

## Placemaking Plan for Exmouth Town and Seafront

**Vision Setting Workshop** 

31 July 2023

## **Placemaking Plan for Exmouth Town and Seafront**

## Consultation Background





#### 2022 Delivery Planning

## **Delivery Group Placemaking Workshop 6 April 2022**

Consensus on Town Characteristics and Placemaking Themes to be considered.

## Cabinet Placemaking Meeting 8 June 2022

Cabinet proposed a programme of consultation.

**2022 Consultation:** ~1400 Participants



### **Multi-stakeholder Workshops**

**Until August 2022** 

138 participants



### Public Questionnaire (online)

**Until August 2022** 

861 respondents



#### **Visitor Surveys (face-to-face)**

**Until August 2022** 

400 visitors



Additional voluntary feedback

**2023 Placemaking Plan:** ~30 Participants

### **Vision Setting Workshop**



**July 2023** 

Validate Exmouth's challenges and opportunities to form a place vision.

### **Placemaking Strategy Workshop**



September 2023

Explore emerging opportunities within Exmouth's character areas.

## Workshop Overview



#### What we did

The purpose of the Vision Setting
Workshop was to test and validate
Exmouth Placemaking Plan's challenges,
and opportunities, and to collectively
develop a vision for each of Exmouth's
character areas.

Three workshop activities were designed to build off the last:

- 1. Defining Placemaking in Exmouth
- 2. Mapping Exmouth's Character Areas
- 3. Envisioning Exmouth's Future

### What we got out of it

During the workshop, participants shared and discussed their perspectives and ideas about Exmouth's Placemaking Plan. In the following pages, the insights and outcomes of each workshop activity are summarised in detail. Findings have been analysed and synthesised to inform the Exmouth Placemaking Plan vision and placemaking strategy.



## Venue and Attendees



#### Venue

The workshop was held at Ocean Entertainment, Exmouth on 31 July 2023 at 14:00-17:00.

#### **Attendees**

30 participants represented a range of stakeholder groups including Exmouth Town Council, key businesses, and community organisations. The tables were facilitated by members of WSP.

| Nicky (Transition Exmouth)             |
|--|
| Ruth Gooding                           |
| Caitlin Davey                          |
| Catherine Causley                      |
| Sarah Elghady                          |
| Anna Fitzgerald                        |
| Andrew Lewis (Kenniford Farm)          |
| George Nightingale                     |
| Graham Nye                             |
| Peter Oliver                           |
| Greg Price (Gig Rowers)                |
| John Astley                            |
| Richard Robinson (Exmouth Rowing Club) |
| Pip Piper                              |
| Debbie Piper                           |

| Peter Gilpin                       |
|------------------------------------|
| Anne-Marie Culhane/Jo (Tide lines) |
| John Petty                         |
| Jim Hill                           |
| Dan Marks                          |
| Cllr Graham Deasy                  |
| Julian Short                       |
| Nick Moore                         |
| Cllr Anne Hall                     |
| Rons Boatman                       |
| Alex Mitchell                      |
| Cllr Paul Hayward                  |
| Cllr Nick Hookway                  |
| Cllr Olly Davey                    |
| Cllr Matt Hall                     |

### **Activities Overview**

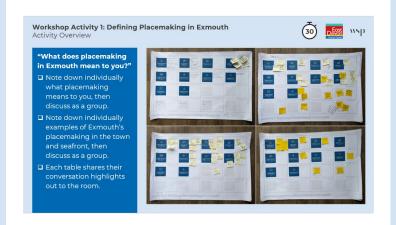




## Workshop Activity 1

# Defining Placemaking in Exmouth

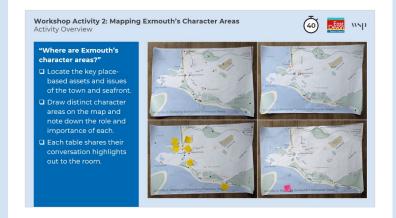
Participants explored what placemaking means to them and discussed examples. They then noted down examples of Exmouth's placemaking in the town and seafront.



## **Workshop Activity 2**

## Mapping Exmouth's Character Areas

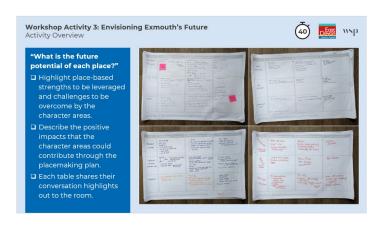
Participants pinpointed Exmouth's key place-based assets and issues of the town and seafront. They then drew distinct character areas on the map and noted down the role and importance of each of them.



## **Workshop Activity 3**

# Envisioning Exmouth's Future

Finally, participants outlined the future vision of each area by highlighting their strengths to be leveraged and challenges to be overcome. They then described their potential positive impacts.





## **Workshop Activity 1: Defining Placemaking in Exmouth**

**Activity Overview** 







# "What does placemaking in Exmouth mean to you?"

- Note down individually what placemaking means to you, then discuss as a group.
- Note down individually examples of Exmouth's placemaking in the town and seafront, then discuss as a group.
- Each table shares their conversation highlights out to the room.



## Workshop Activity 1: Defining Placemaking in Exmouth Outputs





#### **Participants' Placemaking Definitions**

A democratic way to make changes to Exmouth, while celebrating Exmouth's identity as a great place to be.

Improving what's already working and changing outdated uses by building on existing assets and activities and making the most of underused and key spaces.

#### **Participants' Placemaking Examples**

**Connectivity and Accessibility:** Near the thriving Exeter and Pebblebed Heath. Wheelchair access is good currently.

**Public Realm:** Flowers, Open spaces (Maer), Queens Drive Space, Parks

Multi-functional Places: Seafront, Ocean, leisure centre, Pavilion Theatre, Estuary cycle route/bird watching, Strand, Manor Park, Phear Park, Sideshore.

**Socio-economic prosperity:** A great place to 'be', hang out, enjoy. Tourism, food and drink, hotel and catering.

Harnessed Strategic Location: Natural beauty of the seafront (sandy beaches, water sports, bird watching, diversity of activities, South West host and hub for water sports).

**Unlocking key sites:** Magnolia Centre.

**Sustainable Tourism:** Wildlife, water sports.

#### **Other Conversations**

mentioned.

Something needs to happen, and soon: Multiple groups highlighted an urgency for development to begin and

**Exmouth is caught in a vicious cycle that hampers its development:** Tourism increasing car domination >>> places continuing to be planned and designed for the car >>> unhealthy and unsafe environments >>>.

Exmouth needs to establish a virtuous cycle to help improve its development:

Tourism leading to economic growth >>> places receiving increased investment >>> public realm, housing, and quality of life improvement >>>.

**Activity Overview** 







# "Where are Exmouth's character areas?"

- Locate the key placebased assets and issues of the town and seafront.
- ☐ Draw distinct character areas on the map and note down the role and importance of each.
- ☐ Each table shares their conversation highlights out to the room.



Outputs: Assets





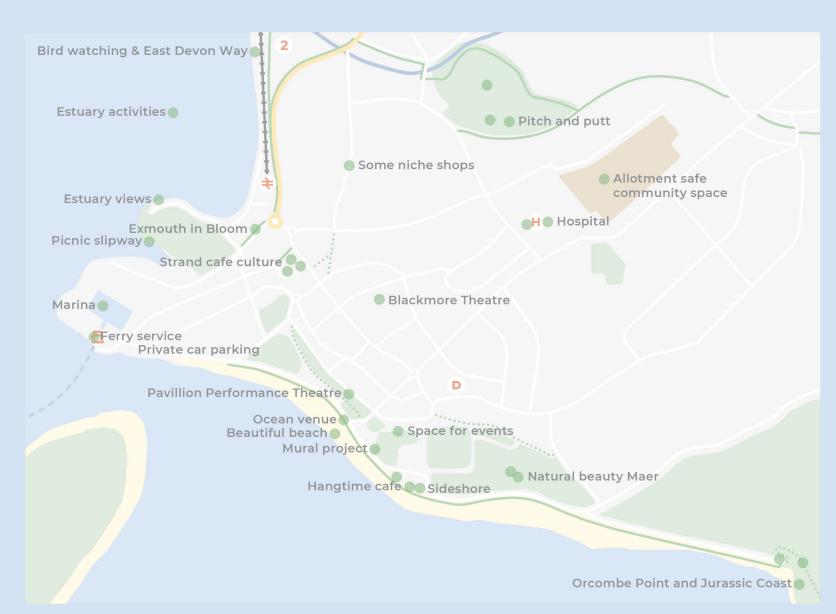
#### Participant's Areas to Enhance

Comments related to Exmouth's **assets** were most concentrated in the following places:

- Strand
- · Seafront tourist area
- Exe Estuary
- Estuary side
- The Maer open space and nature reserve

#### **Common Themes of Assets**

- Abundance of natural landscapes and active spaces
- Cultural venues
- Heritage and listed building stock
- Links to regional historic routes and the Jurassic coast



Outputs: Issues





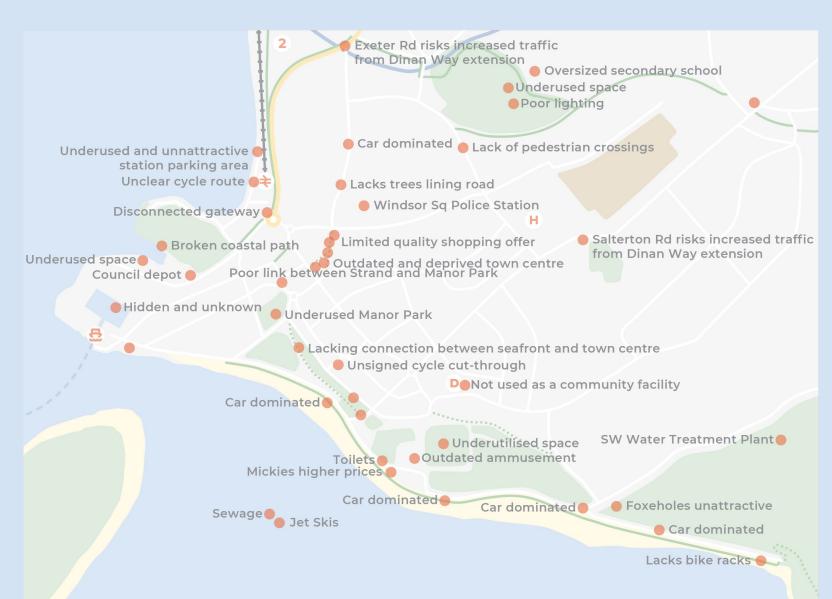
#### Participant's Areas to Improve

Comments related to Exmouth's **issues** were most concentrated in the following places:

- Magnolia Shopping Centre
- Magnolia Walk
- Chapel Street
- Exeter Road
- Esplanade
- Queens Drive

#### **Common Themes of Issues**

- Unsafe roads due to traffic congestion, driving, and parking
- Underutilisation of space and assets
- Poor condition of public realm and built environment
- Lacking pedestrian and cyclist connectivity between station, town centre, and seafront



## Outputs: Assets and Issues



#### **Participant's Areas to Resolve**

Clustering of comments relating to both Exmouth's **assets** and **issues**:

- Town Centre: Key assets included Strand and the area's community and café culture. Key issues included shopping centre areas and the poor condition of buildings and public realm. This combination of assets and issues hampers a continuous experience and interaction with the area.
- **Seafront:** Key assets included Queens Drive Space and Sideshore. Key issues include some variation in costs of leisure and tourism offers, in addition to a wide variation of amenities, ranging from modern and high-quality tourist spaces to poor condition public and residential sports facilities. This combination of assets and issues affects the perception of the seafront as a whole and reduces its inclusiveness.
- Estuary: Key assets include its natural views and flexible open spaces to relax and enjoy. Key issues include gateway views obscured by car parks and underused amenities. This combination of assets and issues reduces Exmouth's potential to establish national and international prominence.



## **Workshop Activity 3: Envisioning Exmouth's Future**

**Activity Overview** 

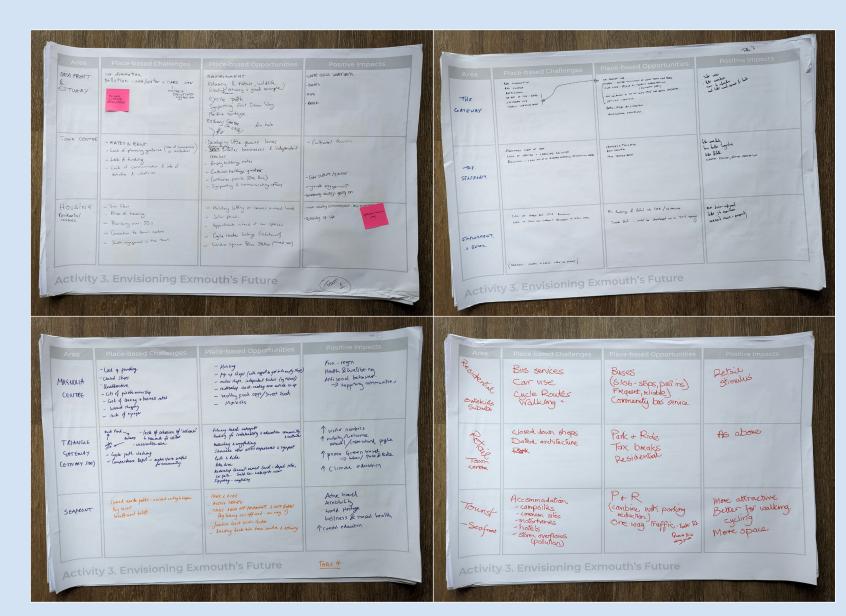






# "What is the future potential of each place?"

- ☐ Highlight place-based strengths to be leveraged and challenges to be overcome by the character areas.
- □ Describe the positive impacts that the character areas could contribute through the placemaking plan.
- ☐ Each table shares their conversation highlights out to the room.



## **Workshop Activity 3: Envisioning Exmouth's Future**

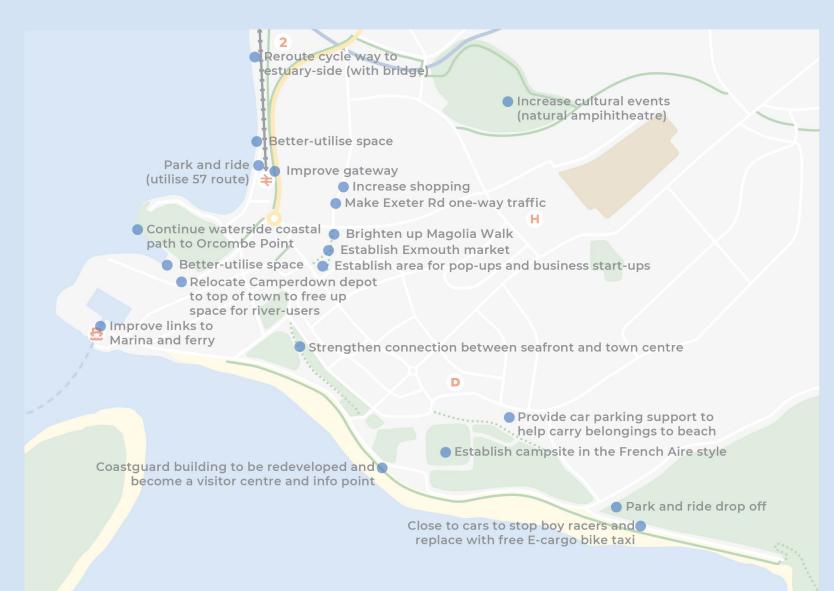
## Outputs



#### Participant's Proposals to Consider

Places with the highest concentration of comments related to proposed **opportunities**:

- Town Centre: Improve the public realm and buildings, utilise vacant spaces and assets, and reduce traffic congestion by improving active and public modes of transport.
   Increase community activity and presence by providing commercial spaces to street market pop-ups and business start-ups.
- **Seafront:** Calm traffic and rationalise the scattered parking. Increase the consistency of safe pedestrian junctions and cross points and review shared pedestrian/cyclist routes. Create an information area focal point and celebrate the voluntary action with a new coastguard centre.
- Gateway and Estuary: Fill existing gaps in pedestrian and cyclist connectivity on key station and town centre routes. Better utilise and invigorate the station car park area with a retail area for SMEs and independent shops.



Conclusions





### Character Areas



During the Vision setting Workshop, participants mapped Exmouth's key assets, issues, and opportunities.

Based on the clustering of these comments, the most commented areas in Exmouth include:

- Gateway and Estuary
- Town Centre
- Exeter Road
- Phear Park
- Marina
- Holiday Accommodation
- Tourism Core
- Resident Outdoor Facilities



## Gateway and Estuary







#### **Assets and Issues**

Station area, car parks, and roads are adequate in size, but are is underused, unattractive, and lacks a cohesive 'welcome'. No dedicated bus and taxi area.

The gateway benefits from combining all travel modes, however they are all poorly connected to the town centre and seafront areas, with the area causing congestion leading to increased noise and air pollution and decreased pedestrian and cyclist safety. Cycle routes are also non-continuous and suffers from unclear signage for all modes.

Imperial Recreation Ground is a major open space asset to the town. However coastal access it is not possible in the areas and to the south, towards the Marina.

#### **Opportunities and Benefits**

Establish a truly multi-modal arrival hub that maximises the natural asset of the Estuary side by routing all transport modes to it.

Open up views to the estuary, relocate the cycle path to the Estuary side.

Provide free, affordable, or subsidised shuttle bus/park-and-ride services starting from station towards seafront.

Rationalise pedestrian and cycle routes along the seafront and throughout the town to encourage increased active local trips.

Establish a continuous walking and cycling route around the entire coastal edge, linking with the station, ferry, beginning of Jurassic coast, and South West Trail to encourage greater recreation and safe active travel.

Improve the occupancy and utilisation of the long-term parking near the station with a retail areas for artisan pop-up stores and business start-ups.

Repurpose the GWR Club building as a tourist and town information point and showcase and signpost other visitor experiences.

Establish a cycle hire network throughout the town, with key docking stations at the station. Increased visitor numbers, climate awareness and education. Promotion of sustainable and active travel.

### Town Centre





#### **Assets and Issues**

Lacks funding and has pockets of deprivation. Some shops are closed or vacant. Limited quality shops, outdated architecture, and unclear wayfinding. Lack of space for new start-ups, SME businesses, and current businesses to grow into.

Characterised by Strand and Manor Park, the southern part of the town centre was almost described as the most successful area, with assets that encourage a modern café culture. However, Manor Park is currently underused and there is a poor connection link with Strand area. While this area is located between the town centre and seafront, it fails to connect the two.

#### **Opportunities and Benefits**

Improve the perception, resident footfall, visitor numbers, and safety of the centre by emphasising its heritage character and quaint lanes. Improve the wayfinding and access to information.

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by improving pedestrian and cycle routes, and reducing local trips taken by car.

Establish new retail and business activities including a community market with healthy street food options.

Increase number of businesses and increase the diversity of the employment sector by repurpose underutilised and vacant stores to encourage SMEs, independent retailers, coworking spaces, pop-up stores, maker shops, and independent trades.

### Tourist Core and Accommodation





#### **Assets and Issues**

Seen to be primarily used by visitors and tourists. Multiple facilities for family activities and events. However, the F&B offer cost of some venues were considered to be higher than average, other entertainment facilities viewed as outdated, and the public toilets in poor condition. Surrounding roads are dominated by cars, with both dangerous driving and parking.

Swimming areas are contaminated by sewage overflow 3 out of 10 days.

Insufficient space and unsafe shared use pedestrian/cycle path.

Car dominated on roads and parking spaces.

#### **Opportunities and Benefits**

Develop a new visitors centre that combines with the coastguard site's redevelopment, showcases their work, and signposts the Jurassic Coast and East Devon Way.

Establish routes that direct visitors to the town centre and estuary.

Establish a segregated cycleway by reducing car dominance along the seafront roads, to improve safety for all modes.

Deliver traffic calming and rationalise approach to car parking measures along the seafront.

Build on the existing activities and facilities that contribute to Exmouth's reputation as a worldclass water sports destination.

Encourage water sports and improve facilities (shelter, changing areas, bike parking, showers, toilets), while maintaining sensitivity to protection areas.

Encourage visitors and residents to stay for longer by ensuring that amenities are available into the evening.

### Phear Park and Marina





#### **Assets and Issues**

Phear Park is a large open space, with multiple facilities, partially segregated green/active routes connect both the rail station to the west and Pebblebed Heath to the east. However, the park is currently underused and thought to be unsafe due to poor lighting and lack of surrounding pedestrian crossings.

The Marina is a picturesque harbour with ribs, jet-skis, yachts and fishing boats, which also provides access to the ferry point.

However, the area lacks clearly marked access to tourists and residents compared other parts of the town.

#### **Opportunities and Impacts**

Phear Park opportunities included improving the safety of the park by increasing its use for cultural events and utilisation of a natural amphitheatre. Improvements to surrounding road junctions, strengthened links to the station and centre, and increased lighting within the park.

The marina's primarily private ownership means that opportunities are reduced. However, both the harbour, ferry point, and surrounding food and beverage amenities will benefit from improved physical and visual accessibility, particularly.

## **Next Steps**



#### 1. Integrate the Workshop Findings

The Vision Setting Workshop findings will be taken forward in the following stages of the Placemaking Plan:

#### **Stage 2: Characterisation Study**

The participant findings will inform the focus of assets, issues, opportunities and the character areas to be studied in Stage 2 Characterisation Study.

#### **Stage 3: Placemaking Strategy**

Findings will guide the emerging opportunities within each character area, while considering each of their unique contexts.

#### 2. Placemaking Strategy Workshop

The focus of the next workshop will be to explore the emerging opportunities within each of the character areas.

The findings of the workshop will help to prioritise the proposed interventions and most appropriate development sites to be taken forward as to the Strategic Outline Business Case and Investment Plan project stages.

All invitees will receive a briefing pack in advance of the workshop date.

11 September 2023 14:00-17:00 Ocean Complex

#### 3. Workshop Activities Plan

#### **Activity 1: Character Areas Review**

- ☐ Recap of Workshop 1.
- ☐ Review the findings from the Stage 2 Characterisation Study.

#### **Activity 2: Opportunities Development**

- ☐ Individually place sticky dots on the most promising placemaking opportunities. Select the top 3 opportunities.
- ☐ Elaborate resources, costs, roles, funding sources for each of the placemaking opportunity.

#### **Activity 3: Intervention Feasibility**

- ☐ Assess the comparative difficulty and impact of each opportunity.
- □ Identify potential co-benefits and trade-offs from combining interventions. Place sticky dots on the strongest, most interlinked opportunities.



# **Appendix**

Pre-Workshop Introductory Presentation

## Agenda



## Part A – Introduction 10 mins

- Welcome from the Chair
- Why we are here

## Part B – Project Progress 20 mins

- Placemaking Plan
- What do we mean by Placemaking?
- Our Understanding of Exmouth
- Challenges and Opportunities

## Part C – Workshop Activities 150 mins

- Introductions
- Defining Placemaking
- Aspirations for Exmouth
- Mapping the Aspirations

## Why we are here



# 13th December 2022 Council Decision

The members of the Placemaking Group accepted the results of the consultations (noting that not all the suggestions fall within East Devon's District Council's statutory remit and those that do will have to be prioritised in terms of deliverability and budget availability).

## 13th December 2022 Council Decision

The Placemaking Group recommended to the Cabinet that the results of the consultation be accepted and that they be used to appoint a professional team to develop a terms of reference and a plan for a Placemaking Strategy for Exmouth Town and Seafront.

## **Today's Session**

Sense checking our interpretation of last year's consultation.

Test and validate the Exmouth's key placemaking challenges, opportunities, and vision.

## **Placemaking Plan - Project Structure**







Stage 1: **Baseline Review** 

To understand the place, its challenges, constraints and opportunities



Stage 2:
Characterisation
Study

Define character areas and set out objectives and vision for each area



Stage 3: Placemaking Strategy

Formulate a placemaking strategy that provides strategic direction to delivering Exmouth's vision



Stage 4:
Strategic Outline
Business Case

Assess strategic interventions and their potential through the outline business case



Stage 5: Investment Strategy

Set out investment and funding strategy to enable delivery of the placemaking strategy



Stage 6: **Development Briefs** 

Improve project
definition of the
strategic
interventions
through
development brief

## Placemaking Plan - Project Team





## **Project Objectives**





## 'Exmouth Placemaking Plan' to ensure...



**Develop a shared vision** for the town
that is driven by the
community's aspirations



Socio-economic sustainability that ensures prosperity and economic opportunities to the residents



A Framework to enable the right conditions for unlocking development on key sites



Delivery of **public realm** that is exciting, vibrant and cohesive



Delivery of projects and opportunities within 10 years



**Encourage sustainable tourism** to bring
investment that provides
benefits to the local
residents



Capitalise and commercialise public land that will bring maximum benefits to the town and its residents



Harness its strategic seafront location, proximity to key destinations, and key activities



**Improve connectivity and accessibility** within and outside the town

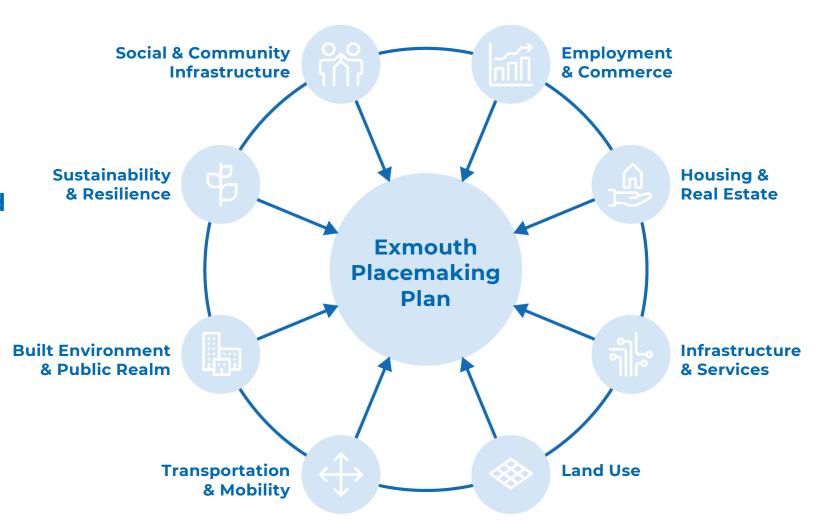


Improve governance, funding mechanisms and collaboration

## What we mean by Placemaking?



Understanding and harnessing the value of Exmouth's **assets** through a set of **interconnected actions** that reimagine and reinvent the town as a cohesive place where people choose to live, work, and spend time.



#### **Consultation Process So Far**





#### **Background**

## Delivery Group Placemaking Workshop 6 April 2022

Delivery Group Members gained consensus on a list of proposed Exmouth Characteristics and Placemaking Themes.

## Cabinet Placemaking Meeting 8 June 2022

Cabinet proposed a programme of consultation with interest groups, stakeholders, and the public to seek feedback on the Delivery Group's workshop outcomes.

#### **Consultation Programme**



#### **Multi-stakeholder Workshops**

### 138 participants

May to August 2022

10,000 words of rich qualitative data from multiple face-to-face events.



## Public Questionnaire (online)

### 861 respondents

Closed 12th of August 2022

Inviting broader feedback on Exmouth's proposed defining characteristics and the placemaking themes.



## **Visitor Surveys (face-to-face)**

400 visitors

July to August 2022



Additional voluntary feedback

#### **Findings**



## **Exmouth's Defining Characteristics**

Specific place-based aspects of Exmouth that contribute to the quality of life and place experience.



## Exmouth's Placemaking Themes

Broad topics to improve the quality of life and place experience for residents and visitors of Exmouth.

**Consultation Findings** 







#### **Exmouth's Defining Characteristics**

#### Exmouth's unique identity is...

A seaside town that is building on its past and looking to the future, with a sensitive place identity.

#### Our biggest asset is...

The beachy seafront and promenade, with water-based recreation and sports being intrinsically linked.

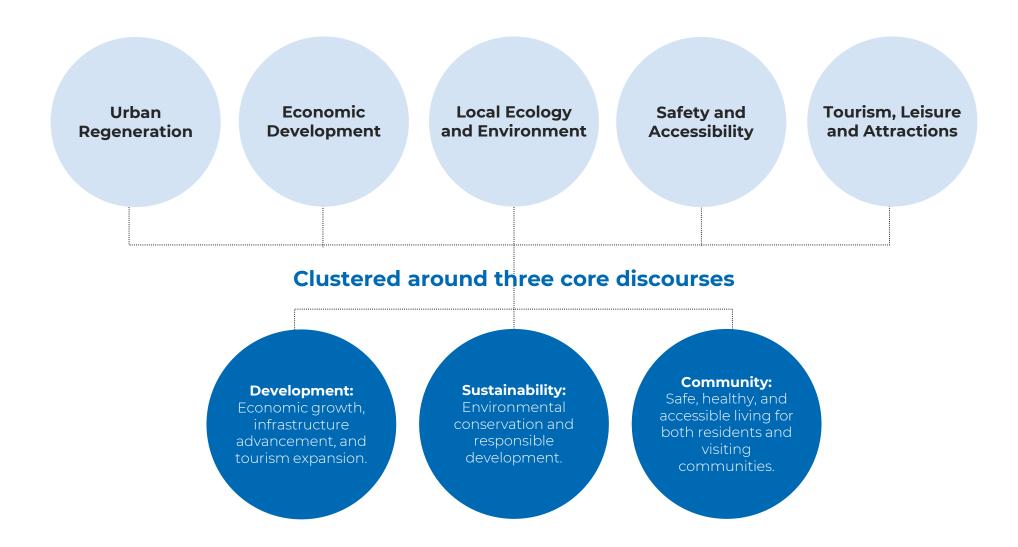
#### We will be known for...

- Its diverse leisure, entertainment, restaurants, and quality places to relax.
- A green tourism offer with eco-holiday accommodation for regional visitors and beyond.
- An active local arts and culture scene, with events and venues, independent shops, and publicly displayed art and installations that support the local economy.

### **Consultation Findings**



## Exmouth's Placemaking Themes



## Our Understanding of Exmouth **Spatial**





## Exmouth's spatial quality is characterised by...



The Estuary and the Seafront characterise the natural setting of Exmouth. As a result, large parts of the waterfront are within flood zone and therefore protected areas.

Centred around Rolle Street, the conservation areas showcase the rich architectural heritage of Exmouth.

Topography and the natural setting play an important role in defining the spatial characteristics of Exmouth. The spatial form is responsive to different contexts and settings, creating distinctive zones.

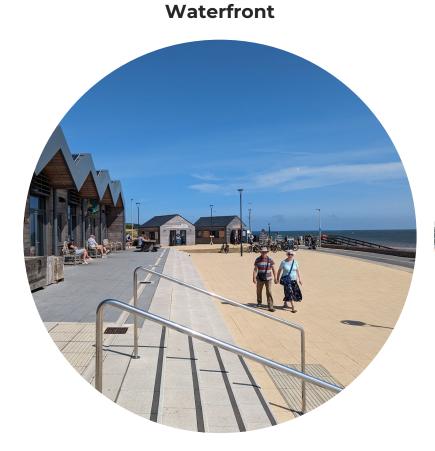
Spatial



## Exmouth's spatial quality is characterised by...

Heritage

## Eximodel 3 spatial quality is characterised by...





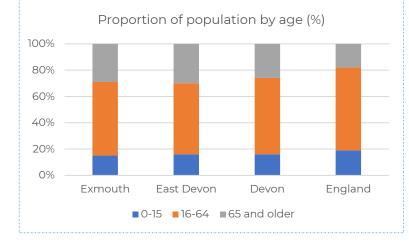


#### **Economics**



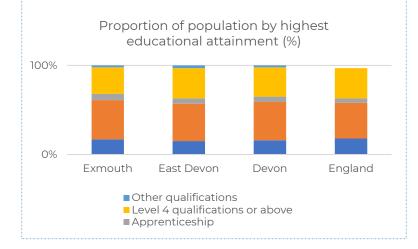
#### **Population**

- Slower population growth between 2011-2021 (3.1%) compared to East Devon (13.9%), Devon (8.7%) and England as a whole (6.6%).
- Older than average, with the population aged 65 years and older being significantly higher (29%) compared to the whole of England (18%).
- Not very ethnically diverse compared to England as a whole.



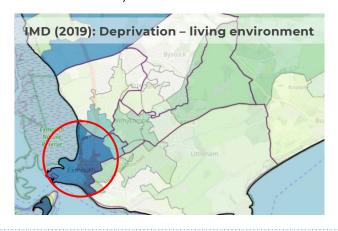
#### **Education**

- Lower-skilled population compared to East Devon and the rest of England.
- Lower proportion educated at NVQ4+ (30%) compared with East Devon (34%), Devon (33%) and England (34%).
- Significant improvement in skills attainment over the past decade: proportion with no qualifications falling by 32% and NVQ4+ level increasing by 15%.



#### **Deprivation**

- **Less deprived** (exposure to crime and barriers to housing and services).
- More deprived (employment opportunities, education, skills and training).
- Spatially, Littleham Ward contains the most deprived LSOAs in terms of income; employment; and education, skills and training deprivation.
- Exmouth Town has relatively high deprivation (crime and living environment).

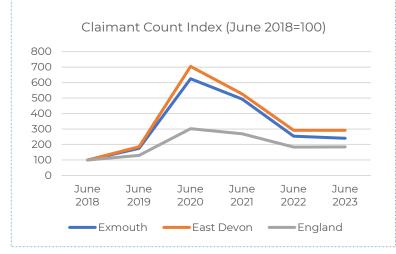


#### **Economics**



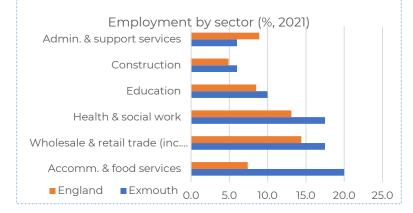
#### Unemployment

- Economically-active population in employment in 2021 is 52.1% significantly less in England as whole (57.4%).
- Effects of COVID-19 persist, with claimant count numbers still higher in June 2023 than their pre-COVID levels.



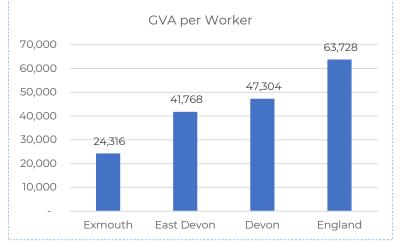
#### **Employment by sector and occupation**

- Key sectors are accommodation and food service activities, wholesale and retail trade, healthcare and social work, education, construction and administrative support activities – 79.2% of total employment.
- Higher proportion working in skilled trades, the care sector and in sales and customer service roles compared to the rest of England; and relatively less representation in managerial/ directorial roles and professional occupations, among others.



#### Exmouth's economy

- In 2021, the total value of all goods and services (gross value added, or GVA) produced by Exmouth's economy was £381 million, compared to East Devon which had a GVA of £2.7 billion, and Devon as a whole with a GVA of £17.5 billion.
- Exmouth's GVA per worker in 2021 is £24,316, suggesting workers in Exmouth have lower productivity compared to East Devon (£41,678), Devon (£47,304) and England (£63,728).



## Our Understanding of Exmouth Transport





### Exmouth's transport and movement are characterised by...

### **Car Dominated Streetscape**

# The visual experience of the streetscape in Exmouth is vehicular-dominated. The open spaces along the seafront function as car park, reducing its visual appeal.

### **Shared Walking and Cycling Infrastructure**



There is designated cycling infrastructure, however, in shared capacity on the pedestrian footways, which limits the footway space. This creates conflicts between users during peak times.

### **Limited Public Transport**



The frequency of bus routes connecting Exmouth's zones and wider is limited, key routes running every 30/60 minutes resulting in the resident's dependency on private vehicles.

# Our Understanding of Exmouth Transport



## Exmouth's transport and movement are characterised by...

### **Car Dominated Streetscape**



### **Car Dominated Streetscape**



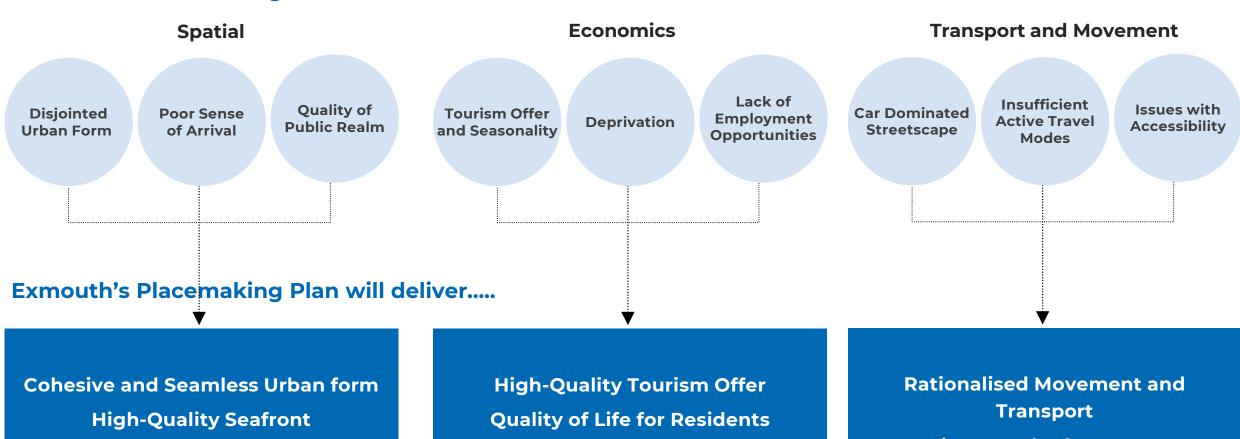
## **Shared Walking and Cycling Infrastructure**



## **Challenges and Opportunities**



## Exmouth's Placemaking Plan will address...



**Public Spaces and Gateways** 

**Diverse Employment Opportunities** 

**Active Travel Infrastructure** Improved choice in travel modes



## **Placemaking Strategy Workshop**

11 September 2023 - 14:00-17:00 © Ocean Entertainment

Exploring the emerging intervention proposals to shape the placemaking strategy and development sites.

