TORRE AND UPTON COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

The Tormohun and Upton Conservation areas are inner suburbs of Torquay. Tormohun centres round the original Saxon and medieval settlement, with the original medieval parish church still extant, while Upton contains the civic heart of Torbay with the Edwardian Town Hall, library and offices. The church and churchyard form one of the three major green spaces within the conservation area, the others are Upton Park in Lymington Road and Memorial Park in Higher Union Street.

The housing is predominantly Victorian, dating from the 1840s onwards, with a combination of large villas and various sized terraces. A large modern development is nearing completion at the old South Devon College site.
The main retail area is Higher Union Street which runs between Brunswick Square to the beginning of the town centre shops. Off Newton Road are larger areas of industrial land with various types and sizes of units.

CHALLENGES

This is a designated area of deprivation so there are people with very little, living alongside those with regular jobs and their own homes. There is a higher than average number of HMO properties as well as the drug and alcohol treatment centre. Government cuts to funding for police and councils are already having an effect on the support available to help those in the greatest need. The low average income in Torquay and rising unemployment does not help small local businesses to start up or to thrive. There are more than 40 listed buildings in this part of Torbay, and any future plans need to take these and the strong Victorian street scene into consideration.

OPPORTUNITIES

In spite of the density of building in the area, there are still opportunities for development.

- The town hall car park has been leased for retail development. The council staff need modern purpose built offices, which would leave the listed Town Hall free for other uses such as a boutique hotel. This would raise the profile of the area.
- The Library requires modernisation or relocation.
- There is still a section of land at the Torre Marine development that is to be developed into Retirement apartments
- The industrial sites off Newton Road are in the main tired and shabby, and would benefit from investment. This would make them more desirable to businesses coming into the area and create much needed jobs. .
- There is a successful Innovation Centre at Lymington Road coach park. We need to look at providing the next level of accommodation for new businesses so that we have a good turnaround.
- We are in the early stage of the ROOTE project which will result in a community centre and cafe being built, also in Lymington Road coach park.
- The large B&Q site in Torre is suitable for mixed development.
- There are opportunities for better use of the road side of Torre Station, whilst the land on the other side of the line is not being used to its best advantage as a container storage unit. Ideas mooted include a hotel or a transport hub.
- With our green spaces, Upton Park is situated along Lymington Road and runs from the Town Hall car park to the coach station. Future visions are to bring the park into the 21st century, by reconfiguring it and upgrading facilities, thus returning the park to a vibrant part of future community interaction.
- We are looking forward to a park/garden area to be created for residents on the Torre Marine site.
- Reversal of traffic flow through Torre to the town centre.
- Improvement of signage to clarify the routes to the seafront and town centre areas.