation.

6.2. Financial:

There are no immediate financial implications. Activities within the CPP will require a mix of funding that would be determined as and when it becomes available.

6.3. HR:

None

6.4. Risk:

The key risk is that delivery fails to materialise as quickly as hoped due to a lack of government support and funding opportunities. In addition, the severe impact of Covid-19 on the HotSW area needs to be taken into account.

6.5. Other Implications: Health and Well-being; Health and Safety; Sustainability; Community Safety; Privacy:

None

## **7. Background papers**

7.1. Heart of the South West Coastal Productivity Plan

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heart of the  
south west

local enterprise partnership

# Coastal Productivity Plan

Focusing on Seaside Towns and Coastal Resorts

**Response to Covid-19**



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**Version Control**

V1 June 2019	Consultation draft to coastal group
V2	Consultation draft to LEP MTM
V3 August 2019	Consultation with partners
V4 August 2019	
V5 September 2019	Reviewed and Edited
V6 September 2019	
V7 February 2020	Following partner consultations and workshop
V8 February 2020	Incorporating feedback from version 7
V9 December 2020	Incorporating research and impact of Covid-19
V10 December 2020	Incorporating partner consultations from V9

## Executive Summary

The Coastal Productivity Plan (CPP) responds to both the long term structural and the immediate Covid-19 challenges by setting out interventions to create opportunities and improve economic resilience and prosperity in seaside towns and coastal resorts<sup>1</sup>. This will in turn contribute to delivery of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) mission of "repositioning the Heart of the South West's profile and reputation, nationally and globally. Connecting people, places, businesses and ideas to transform our economy, securing investment in infrastructure and skills to create more jobs and enable rewarding careers".

The CPP sets out both the impacts from Covid-19 and the longer term key challenges restricting growth in some of HotSW most economically challenged areas and how they might best be overcome. These coastal towns and resorts exhibit a high concentration of employment in tourism, low economic performance, socially immobile communities and relatively high unemployment.

As a consequence Covid-19 has demonstrated how economically fragile these place are. The concentration of tourism employment means that the lockdowns and restricted movement have impacted trade and employment in these face-to-face sectors particularly hard. Mainly effecting the younger lower paid parts of the workforce who were already struggling prior to the crisis.

The CPP provides a mechanism for delivery of the HotSW LEP Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and Productivity Strategy. It supports the HotSW becoming a 'thriving place' by ensuring prosperity through clean and inclusive growth. It will maximise the area's natural capital

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<sup>1</sup> Coastal towns and resorts which stretch the length of the HotSW coastline and are suffering from low productivity and economically lagging. These include;

through delivery of Coastal Action Zones (CAZ), and the Tourism Sector Deal (through a Tourism Zone), as well as alignment with the ambitions of the Offshore Wind Sector Deal.

The CPP provides evidence, context and interventions that can be delivered through the UK Shared Prosperity and Levelling Up Funds targeting those places most in need across the HotSW

The CPP has been developed in consultation with the HotSW LEP, coastal local authorities and relevant stakeholders. It focuses on five key themes: Ideas, People, Infrastructure, Business Environment and Place. Each one looking at the context and approach to the economic challenges and making recommendations to support growth.

The **Ideas** theme explores the role of natural capital and cultural assets in 'place-making'. They can offer the opportunity for economic diversification and improved productivity, by encouraging creation of new job opportunities in sectors such as renewable energy, biomanufacturing, and biomimicry, along with offering new visitor related products which help extend the tourist season. These opportunities respond not only to the climate emergency but also to the launch of the Government's 10 point Green Plan.

The **People** theme examines the key issues impacting on residents of coastal towns such as the divergence in ambition and how this impacts on the 'brain drain', social mobility and widening pay gaps. The aim is not just growth but inclusive growth.

**Infrastructure** is a key enabler for productivity-led growth, particularly in coastal towns which are on the 'edge'. Investment in infrastructure is critical to turning the tide on decades of lost growth

Exmouth, Sidmouth, Barnstaple, Ilfracombe, Burnham-on-Sea, Dawlish, Teignmouth, Brixham, Paignton, Torquay, Bideford, Northam, and Minehead.

and deterioration in the physical fabric of our coastal towns – not only our town centres, and employment sites but also in flood defences, coastal management, and biodiversity. A key aspect of infrastructure deficit is connectivity, both digital and via transport links, including road, rail, ferry, and lack of on demand transport.

The **Business Environment** theme highlights the narrow industrial base of our coastal towns which contributes to higher levels of low-wage employment. The reliance of our coastal communities on a small number of industries, which generally offer occupations in relatively lower paid sectors, leads to limited opportunities for them to restructure and grow.

The **Place** theme identifies the characteristics which define our coastal towns as being areas of low productivity and part-time seasonal jobs with comparatively low wage rates, in sectors such as health & social care, and tourism & hospitality. It explores how the economic structure of coastal areas is changing, and with improved physical and digital connectivity combined with outstanding natural environmental assets, can support opportunities for productive growth in our coastal economies.

## Summary of Solutions and Opportunities

Notwithstanding the challenges facing seaside resorts and coastal towns this plan charts a positive way ahead. It is not about quick fixes but long-term solutions; it is about levelling up, not propping up.

### 1. Investing in infrastructure

It is imperative that the Government and all relevant agencies recognise the seriousness of the threats to our area's natural and cultural assets and ensures that there is appropriate investment in combatting erosion and maintaining/ improving flood defences. One option is to create a Local Infrastructure Fund to address coastal

erosion/ flooding and to support enabling works to bring forward new employment sites.

Local partners should continue to work together to articulate the key road and rail infrastructure challenges facing our coastal communities, develop a pipeline of projects around the LIS themes and adopt an agreed approach to putting their case to the Department for Transport.

Partners should seek (and be supported) to maximise opportunities for sustainable and clean energy generation through tidal and offshore technologies, particularly on the northern coast of Devon and Somerset including the Celtic Sea floating offshore wind farm and in relation to the FAB (France – Alderney – Britain) Link Interconnector Project on Devon's south coast.

### 2. Establish a Coastal Action Zone

The Government is encouraged to pilot a Coastal Action Zone in HotSW. Such a Zone would catalyse regeneration and attract private sector investment in 'left behind' coastal areas. It would level up the playing field enabling left behind areas to compete with urban areas which generally attract greater private investment as the returns are higher by:

- Providing gap funding for projects that facilitate commercially viable development of new employment space and affordable housing.
- Offering simplified local authority planning procedures including Local Development Orders (LDOs) to fast track the delivery of investment in designated coastal areas.
- Allowing CAZ authorities to put forward investment cases to borrow from the Public Works Loan Board at a discounted rate to catalyse investment in capital and infrastructure projects.

- Enabling 100% capital allowances on new investments and re-investments in capital and property.
- Providing a Seed Fund facility to deliver early enabling works in CAZs and springboard the delivery of infrastructure projects that facilitate commercially viable developments where market failures have been proven.
- Capital gains or Corporation tax reliefs to incentivise private sector investment within the CAZ.<sup>2</sup>

### **3. Ensure that the needs of coastal towns are recognised in the design of relevant strategies and funding sources**

National bodies ought to recognise that HotSW is a diverse economy, which features three cities and two coastlines, divided north to south by two National Parks. Coastal towns are distinctive from the HotSW's rural areas and urban centres, are adrift in terms of economic performance and account for around 40% of the LEP's total population. As such, the coastal agenda needs to be entrenched in the LEP's thinking and focus.

Along with the LEP, the Joint Committee and the Great South West All Party Parliamentary Group need to be made aware of the issues slowing growth and hindering productivity in coastal towns. In response to the House of Lords report, 'The Future of Seaside Towns', their support is needed to persuade the Government to prioritise and extend the programme of support for coastal areas within the UKSPF, with a focus on supporting the recovery, levelling up, and raising productivity levels. There is also a need to ensure that other funding sources, such as UKSPF fully recognise the challenges and opportunities within coastal towns.

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<sup>2</sup> Development of a mechanism akin to the US Opportunity Zone  
<https://www.eda.gov/opportunity-zones/>

Further, there is an opportunity to work with other coastal areas to share examples of 'good practice' and 'lessons learnt' to support the development of a Strategic Investment Framework which prioritises the needs of coastal areas.

### **4. Pilot a Digital Business Academy**

Relevant stakeholders should explore what digital technologies might most usefully be adopted by different types of businesses and then support them to adopt those technologies through a Digital Business Academy. The Academy would provide SMEs with the digital skills and tools to raise business productivity by increasing market presence/ penetration, and better equipping businesses against cyber threats. Given the uptake and response to Covid19, it has been demonstrated that individuals and businesses have pivoted. Bolstering this through the establishment of a digital academy linked to Somerset and Devon libraries services and community hubs for co-working represents an increasing opportunity, provided these hubs have greater investment in superfast broadband and mobile connectivity. A detailed offer has already been developed.

### **5. Meet the career ambitions of people and skills needs of employers**

The Apprenticeship Pilot, which provides information, advice, and guidance to businesses and adopts an innovative approach in facilitating the opportunity to bring together training providers, businesses and apprentices could usefully be extended across the whole of the coastal areas. Innovative additions might include: exploring the potential for SMEs to utilise unused Apprenticeship

Levy resources, highlighting opportunities in key sectors and staging a regular Apprenticeships Fair.

In addition, there may be scope to provide training vouchers for SMEs to support upskilling of their workforce and productivity gains, particularly in tourism & hospitality and health & social care.

Partners might also explore sector-specific approaches and centres of excellence for training (specifically hospitality, biomanufacturing, food, health and social care, construction and advanced engineering) to help develop career pathways.

There is a need to improve engagement and awareness between the Careers Hubs and local industry to ensure schools are aware of the breadth and diversity of employment opportunities in coastal areas.

## 6. Support the visitor economy via a Tourism Zone

A Tourism Zone would help to Build Back Better and improve sector resilience by supporting the digital capability of businesses in the visitor economy, business support and recovery webinars, Marketing, international and domestic PR and Digital campaigns, and development of new products for the travel trade which will help drive up visitor numbers, extend the season and tackle local barriers to tourism growth.

Working in partnership, key stakeholders, including Coastal Community Teams, Destination Management Organisations (DMOs), The National Coastal Tourism Academy, and others there is an opportunity to establish an identifiable brand or vehicle for use by existing brands that capitalises on the natural environment, heritage and cultural assets in such a way as to attract high value tourism by:

- Support for local DMOs to develop new offerings and learn from existing successful organisations nationally
- Provide business support and recovery webinars focused on extending the coastal tourism season, new product development, toolkits to boost off-peak opportunities, and online training.
- Establishment of a training hotel to support professional career development within the sector.
- Marketing, PR and Digital campaigns focusing on domestic and international activity targeted at identified audiences to generate bookings throughout 2021 to rebuild the sector.
- Expand and capitalise on current tourism offerings such as food and drink and the SW Coastal Path in order to expand on the staycation market.

In summary, to boost productivity growth in the HotSW LEP area, we are calling for the following:

- A **Local Infrastructure Fund** to provide substantial investments in combatting erosion and maintaining/improving flood defences and facilitating new commercial development. Without this, existing activity is threatened and attracting new business investment is increasingly difficult.
- Discussions with all relevant bodies in respect of **road, rail, ferry and innovative demand responsive transport solutions infrastructure** needs and opportunities, leading to an agreed list of transport priorities.
- Conversion of opportunities within the circular economy for **sustainable and clean energy generation** into realised projects.

- Establishment of a **Coastal Action Zone** with the powers and funding to facilitate development where there is clear potential for growth but market failure is holding back the realisation of that potential.
- An **Opportunity Zone** to encourage and incentivise private sector investment in our coastal communities.
- All relevant bodies and funding programmes to prioritise and acknowledge the specific issues facing coastal towns and recognise the opportunities they offer within the development of the new **UK-wide Investment Framework**.
- Funding the establishment of a **Digital Business Academy**, in line with already established aims and objectives.
- Harness the natural capital in coastal communities to **develop a sustainable and circular economy** which draws upon innovative ways to reduce waste, make use of by-products, and reuse resources.
- Support for exploration of **other innovative approaches to up-skilling** through training vouchers and sector-specific approaches and centres of excellence for training.
- Establishment of a **Tourism Zone** in order to improve the breadth and quality of the existing offer and thereby raise productivity and boost growth.
- A **voice representing the interested of coastal communities and seaside towns** within Government.

## Impact of Covid-19

The Coastal Productivity Plan (CPP) has been updated since it was written in February 2020, prior to the coronavirus crisis. This update sets out the extent of the impact on coastal communities and seaside towns.

The impact Covid-19 has had on employment and the economy in coastal areas highlights their fragility.

The near total shutdown of national economic activity towards the end of March 2020 was an immediate response focused on protecting public health. Following the gradual reopening of society, the size and scale of the economic aftermath became apparent as the focus turned towards economic recovery. While some sectors have been able to recover more quickly, other sectors have continued to suffer due to restrictions which have remained in place and HotSW's coastal places are harmed by this slower recovery.

The Centre for Towns<sup>3</sup> has shown that coastal communities are amongst the most affected economically by the lockdown measures brought in as a result of the pandemic. Those communities are also at greater risk from the longer-term effects of the crisis. Of the top 20 most at risk towns in the UK, the study showed that nine were coastal.

The impact of the restrictions and initial economic shutdown particularly impacted four sectors the hardest, those being; non-food retail, accommodation, pubs and restaurants, and arts and leisure. Employment within these sectors accounts for a significant proportion of jobs particularly in coastal towns, compared to other areas. Employment within these sectors is generally recognised as being low paid, seasonal, and generally unstable when compared to

others. The Centre for Towns report revealed that over a quarter of employees in coastal towns in England and Wales work in these sectors, suggesting that those on lower incomes were the hardest hit and will take the longest to recover.

Table 1 shows the national take up rates of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) by sector between May and October 2020.

**Table 1: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme take up rate, nationally by sector**

Sector	CJRS take-up	
	May	October
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	17.18%	5.49%
Mining and quarrying	24.86%	5.78%
Manufacturing	33.99%	11.96%
Energy production and supply	12.20%	1.20%
Water supply, sewerage and waste	20.78%	6.64%
Construction	52.87%	14.45%
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles	35.48%	11.79%
Transportation and storage	22.57%	9.76%
Accommodation and food services	63.32%	26.75%
Information and communication	13.45%	9.26%
Finance and insurance	5.68%	2.72%
Real estate	29.49%	12.46%
Professional, scientific and technical	22.40%	13.11%
Administrative and support services	23.53%	11.82%

<sup>3</sup> The Centre for Towns, The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on our towns and cities, April 2020

Public administration and defence; social security	0.32%	0.44%
Education	6.41%	4.70%
Health and social work	8.07%	4.22%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	54.02%	33.05%
Other service activities	47.01%	22.68%
Households	5.34%	2.31%
Unknown and other	1486.49%	13.64%
Total	28.65%	10.79%

Source: HMRC, Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics

The data shows both the hardest hit sectors in terms of employment during the initial lockdown in May, as well as illustrating the sectors which are continuing to endure the effects of the pandemic, and are arguably the most vulnerable. Both the accommodation and food services, and arts, entertainment and recreation, were initially amongst the hardest hit and still remain markedly high in October compared to others. The closure of hotels, campsites and caravan parks for most of 2020 has had a major impact on the tourism sector and particularly in coastal towns.

Table 2 shows the take up rates of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) by unitary and district authority across the HotSW geography between May and October 2020.

**Table 2: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme take up rate, across HotSW**

Area	CJRS take-up	
	May	October
England	25.2%	10.4%
South West	26.0%	9.7%

<sup>4</sup> Locality, How community organisations can lead the post-Covid jobs recovery, 2020

Plymouth	26.1%	8.2%
Torbay	30.1%	10.2%
East Devon	28.1%	10.2%
Exeter	23.7%	9.1%
Mid Devon	25.1%	9.1%
North Devon	30.0%	9.4%
South Hams	29.7%	10.2%
Teignbridge	28.3%	10.5%
Torridge	30.0%	10.1%
West Devon	26.7%	10.5%
Mendip	29.9%	11.9%
Sedgemoor	24.1%	8.5%
Somerset West and Taunton	25.4%	9.1%
South Somerset	25.3%	9.0%

Source: HMRC, Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics

Table 2 shows both the hardest hit geographies across the HotSW during the initial lockdown and those which are continuing to face prolonged economic challenges. In May 2020 four out of the five areas across the HotSW with the largest take up rates of the CJRS were in coastal authorities. In October three out of five areas with the highest take-up were still coastal authorities which had a high concentration of employment in the tourism and hospitality sector.

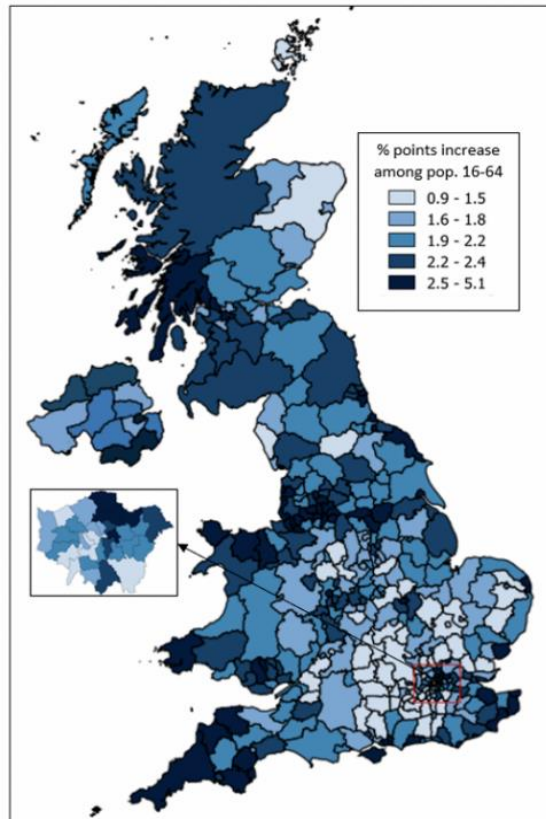
Some aspects of the economic crisis provoked by the pandemic are well understood. It is hitting young and poorly paid people hardest, and is concentrated in sectors most affected by Covid restrictions such as hotels, restaurants and bars. Research by the Communities in Charge campaign<sup>4</sup> shows that 44% of areas with high employment



deprivation and existing job shortages are also in the top 20% of areas considered most at-risk for Covid-19 related job losses.

Figure 1 illustrates the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown on claimant unemployment rates by district and unitary authority.

**Figure 1: Change in claimant unemployment rate, March-April 2020 (% of population aged 16-64)**

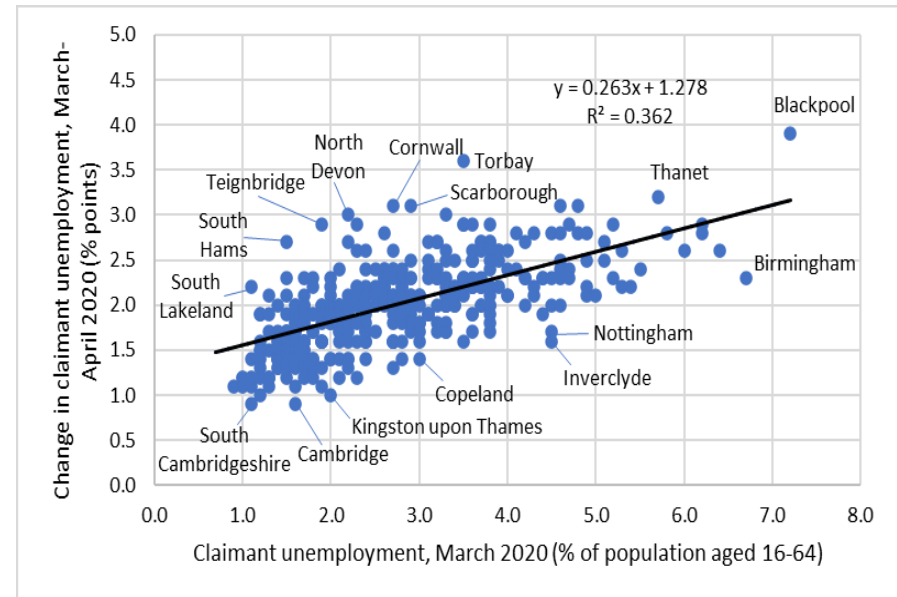


Source: Local resistance to rising unemployment in the context of the Covid19 mitigation policies across Great Britain, University of Portsmouth

Figure 1 suggests that coastal areas, particularly in the HotSW recorded some of the the greatest impacts in rising unemployment as a result of lockdown.

Figure 2 illustrates pre-covid unemployment levels and the increase in unemployment from Covid.

**Figure 2: Local increase in unemployment according to level of pre-existing unemployment, Local Authority Districts & Unitary Authorities, March-April 2020**



Source: Local resistance to rising unemployment in the context of the Covid19 mitigation policies across Great Britain, University of Portsmouth

Figure 2 shows there is a relatively strong relationship between pre-Covid unemployment and the scale of the impact. The areas above the line (indicating a greater Covid-19 impact than predicted based on pre-Covid unemployment) are overwhelmingly coastal. Those

towards the top right (high unemployment, large increase) are seaside towns with a high dependence on employment in the tourism sector, while those in the top left (low unemployment, large increase) tend to be affluent rural areas on the coast, but again with substantial employment in tourism and mainly in the HotSW.

This is further supported by research from the Institute for Fiscal Studies<sup>5</sup> which shows how coastal areas have generally been hit hardest on worker and health measures, and clearly demonstrates that coastal areas are in need of immediate support.

The government are committed to 'levelling-up' and particularly supporting 'left behind' towns and cities of the UK, including coastal towns. Recovery from the Covid-19 crisis has been linked to this agenda through 'Build Back Better' and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) as announced in the November 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR).

Before the economic challenges of Covid19 our coastal areas faced long-term structural challenges. They could be viewed as 'left-behind' from previous economic crisis, and are projected to remain vulnerable with forecasts indicating these economies will take longer to recover to pre-Covid levels compared to other areas.

As well as looking at the current economic risks, the IFS research also considered how resilient towns could be by looking at their socio-economic characteristics. Whilst the UK population is getting older across the whole country, the demographic in coastal places is generally aging at a faster rate compared to university towns and large cities which are continuing to attract younger people. The changing demographics were already economically impacting coastal areas which were suffering economic scarring from previous

shocks, however the lack of available jobs and subsequent 'brain drain' in coastal areas poses a significant risk to their recovery. Having already suffered from economic decline, social isolation, a lack of investment, under-employment and low levels of social wellbeing, these challenges across many coastal towns are likely to be further exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic, leaving many coastal areas lagging ever further behind.

In June 2020 South West Councils commissioned Oxford Economics to provide Coronavirus economic impact scenarios. As part of the modelling they constructed a Coronavirus Vulnerability Index to assess the vulnerability of local authority areas to the impact of coronavirus. It summarises potential vulnerability across three themes—economic diversity/ industrial structure, business structure, and digital connectivity to provide an indication of the characteristics of areas that could leave them more exposed to the economic impacts of coronavirus.

The South West tends to be more vulnerable than elsewhere in Great Britain. More than two-thirds of local authorities in the SW have a score of over 100, indicating that they are more vulnerable than the average, while more than two-fifths (43%) ranking among the top 25% most vulnerable—the highest of any region.

In general, coastal areas tend to be most exposed due to their lack of economic diversity/ industrial structure, reflecting a reliance on tourism related activities. Business structure also appears to be a significant issue in some coastal areas, while Somerset and more rural areas tend to perform less favourably on measures of digital connectivity.

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<sup>5</sup> Institute of Fiscal Studies, The geography of the COVID-19 crisis in England, June 2020

**Table 3: Coronavirus Vulnerability Index, South West<sup>6</sup>**

Local authority area	Index (average=100)	Quartile
Devon:	-	-
East Devon	125	Top 25%
Exeter	55	Bottom 25%
Mid Devon	149	Top 25%
North Devon	137	Top 25%
South Hams	114	50% to 75%
Teignbridge	106	50% to 75%
Torrige	127	Top 25%
West Devon	140	Top 25%
Plymouth	90	25% to 50%
Somerset:	-	-
Mendip	129	Top 25%
Sedgemoor	137	Top 25%
Somerset West & Taunton	112	50% to 75%
South Somerset	125	Top 25%
Torbay	106	50% to 75%

Source: South West Coronavirus economic impact scenarios, Oxford Economics, July 2020

Covid-19 has magnified the economic disparities and structural challenges faced by coastal areas. There has never been a more critical time for a step change in policy and approach in order to support the future economic wellbeing and prosperity of coastal areas.

<sup>6</sup> A higher score represents a greater degree of vulnerability. Those among the top-25% most- and least-vulnerable local authorities nationally are shown in red and blue respectively.

## Background

The Heart of the South West (HotSW) Coastal Productivity Plan (CPP) was born out of work from partners across the area, which included local authorities, Coastal Community Teams (CCT) and other key stakeholders. The purpose of the CPP is to explore how economic productivity can be improved in HotSW's coastal places leading to inclusive and sustainable long-term economic growth across the area.

The challenges facing England's coastal towns and resorts have been set out in detail in the 'The Future of Seaside Towns'<sup>7</sup> report published by the House of Lords Regeneration of Seaside Towns Select Committee. The report considered evidence from coastal towns across the UK, summarising the key issues and outlining actions to support their regeneration. The report notes economic issues that are founded on the decline of core industries and geography, with the peripherality of these places being a particular issue.

The Government's response<sup>8</sup> to the House of Lord's report is welcomed. The acknowledgment of 'neglected' coastal areas and the need for a 'trajectory to regeneration' aligns with the purpose of this plan to raise productivity levels, levelling up agenda, and support long term sustainable growth of HotSW's resorts and other coastal towns.

However, to address both the impact of Covid-19 and the deep seated and unique structural challenges faced by our coastal towns more needs to be done to ensure that they not only share in the growth of the wider economy, but make a consistent contribution and help drive forward growth in their own right.

<sup>7</sup> <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201719/ldselect/ldseaside/320/320.pdf>

There is a requirement for intervention to safeguard. Recover, and create jobs in order to boost growth in these places, by investing in infrastructure, facilitating private sector development, attracting new businesses and encouraging more start-ups, training those in work and improving the employability of people not in work.

Place-based policy needs a stronger emphasis on coastal towns and resorts; 'A rising tide does not lift all ships'. The economic gap of our coastal areas is continuing to widen over time with the vulnerability of these fragile economies being ever more apparent as a result of pandemic – the left behind are falling further behind.

## The Scope of the Plan Geography

The purpose of the CPP is to support our coastal towns which are suffering from low productivity and economically lagging. The geographic scope of the CCP stretches the length of the HotSW coastline. It is proposed that the recommendations specifically target coastal strips within the local authority areas of:

- East Devon (Exmouth, Sidmouth)
- North Devon (Barnstaple, Ilfracombe)
- Sedgemoor (Burnham-on-Sea)
- South Hams
- Teignbridge (Dawlish, Teignmouth)
- Torbay (Brixham, Paignton, Torquay)
- Torridge (Bideford, Northam)
- Somerset West and Taunton (Minehead)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/Regenerating-Seaside-Towns/Government\\_response.pdf](https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/Regenerating-Seaside-Towns/Government_response.pdf)

**Figure 3: Scope of Coastal Productivity Plan**



### Strategic Context

The CPP supports delivery of the HotSW Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). The LIS is central to delivering the vision to build a more productive economy, fit for the future and with prosperous communities across the HotSW.

The HotSW is a special place with enormous potential in its businesses, its people, and its places. It represents an economy of £35 billion per year, 83,000 businesses and a population of more than 1.7 million people, featuring two coastlines stretching over 484 miles. Excluding Plymouth and Exeter, around two fifths of the population live in coastal areas. Our coastal towns play an integral role in the make-up of the HotSW economy, leading on hi-tech engineering and opportunities within the marine sector, as well as fishing and tourism.

This CPP also aligns with the Route Map to Recovery, and vision set out in HotSW LEP's Productivity Strategy for all parts to become more prosperous, and for people to have a better quality of life and higher living standards.

### Aims and Objectives

The 'spirit' of the CPP is to address the issues facing traditional coastal and estuarine towns rather than coastal cities. It seeks to improve the capability of coastal towns to function at a higher level and contribute more to the growth of the region. Therefore, this plan focuses on raising productivity in areas with low GVA per head and a high concentration of employment within the tourism sector.

The House of Lords Select Committee report notes that 'Investment from central government must be focused on supporting sustainable, long-term regeneration, not piecemeal, short term initiatives. Local authorities, alongside business and community leaders, have a crucial role to play in providing vision, leadership and enforcement, enabling partnerships, and setting a favourable planning environment.

This document brings together evidence and the aspirations of stakeholders from across the HotSW area, in order to ensure there is justification for and prioritisation of measures designed to drive higher levels of productivity and thereby raise prosperity. It is an invitation to the Government, its agencies and other partners to work with us on addressing this important agenda.

The CPP focuses on five key themes:

- Ideas
- People
- Infrastructure
- Business Environment
- Place

# Ideas:

## Natural Capital, Culture, and Heritage

Page 22

01



## Context

There is a wealth of evidence that an area's natural and cultural assets can play a vital 'place-making' role in economic development. Our coast is one of our most valued natural assets, but one which is under threat from erosion and rising sea levels. HotSW is home to three UNESCO World Heritage sites: the Jurassic Coast, the North Devon Biosphere and Torbay Geopark.

The natural capital of our coastal economies directly supports jobs in fishing and tourism, but also provides wider benefits to our economy through the provision of quality of life, recreation, flood protection and social value. Similarly, our cultural heritage not only attracts visitors from around the world, but also plays a vital role in supporting the wellbeing of people and communities by attracting new investment, recognition of place, and supporting social pride.

## Key Issues

1. The natural and cultural assets of our coastal communities need to be preserved so that they can continue to contribute to the area's economic (and social) wellbeing. This is both to retain them as assets (and the economic activities tied to them) and, where flood defences are an issue, to protect other economic assets.
2. The area's natural and cultural offerings merit much greater promotion in order to better exploit opportunities to attract high value tourism, including overseas visitors. This would help to raise productivity in what is traditionally a low productivity sector. The area's natural and cultural offerings merit much greater promotion in order to better exploit opportunities to attract high value tourism, including overseas visitors. This would help to raise productivity in what is traditionally a low productivity sector.
3. There is a lack of take-up of digital technology amongst existing businesses, especially in the tourism sector.
4. There is a need to effectively harness the natural capital and to innovate. Our natural capital offers the opportunity for diversification of our economy in providing new job opportunities in sectors such as offshore and hydroelectricity generation, biomanufacturing, and biomimicry e.g. developing and manufacturing sustainable insulation material by feeding local industrial and agricultural by-products to fungus.

## Solutions and Opportunities

1. It is imperative that the Government and all relevant agencies recognise the seriousness of the threats to our area's natural and cultural assets and ensures that there is appropriate investment in combatting erosion and maintaining/ improving flood defences through the National Infrastructure Strategy (NIS).
2. Working in partnership, key stakeholders, should establish an identifiable brand or vehicle for use by existing brands that capitalises on the natural environment, heritage and cultural assets in such a way as to attract high value tourism and capitalise and celebrate the 'Year of the English Coast'. This might be further exploited through the establishment of a Tourism Zone, led by HotSW LEP in collaboration with other LEP areas.
3. Relevant stakeholders should explore what digital technologies might most usefully be adopted by different types of businesses and then support them to adopt those technologies, e.g. through a Digital Business Academy.
4. Partners should seek (and be supported) to maximise opportunities for sustainable and clean energy generation through tidal and offshore technologies, particularly on the

Northern coast of Devon and Somerset and in respect of the FAB Link Interconnector Project on Devon's south coast.

5. Work with key stakeholders such as the UK Hydrographic Office and Met Office to utilise Big Data and our natural capital in accelerating the development of new and emerging technologies which can support the growth of the knowledge economy in coastal areas. Examples include harvesting seagrass and kelp to support carbon sequestration to fight climate change, and biomanufacturing to develop new natural and sustainable construction materials.

### **Case Study – English Riviera: England's Seafood Coast**



England's Seafood Coast promotes the fantastic seafood sector and restaurants in Torbay. The project has created a brand, developed a national seafood trail, and a seafood festival.

The project has attracted 'food tourists' from Holland and Germany and is expanding.



# People:

# 02



## Context

Whilst having the right people, with the right skills is a key issue for all employers, it appears to affect coastal businesses disproportionately. Firstly, the demographic composition of coastal communities (with a high number of retired people) means the proportion of the population that is economically active is lower than in many other areas. It also results in a high demand for housing, due to people moving to the area to retire. Secondly, the lack of local employment opportunities encourages those who are highly motivated to move away and perhaps only return later in life. It also demotivates those who come from households with multi-generational unemployment and assume there is little point aspiring to jobs that do not exist. This creates a 'Catch 22' situation of employers being reluctant to invest locally because of perceptions of poor labour availability and young people in particular moving away in the absence of a good range and quality of career opportunities.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that coastal businesses have a lower propensity to address these skills challenges, partly due to their size and focus on 'business as usual', but also the value they place on their workforce and a willingness to pay higher wages – partly linked to the nature of the business i.e. being seasonally dependant, but also the captive nature of the labour pool.

Brexit presents a challenge to some of the dominant sectors locally (such as tourism & hospitality, and health & social care) where there is a relatively high proportion of 'migrant labour'. These challenges are amplified by rising demand in domestic tourism ('staycations') along with increased pressure on health and social services from the ageing demographic of coastal populations.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation report *The Benefits of Tackling Worklessness and Low Pay*<sup>9</sup> found that for every out-of-work claimant that moved into a job that paid the Living Wage<sup>10</sup> the Government gained, on average, £6,900, and the local economy more than £14,000 per year. Improving well paid job opportunities and wage rates in coastal communities through the delivery of the CPP could support more than 5,000 residents in the HotSW moving from out-of-work benefits (51,260 in HotSW, October 2020) into a Living Wage job. Not only would this ensure that growth is inclusive, but it would benefit the Exchequer by around £34.5M each year and the local economy by more than £70M each year.

## Key Issues

1. Perceived lack of job/ career opportunities pushing away people and acting as a barrier to higher skilled and experienced people re-locating into the area.
2. Affordability of housing (rented and bought) pushing away young people in particular.
3. People only coming back in their 40s, which leads to a proliferation of lifestyle industries.
4. The size and nature of typical coastal businesses means that they find it very burdensome /inefficient to take on apprentices. However, such businesses need to understand the opportunities which apprenticeships present for raising their skills levels. Myth busting around apprenticeships is required, along with combating the barriers faced by SMEs around taking time out of 'business as usual' to invest in skills and training.
5. Challenges around transport, connectivity, and social isolation, are barriers to accessing learning and employment opportunities. This is particularly notable on the north coast of the HotSW.

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<sup>9</sup> December 2014

<sup>10</sup> £7.45 per hour in 2012

## Solutions and Opportunities

1. We would welcome the full engagement of the LEP's Skills Advisory Panel in recognising and responding to the full extent of the very particular skills issues faced by coastal towns.
2. Provide training vouchers for SMEs to support upskilling of their workforce and productivity gains, particularly in tourism & hospitality and health & social care.
3. Explore sector-specific approaches and centres of excellence for training (specifically hospitality, health and social care, construction and advanced engineering) to help develop career pathways.
4. Improve engagement and awareness between the Careers Hubs and local industry to ensure schools are aware of the breadth and diversity of employment opportunities in coastal areas.
5. Ensure that planning policies give due consideration to the need for more affordable housing, and should be a consideration in the development of new visitor accommodation.
6. Investment in people and skills tailored to local needs of coastal areas, with particular focus on re-training those out of work and supporting those furthest from the labour market.
7. Support the development of a vibrant voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector in our coastal towns as a way of supporting people back into work who have been unemployed for long periods as well as adding value to existing sectors
8. Investment in innovative demand responsive transport solutions to tackle the challenges associated with social mobility.
9. Extend the Kickstart Programme to support recruitment and the economic recovery.

## Case Study – The Globe Training Hotel, Great Torrington



A partnership between Torrington District Council, Great Torrington Town Council, Petroc, and The Plough Arts Centre to regenerate a long-closed Grade II Listed hotel and create a working training hotel offering the South West's first degree-level apprenticeship in Tourism and Hospitality.

As well as bringing back into use a new 8 bedroom hotel creating 15 jobs, the community owned facility

will provide an additional venue for community and cultural activities.

The training hotel will offer routes to drive sector-wide improvement through up-skilling, including working with education charities such as Springboard to raise the profile of careers in hospitality and tourism in schools.

# Infrastructure:

A large concrete dam is shown with waves crashing over it, creating a massive plume of white water. In the background, a city is built on a hillside, with some lights visible. The sky is overcast and grey.

03

## Context

Challenges associated with climate change, coastal erosion and rising sea levels are acutely felt in our coastal communities. The need for flood defences and coastal management are crucial in helping to safeguard and raise productivity levels, not only in protecting houses and new development, but also ensuring the resilience of road and rail connections, and safeguarding the tourism industry in our seaside towns – all of which enable our local economies to function.

Indeed, the peripheral nature of our coastal communities can often lead to a disconnection (actual and perceived) with other parts of the country. Infrastructure is a key enabler to economic growth and productivity. This is demonstrated when comparing the economies of Brighton to Hastings – both similar distances from London, but better transport links between London and Brighton have enabled it to successfully restructure its economy. Similarly, emphasis should be given to the technological solutions that could help us to address the long-standing structural challenges, and help people to work remotely, access better employment, and educational opportunities in coastal areas.

Many coastal towns have endured long term decline, as private sector investment has decreased, with falling rates of return sapping investor confidence. This has led to a deterioration in the physical fabric of coastal town centres, including the public realm, tourism accommodation, and visitor attractions. Where there are uncertainties surrounding the economic case for development for the private sector, better market intelligence may be the key for unlocking opportunities and catalysing the market, particularly when focusing on our town centres and tourism assets. There is also a lack of flexible business workspace.

The coastal areas within the HotSW LEP area are relatively well catered for in terms of broadband, but too few businesses have either underinvested or adopted appropriate digital tools and developed relevant skills to fully exploit related opportunities.

## Key Issues

1. Coastal erosion and flood risks are putting existing economic activities in jeopardy and blighting the prospects for new investment.
2. Town centre regeneration and diversification of retail space is desperately needed to revive formerly popular seaside resorts and give them new purpose.
3. Improved infrastructure and transport connections are required to connect coastal areas and improve links with larger urban centres.
4. There is a lack of good quality commercial development sites and modern business accommodation. This reflects declining investor confidence and developers acquiring land in coastal locations for residential use, as well as strict planning restrictions applying in places close to AONB.

## Solutions and Opportunities

1. Working with the Environment Agency, DEFRA, Infrastructure Commission and Local Authorities, to secure investment through the National Investment Bank (NIB) and Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme to combat rising sea levels and coastal erosion.
2. Local partners should continue to work together to articulate the key road and rail infrastructure challenges facing our coastal communities, develop a pipeline of projects around the LIS themes and adopt an agreed approach to putting their case to the Department for Transport. Including ferry links and on demand transport solutions

3. Create a Local Infrastructure Fund to address coastal erosion/ flooding and to support enabling works to bring forward new employment sites.
4. Create a Coastal Action Zone Capital Fund to gap fund projects that facilitate commercially viable development of new employment space and affordable housing.
5. Pilot an Opportunity Zone in the HotSW to attract and incentivise private sector investment in our coastal areas.

# Business Environment:

Page 31

04



## Context

Coastal economies with low productivity tend to have a dependency on a narrow industrial base, with relatively high employment in the public sector and in tourism. The HotSW tourism sector mainly comprises SMEs which actively trade during the peak season – welcoming more than 59 million visitors each year - but are largely dormant for the rest of the year. This makes Business Rates a particular issue, given the income earning window is relatively narrow, but Business Rate liabilities are all year round. Coastal tourism has been extremely vulnerable to the impacts of Covid-19 and have been hit particularly hard, however the business have been responsive in their need to adapt and innovate. Tourism businesses have also expressed concerns that the UK policy on VAT for tourism accommodation creates an uneven playing field for those competing with other countries, where the VAT rate is lower.

Although average survival amongst SMEs in coastal towns are a little higher than those in other areas, this is thought in part to reflect many owners running them as a ‘lifestyle’ business. These businesses are less likely to actively seek business support, seek to innovate or change their culture and become more productive. This impacts upon their resilience and adaptability to significant changes to business conditions, and has been evident through the scale of the impact of Covid-19 in coastal areas.

Traditional business support programmes which work in urban areas do not always work as well in coastal areas. They are generally more expensive to deliver and offer relatively poor value for money due to the low take up rates and restrictive criteria. A fresh approach is needed to support SMEs in our coastal towns, not least in becoming more operationally efficient by being ‘digitally ready’. This can be done by providing skills and tools which promotes remote and agile

working practices, along with supporting them to broaden their reach to wider markets through e-commerce platforms.

## Key Issues

1. A narrow business base makes coastal economies extremely vulnerable to external shocks.
2. Many coastal economies experience seasonal highs and lows.
3. There is limited specialist digital skills training provision for the high value tourism sector within the LEP area, especially given the size of the sector and opportunity for growth.
4. There is a lack of employment land to support and retain successful local businesses that are looking to expand.

## Solutions and Opportunities

1. Pilot a Digital Business Academy to support businesses in becoming ‘digitally ready’ and improve their market presence, with a focus on the retail and tourism sectors.
2. Seek funding through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to provide small business co-improvement grants (up to £10K) to encourage investment in improving the productivity and competitiveness of growth aspirant businesses, as well as their environmental sustainability and energy efficiencies in coastal locations.
3. Press for the Government to undertake a review of the relevant tax regimes in acknowledgement of the unique circumstances faced by our coastal businesses such as the permanent removal of VAT on accommodation, and to explore tax incentives to encourage investment from higher value sectors.
4. Start-up business support programme to aid economic recovery, especially in coastal areas where job opportunities are limited.
5. Support for the Northern Devon Digital Accelerator programme to utilise Big Data and AI as part of a Digital Biosphere.



6. Support the development of local R&D centres of excellence and collaboration in new and emerging industries that support 'Build Back Better' by developing a sub-regional innovation ecosystem which helps support high quality knowledge based jobs for local people in coastal areas.

### **Case Study – Propeller: Exmouth**

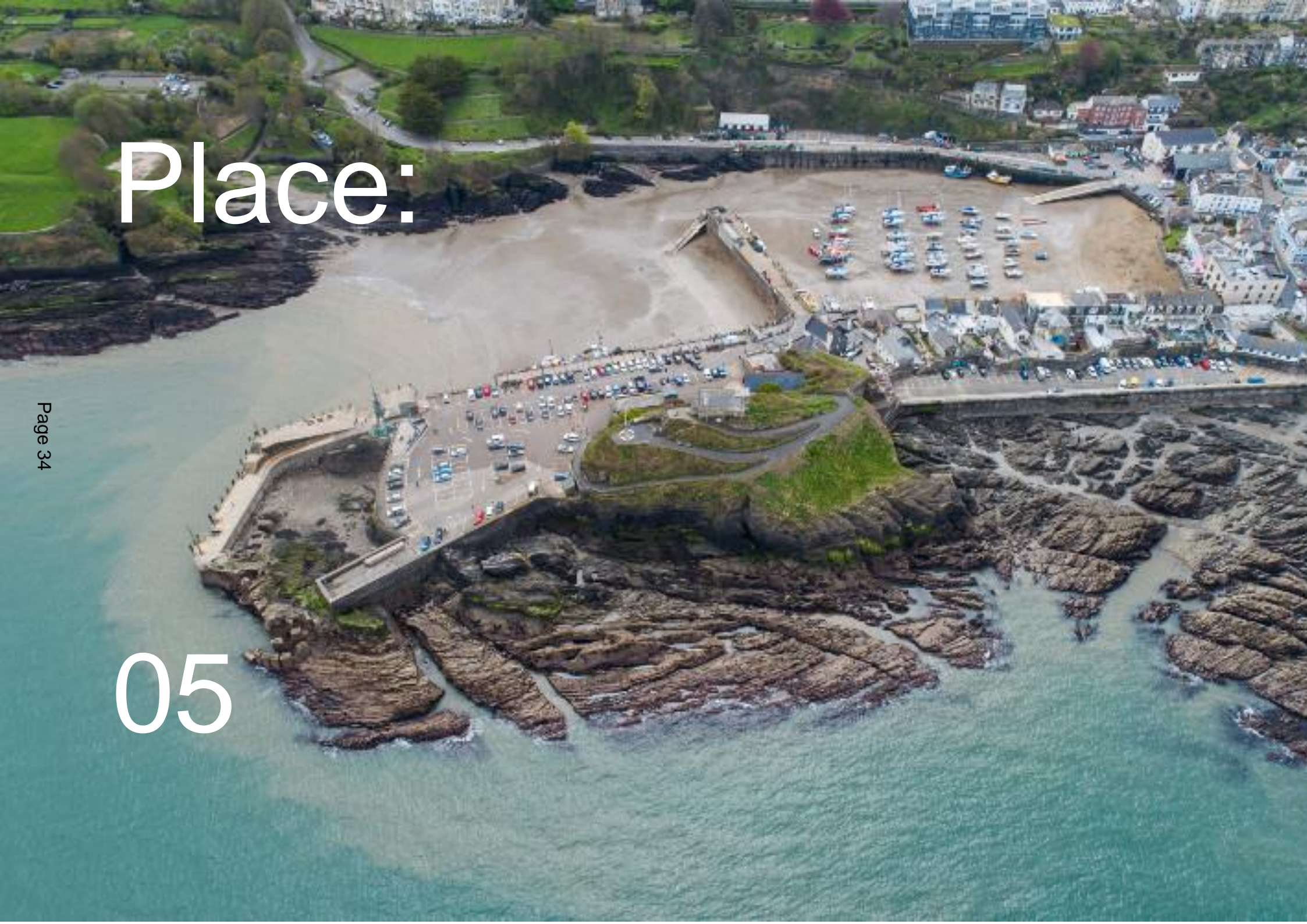
Propeller opened its co-working space in Exmouth in October 2018, thanks to East Devon District Council providing discretionary Business Rate relief. The Centre has already seen ten new start-ups founded.



The Centre offers a range of support and resources to entrepreneurs and now has more than 100 members who regularly attend events, with topics including big data, smart logistics and tech development, leading up to a major conference in 2020 with international appeal.

Place:

05



## Context

Coastal communities include some of the most deprived areas of the country, juxtaposed with areas of relative affluence. They often have lower skills levels, productivity, and wage rates, and a combination of part-time, seasonal jobs and under-employment in sectors such as health & social care, and tourism & hospitality. The decline of traditional sectors such as fishing, shipbuilding and a lack of adaptation to changing visitor demands, have also proved a challenge.

Seaside towns reliant on visitors have seen their high streets suffer an especially sharp decline, in the context of a tough retail environment generally. As they become less attractive, this triggers a further fall in visitor numbers, a downward spiral that needs to be reversed.

Yet our coastal communities are unique, not just in their economies, but also in their assets – the coastal and marine environment. They offer considerable unrealised potential and the possibility of significant economic growth opportunities in high value/ sustainable tourism and in low carbon technologies.

They also offer an attractive place to live in a more decentralised and digitally focused working environment, provided that the standards of infrastructure, the digital, built and natural environment and service provision in areas such as education and skills development, meet the needs of aspirational people and businesses, particularly in digital, hi-tech, and creative industries.

## Key Issues

1. Coastal town centres need to diversify and fit for the future, with broader town centre uses, through improved public realm, social space, quality residential developments, and

cultural/ leisure offerings to attract and retain younger residents.

2. There is need for a strategic approach to tackling low performing sectors, developed collaboratively with key businesses and stakeholders across the LEP area. Strategic development activity should be resourced through funding sources such as Towns Fund, Future High Streets, and UKSPF, to develop the place-based agenda to support the levelling up of coastal towns.
3. There is a need to support the recovery of the tourism sector, through providing a wider offer to visitors, promoting sectoral improvements that meet new global challenges and customer demands and promoting the tourism and hospitality sector as a career which offers full time, well paid employment opportunities and defined career paths.
4. Encouraging high quality private sector investment, be it housing, employment space, retail and leisure or public realm improvements is key to raising aspirations and regenerating our coastal economies.

## Solutions and Opportunities

1. Press the Government to accept the House of Lords recommendation in respect of Coastal Action Zones, and seek for that designation to be piloted in HotSW.
2. Ensure Government recognises the priority for UKSPF and Levelling Up Fund to address the challenges and to fast track the delivery of stalled regeneration projects and new investment in order to aid recovery of left-behind coastal areas.
3. Seek reintroduction of discounted Public Works Loan borrowing rates (minimum of 0.25%) for capital investments in growth and regeneration projects undertaken by coastal local authorities to catalyse investment.

4. Work with partners to access investment through the NIB to support sustainable energy generation as part of the National Infrastructure Strategy and reach net zero carbon by 2050 as well as the challenges of the post Covid-19 recovery.
5. Provide coastal areas with capacity funding to support additional resource in delivering solutions.
6. A Ministerial voice representing the issues and challenges of coastal areas.

## Appendix – Key Facts and Figures

The issues and challenges facing many coastal towns and communities across the UK are well evidenced. Britain's coastal communities are among the worst socio-economically performing parts of the country across a range of indicators, including earnings, employment, health and education. Analysis<sup>11</sup> shows that:

- Five of the ten local authorities in Great Britain with the lowest average employee pay are in coastal communities – Torbay, North Devon, Gwynedd, Hastings and Torridge – three of which are within the HotSW.
- In 2016 average employee pay was about £3,600 per annum lower in coastal communities than in other parts of Great Britain.
- Five of the 10 local authorities in Great Britain with the highest unemployment rate are coastal communities. For the three months prior to March 2017 – these were Hartlepool, North Ayrshire, Torridge, Hastings and South Tyneside.
- Ten of the twenty local authorities in England & Wales with the highest proportion of individuals in poor health are coastal communities – Neath Port Talbot, Blackpool, Bridgend, Sunderland, Barrow-in-Furness, Carmarthenshire, East Lindsey, South Tyneside, County Durham and Hartlepool.
- The two local authorities in England & Wales with the smallest proportion of 16+ population holding level 4 and above qualifications (such as higher apprenticeships and degrees) are Great Yarmouth and Castle Point – both coastal communities.
- In 1997, economic output (GVA) per capita was 23% lower in Great Britain's coastal communities, compared with non-coastal communities. By 2015 this gap had widened to 26%.

<sup>11</sup> Living on the Edge; Britain's Coastal Communities, Social Market Foundation, September 2017

Poor economic performance and social deprivation in our seaside and coastal towns has been associated with a lack of well-paid job opportunities due to long-term structural economic challenges resulting from the demise of the domestic tourism market. This coupled with isolated communities, poor transport links and lack of major employment centres, has resulted in communities 'living on the edge'. These challenges lead to disconnection and deprivation evidenced through the labour market and wider economic underperformance, social, health, and educational issues, all of which cost the public purse over the long term<sup>12</sup>.

The Localis report<sup>13</sup> recognised that for all its merits, a national Industrial Strategy: *"won't suit, or even help a great many places whose choice will be to either lead their own industrial strategy or have none at all."* The report goes on to identify places which they consider to be "stuck":

<sup>12</sup> OECD, Job Creation and Local Economic Development, 2016

<sup>13</sup> The Making of an Industrial Strategy, Localis, March 2017

**Table 4: The thirty structurally weakest economies in England**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>National ranking on key economic/ demographic indicators<sup>14</sup></b>
1	Isle of Wight	263
2	Blackpool	258
3	Tendring	257
4	King`s Lynn and West Norfolk	253
5	East Lindsey	252
6	North Norfolk	247
7	Torbay	245
8	North Lincolnshire	245
9	West Lancashire	242
10	Wyre	241
11	Copeland	239
12	Dudley	236
13	Eden	235
14	West Somerset	235

<sup>14</sup> Average Ranking refers to the average ranking an area receives against a set number of economic and human capital indicators we have established as being

15	Sunderland	233
16	Babergh	233
17	North Kesteven	232
18	North East Derbyshire	230
19	Staffordshire Moorlands	228
20	North East Lincolnshire	227
21	Suffolk Coastal	226
22	North Devon	225
23	South Norfolk	225
24	Tameside	223
25	Torridge	223
26	Barrow-in Furness	223
27	South Lakeland	223
28	Great Yarmouth	222
29	Stoke-on-Trent	222
30	Christchurch	222

The evidence in table 4 emphasises that the economies of many coastal towns across England have performed poorly, relative to the

important measures of a places economic vitality. Full details of our calculations are available in the appendices of The Making of an Industrial Strategy, Localis

rest of the country, with a lack of well-paid job opportunities for people in these areas. Many are ill connected to major employment centres, which compounds the challenges faced by the residents in coastal communities. Not only do they lack local job opportunities, but travelling elsewhere for work is also relatively difficult due to the peripheral/ isolated locations and poor infrastructure links, all of which act as a barrier to social mobility.

The economic gap between coastal and non-coastal communities has widened over time. In 1997 Great Britain's economic output (GVA) per capita was 23% lower in coastal communities, compared with non-coastal communities. By 2015 this gap had widened to 26%, with 10 of the bottom 20 local authorities (in terms of economic output per head) being coastal areas.

Many coastal economies remain smaller than their pre-financial crisis peaks. A third (32 of the 103) of coastal local authorities in Great Britain had smaller economies in 2017 than in 2007<sup>15</sup> in real terms. This compares with a fifth (20.6%) of non-coastal local authorities in Great Britain seeing a decline in the size of their economies over the same period. In short, coastal economies have struggled more than the rest of the country to move on from the impact of the 'Great Recession' of 2008 /09.

Low employee pay is pervasive across coastal communities. Average employee wages in coastal communities were about £4,700 lower than those in the rest of Great Britain in 2018<sup>16</sup>, this is compared with a gap of £3,600 per annum in 2015, suggesting a widening pay gap.

Evidence suggests that this growing divergence in coastal economies is leading to increased health problems and inequalities, resulting in reduced life expectancy<sup>17</sup>. The combination of being

trapped in poor quality employment, a widening pay gap, and lack of career opportunities is leading to an increase in drug and alcohol abuse in our coastal towns. These behaviours and poor quality of life are adversely impacting on people's health and life expectancy.

Table 4 provides a summary of the economic performance of the HotSW coastal areas compared to others. The research identifies four 'stuck' places which have structurally weak economies – Torbay, West Somerset, North Devon, and Torridge. Surrounded by affluence, are pockets of significant deprivation– over 17.1% of residents in Torbay, Torridge, North Devon and West Somerset live in some of the most deprived areas in England<sup>18</sup>.

While these challenges are not exclusive to coastal communities, it is evident that coastal towns and resorts suffer from the following issues to a greater extent than the rest of the country:

- Polarised communities, with high levels of economic inequality
- Presence of underinvestment and neglected or decaying architecture
- Higher proportion of low paid part-time employment, and comparatively lower representation of well-paid jobs in the professional, scientific, and technical sectors
- Lower aspiration, with intergenerational unemployment and educational underachievement, associated with the challenges around the lack of social mobility
- A greater percentage of residents with long-term health problems and in receipt of out-of-work benefits
- Higher levels of relative deprivation

<sup>15</sup> Falling off a cliff? Economic and social decline by the coast, Social Market Foundation, August 2019

<sup>16</sup> Falling off a cliff? Economic and social decline by the coast, Social Market Foundation, August 2019

<sup>17</sup> Falling off a cliff? Economic and social decline by the coast, Social Market Foundation, August 2019

<sup>18</sup> Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015, based on 2012 data. Living in the bottom 20% most deprived wards in England

- Higher-than-average proportions of residents in cheap, privately rented accommodation

Table 5 summarises the differences in economic performance between the HotSW's coastal and non-coastal districts/ authorities. The CCP sets out the context and recommendations to address these challenges associated with low economic productivity in our coastal areas.



**Table 5: HotSW LEP Economic Indicators**

	Population <sup>19</sup>	GVA per FTE <sup>20</sup>	GVA per Head <sup>21</sup>	Average Resident Pay <sup>22</sup>	Average Workplace Pay <sup>23</sup>	IMD 2019 Rank <sup>24</sup>	Social Mobility Rank <sup>25</sup>	Proportion of Tourism Employment	Employment <sup>26</sup>	JSA <sup>27</sup>	Unemployment <sup>28</sup>
Torridge	68,267	£39,549	£12,757	£22,398	£18,829	99	283	17.2%	87.9%	0.6%	5.9%
Mid Devon	134,163	£40,020	£13,783	£22,156	£21,582	176	194	10.1%	81.3%	0.5%	5.8%
Teignbridge	82,311	£41,245	£15,326	£20,718	£19,978	194	153	14.9%	78.5%	0.5%	3.8%
South Hams	87,004	£41,778	£19,208	£20,850	£20,508	229	49	15.9%	80.2%	0.3%	-
West Devon	55,796	£42,032	£13,746	£22,371	-	162	143	19.1%	70.6%	0.5%	-
East Devon	146,284	£42,736	£15,269	-	-	244	123	17.9%	81.6%	0.6%	-
North Devon	97,145	£43,044	£19,370	£20,848	£21,721	132	238	16.7%	81.0%	0.5%	-
Torbay	136,264	£44,110	£14,975	£21,926	£19,511	48	137	18.5%	72.7%	0.8%	6.0%
Sedgemoor	123,178	£44,629	£15,822	£22,448	-	125	258	12.3%	79.4%	0.4%	3.9%
Mendip	115,587	£45,316	£18,320	£21,435	£22,404	184	231	12.7%	84.0%	0.4%	3.4%
Somerset West and Taunton	155,115	£46,777*	£21,232*	-	-	146	206*	11.5%	77.6%	0.4%	3.4%
HotSW	1,762,964	£47,131	£19,217	£22,202	£21,917	-	-	12.9%	78.3%	0.5%	3.7%
South Somerset	168,345	£48,717	£19,878	£23,380	£23,741	172	229	8.8%	78.2%	0.4%	2.0%
Plymouth	262,100	£48,970	£19,418	£22,188	£23,196	64	164	11.3%	73.6%	0.6%	4.9%
UK	66,796,807	£56,321	£24,403	£25,780	£25,780	-	-	10.8%	75.8%	0.8%	4.0%
Exeter	131,405	£61,417	£40,521	£22,663	£23,779	189	81	8.8%	78.8%	0.5%	3.6%

- Data unavailable
- Data for Taunton Deane

<sup>19</sup> Nomis, Population Estimates, 2019

<sup>20</sup> HotSW Projection Model, Oxford Economics. 2013 prices

<sup>21</sup> HotSW Projection Model, Oxford Economics. 2013 prices

<sup>22</sup> Nomis. Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2020. Average median pay

<sup>23</sup> Nomis. Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2020. Average median pay

<sup>24</sup> Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019. Rank out of 317 Local Authorities

<sup>25</sup> Social Mobility Index, 2017. Rank out of 324 Local Authorities

<sup>26</sup> Nomis, Annual Population Survey, July 2019 – June 2020

<sup>27</sup> Nomis, JSA, November 2020

<sup>28</sup> Nomis, Annual Population Survey, July 2019 – June 2020

The ONS has analysed 169 coastal towns across England and Wales split by size and by characteristics. It has looked at both seaside towns and coastal towns. Seaside towns are those with a tourist beach and associated visitor attractions while the other coastal towns include those located on the coast but focused on other activities such as being a port town or a town with an industrial heritage.

The ONS have split and categorised the towns based on their 2011 Census population. Towns with populations between 5,000 and 20,000 have been categorised as smaller towns while those with populations greater than 20,000 are categorised as larger towns.

**Table 6: HotSW Coastal Towns**

Town Name	Town Classification	Income Deprivation/ Job Density classification	Total Population	Population ages 0-15	Population ages 16-24	Population ages 65+	Population growth rate (2009 - 2018)	Employment growth rate (2009 - 2018)
Bideford	Smaller other coastal town	Higher Deprivation Mixed	19,927	19.4%	59.4%	21.2%	13%	-5%
Brixham	Smaller seaside town	Higher Deprivation Residential	16,986	14.2%	52.5%	33.3%	1%	-6%
Budleigh Salterton	Smaller seaside town	Lower Deprivation Residential	5,284	12.1%	43.4%	44.5%	3%	3%
Burnham-on-Sea	Larger seaside town	Higher Deprivation Working	24,016	16.1%	54.6%	29.3%	5%	12%
Dartmouth	Smaller seaside town	Mid Deprivation Working	4,917	12.9%	55.0%	32.1%	-4%	4%
Dawlish	Smaller seaside town	Higher Deprivation Residential	13,048	15.2%	55.6%	29.2%	14%	7%
Exmouth	Larger seaside town	Mid Deprivation Residential	35,632	16.1%	56.5%	27.4%	4%	-5%
Ilfracombe	Smaller seaside town	Higher Deprivation Mixed	11,055	17.5%	59.3%	23.2%	0%	10%
Kingsbridge	Smaller other coastal town	Mid Deprivation Working	6,176	16.2%	55.6%	28.2%	3%	-5%
Minehead	Smaller seaside town	Higher Deprivation Working	12,014	13.9%	52.8%	33.2%	0%	-9%
Paignton	Larger seaside town	Higher Deprivation Mixed	66,905	17.3%	56.1%	26.6%	3%	-1%
Plymstock	Larger other coastal town	Lower Deprivation Residential	25,861	17.9%	55.8%	26.3%	4%	-6%

Source: ONS, Coastal towns in England and Wales: October 2020