



The Globe, Torrington – Insight Panel findings – Simon Sherbersky (SS)

Project Requirements

To engage interested parties in three sets of 3 Panel discussions to inform the next stage in the design process for the building and its use. Nine two hour sessions took place at the Town Hall, with a focus on Community, Skills and Training and Business and Hospitality, aligned to the business plan developed for the share offer process.

1. Engage diverse stakeholders (residents, businesses, education providers, cultural organisations, young people, volunteers).
2. Gather hopes, needs, and practical ideas for the Globe's role in business development, community wellbeing, and training/skills.
3. Surface barriers and opportunities to ensure the project reflects local realities.
4. Build ownership and pride in the project by positioning stakeholders as co-creators.
5. Produce a clear set of outcomes and outputs aligned with the Globe's objectives, ready to be tracked for impact reporting and evaluation.

Each theme will have three sessions (Nov, Dec, Jan): -

Session 1: Exploration – hopes, dreams, priorities, visioning –

Session 2: Focus – challenges, opportunities, practical ideas, partnership potential –

Session 3: Outcomes – refining proposals, shaping measurable outputs, agreeing indicators of success

Approach to Delivery

Engagement Activity

Invitations were handled by the Globe Manager. SS picked this work up after the 1st round of panels had been conducted, so facilitated sessions 2 and 3 for each theme, as outlined above, which built on the first sessions delivered before Christmas. The brief was to deliver the approach outlined by the previous facilitator, who was unable to complete the work. Session one surfaced the aspirations in each group, including using a cover story mock up, where participants produced an article which showed the amazing impact, ten years on.

Two well tried co creation tools were used for session 2 and 3 respectively, unless participants requested a different format, as in the Business sessions. Session 2, the Round Robin, which enables participants to contribute to each others` ideas, challenge their feasibility and propose iterated approaches taking on board criticisms. Session 3 used a How might we template from The Design Kit at the Human-Centred Design Resources, which seeks to further define intended outcomes, context, constraints, further explore solutions and refine original proposals.

Although the methodology did not request it, SS sought to find patterns and synergy between the three themes, to enable a more cohesive set of findings to be put forward.



Engagement Recommendations

All group participants were invested in the potential as community investors, but all wanted ongoing **involvement** and requested additional **engagement** and **communications**, using a variety of mediums, incl. the frontage of the building, which still has posters referring to the share offer on it. A number of people were interested in being more involved and liked the idea of a **network** of globe ambassadors, who could **tell the story** by word of mouth, as well as through **other channels**, like the existing newsletter.

The development of sub groups to the board to take forward areas of work was highlighted by Grant Langer, who attended every session. This was seen as a positive step. There was interest to get more involved in each group.

The demographic of attendees was 40 plus, so the exercise has not managed to reach younger age ranges.

In the facilitator`s opinion the opportunity of a community enterprise relies on building on and connecting up people across the local area to aid the recurring theme of the Globe being a catalyst for a thriving Great Torrington in the future. Having set up and run a Community Development Trust, my recommendation is to invest in the energy and passion of the investors and wider community, which needs some dedicated resource to act as a community / network weaver, using asset based approaches (see [Home - ABCD International Network](#)). This needs to be a dedicated role (possibly shared across a number of local people), rather than an expectation of the Manager, given the focus needed on the renovation phase.

Findings

Overall:

Strong support for a **community enterprise**, that local people were proud of that could be a **catalyst** for more regenerative **community led action**, that **compliments** existing offers and is a place for **locals and visitors** in equal measure.

There was a very strong desire from all three groups to have a community enterprise that prioritised **accessibility** and provided facilities for people with **disabilities**, with a minimum of two rooms being fully wheelchair accessible and that this was an important USP / selling point, aligned to Torrington being a place where people with disabilities were welcome and catered for.

Furthermore this should be extended to training and employment opportunities, connecting in with the **SEND** and **apprenticeship** offers through North Devon College.

The above were generated by the Community and Training groups respectively and could then be tested with the business group, as they ran in that order. All three groups fully supported the accessibility theme / USP.

Connecting with the history of the place was considered important and part of creating a compelling narrative. Theming and naming the rooms and the possibility of engaging with and drawing from local peoples memorabilia would be a great way to embed the sense of community ownership, e.g. through photos.

All groups unanimously supported the **values and ethos** outlined in the business plan, especially around being a good employer, valuing staff and their wellbeing, but also as an exemplar for supporting progression, both on site and within its supply chain, including giving opportunities to people with special educational needs and disabilities and as a community enterprise that actively supported opportunities for local young people.

The byword is **flexibility**, design the spaces so they are flexible, so the catering offer can be flexed to meet demand and also be used for wider activities, be they training, functions, arts and crafts or other.

Business and Hospitality Panel:

The Globe **offer** – an Inn with rooms that is a friendly, affordable, good quality offer, rather than a high end hotel.

‘The Globe’ is an Inn with rooms, fit for the present day context, not trying to punch above its weight and in the context of the place, that welcomes its own community and others including those with additional needs and disabilities. 11 rooms maximum, less OK and with two family rooms that could be used for more budget groups in a bunk style to cater for cyclists and walker groups, which enables future proofing if the Active North Devon group achieve their aspirations for connection to the Tarka trail, which seem more hopeful. Provision should be made for secure storage of bicycles to complement this approach.

The issue of **parking** was strongly felt in this group. It needs to be onsite to encourage disabled and other guests to choose to stay here, as opposed to other destinations. There are currently five parking spaces owned by the Globe that stretch beyond the rear of the building and the previous design would build into the middle of these, which was highlighted as a major concern. Other parking solutions were discussed, but were subject to ongoing negotiations. This group felt that lack of parking was a critical risk factor for the successful operation of the facility.





The group discussed the **restaurant and bar** options and felt that capacity for 80 covers at peak capacity was optimum for the future, but aligned with the idea of creating this flexibly, with room dividers, allowing three spaces to be used for restaurant, private groups and other activities outlined below. Food offer should attract locals as well as visitors, be a good affordable offer available in the bar and restaurant, with availability all day everyday, including breakfast, lunch and dinner, on some level, given the lack of offer for breakfast and earlier in the week. Consideration should be given to price points to maximise usage and take up by locals and visitors alike. Strong support for local sourced and stocking local brands, such as ales and ciders

Outdoor space was discussed, which, if enabled, provides additional flexibility and capacity. Depending on design and covering, this could also be used year round and to have entertainment, such as live music.

The issue of attracting the right calibre of **Manager**, was seen as critical and on site accommodation was discussed. If on site this would need to be a 2 bed self contained flat to attract the right kind of leadership for the Globe to be a successful Inn with rooms. If off site, the enterprise needs to ensure that the offer is attractive enough to secure the high calibre of Inn Manager needed to create a successful Globe of the future.

The original business plan **staffing and training figures** were seen as too aspirational to be viable by both this group and the training group. An Inn would have a Manager / Bar person, there would be no separate reception and a staff team less than the 19 outlined in the plan in order to be viable. Further testing and reviewing of similar set ups, as below, would be critical to ensuring a viable concern.

The group reviewed earlier concept drawings from the business plan and were keen to both retain as much parking as possible, including, building over parking.

Coordinated marketing with other attractions and offers, supporting (national) reach was considered important, i.e. Rosemoor and The Plough. There was also support for connecting in with Arts and Crafts, as outlined below and marketing packages to attract visitors.

Several successful Inns were highlighted by John Eeles, who advocated for the importance of seeing what was working elsewhere:

Bittiscombe Inn, Upton, Tiverton	https://www.thebittescombeinn.com/
Castle Inn, Lydford, Tavistock	https://castleinnlydford.co.uk/
The George, South Molton	https://www.thegeorgesouthmolton.co.uk/
Tinners Arms, Zennor, St Ives	https://tinnersarms.com/

Session Attendance: Sess 1: 10, Session 2: 6, Session 3: 7

Training:

The group felt that the aspirations for 20 learners a year was over ambitious and that the approach should be to get the Inn up and running and then look to support 1 or 2 placements (apprenticeships) at a time. The Apprenticeship scheme is moving to a modular approach, with 3-4 modules a year, to be confirmed, to incentivise greater employee sign up, as 12 months plus is seen as too onerous, especially in hospitality. This could provide four individual placements per year with one apprenticeship as a starting point once the operation is set up and running effectively, with a view to adding another placement in subsequent years.

North Devon College (NDC) is now partnered with Exeter College, so can provide the full range of hospitality apprenticeships, but only kitchen/chef apprentice through NDC. NDC also have a specialist SEND facility in Tiverton and are keen to engage with the unanimous aspiration above. The Michael Caines Academy – Excellence in Hospitality, which is located at Exeter College, was discussed and his commitment to young people and as a person with a disability, it was felt his support and connection to the aspirations should be pursued through NDC.

Two participants were ex head teachers at Primary and Secondary level (incl ex head at local secondary school, who has ongoing relationships with employees at Rosemoor). The value of local people being involved and their connections and relationships being a key to the success of a community enterprise were felt to be key to the ongoing development of the Globe and Torrington.

Participants were keen to see clear linkages and alignment between agencies and organisations to promote the hospitality sector as a worthwhile career and to work together to foster the appetite and aspirations of young people locally and felt they could help. It was referred to as accessible pathways to employment, but could be seen more broadly as pathways to learning new skills, experiences, employment and entrepreneurship.

Adult Education was also discussed, Could the Globe and other venues in Torrington be part of improving the offer and its reach to local people? More conversations are needed with skills and training providers to develop this. NDC is once again an adult learning supplier.

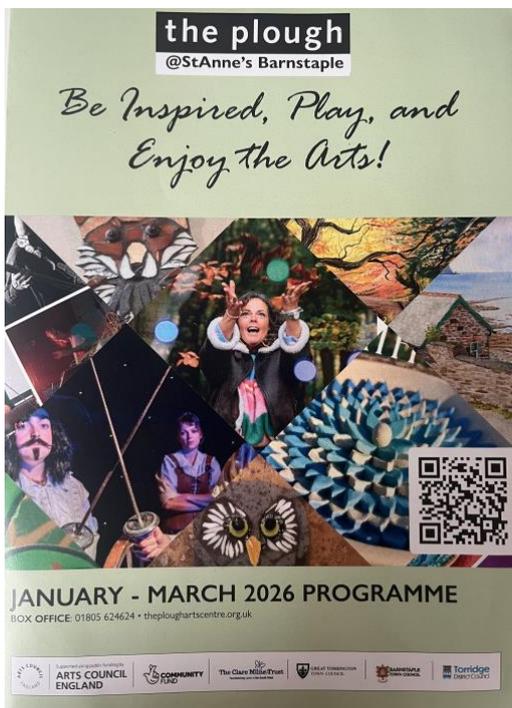
Whether you're a young person wanting to try out things to see what you might want to focus on or an older person looking to try new things and learn new skills, a more interconnected community enterprise network, can be a way to support this. Like in many places the missing ingredient is the network weaver to help connect things up.

Working collaboratively with both the locally sourced supply chain and other hospitality, entertainment and tourist destinations to both increase appetite to work in the sector and for the offer to be high quality was proposed, with the Globe acting as a catalyst to ensuring a wider commitment to supporting training and development across the area.

Session Attendance: Session 1 : 5, Session 2 : 4, Session 3: 3

Community:

Arts and Crafts



The predominance of arts and craft in the area was seen as an important asset to connect to both in terms of creating packages, such as arts and crafts breaks, but also to provide local activities in the flexible spaces, which could be volunteer led and help provide community connection and learning.

Accessibility

This started with the desire to have a `changing room` for people with disabilities and quickly evolved into the Globe being a place that caters for people with disabilities, that offers packages with other providers and builds this into its training and employment approach.

Youth

One participant was keen to see a youth space, run by young people. This prompted animated discussion in all three groups, spreading understanding of existing Torri Youth provision, but questioning the fit with the hospitality offer. The feasibility of a community space with a separate entrance was discussed and considered possible. This needs to be considered next to Business Group views re parking.

One suggestion was that, as a surplus producing concern, the Globe could be investing in this kind of activity and supporting it to happen in another space. The idea of the Globe as a catalyst to supporting a Thriving Torrington, came up in all groups.

Intergenerational

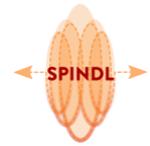
The idea of connecting with groups / organisations that work with older and younger people and stimulating more intergenerational activity was seen as important for the community. Starting with `Torrington Together` event in June. This relies on capacity outlined above in Engagement section above.

Asset mapping would be a good tool to use to get more of a collective sense of what is happening, who is involved and helping support what could be.

One attendee is the Community Developer (Torrington 100) for the place, employed by Torridge Community and Voluntary Service (TTVS).

Session Attendance: Sess 1 : 7, Session 2 : 4, Session 3: 5

Figures above include Grant Langer, Globe board member and ex owner, who provided a helpful link to the board and enabled interactions to feel more connected to the decision making group.



Measures of success

A viable enterprise that provides for residents and visitors, that's good quality, yet affordable and inclusive, that fits within the local context.

A destination for those with additional needs and disabilities

A catalyst for further regeneration to support a thriving Torrington

A facility that is connected and complimentary, that actively develops partnerships and builds on local assets.

A `community enterprise` that values those involved, staff, volunteers, investors, the wider community and those who use it.

An enterprise that offers opportunities for careers in hospitality across its supply chain and partnerships that are inclusive.

A flexible facility that enables inclusive access for Torrington and its visitors.



Our credibility & knowledge

The work was delivered through SPINDL CIC, trading arm of Torbay Communities (TC) and Plymouth Octopus (POP), two charities leading social leadership and system change across sectors, with communities.

Simon's experience:

- 11 Years at Torbay Council, ultimately as Executive Head of Communities, which included all Housing functions, Supporting People, Community and Voluntary sector development and strategic commissioning of integrated Adult Social Care (Torbay Care Trust)
- 10 Years as CEO of Torbay Communities / Director of Ageing Well Torbay (AWT) partnership, a seven-year system-wide test and learn programme focussed on reducing social isolation and loneliness (Ageing Better, NLCF). Led the creation of a VCFSE co-ordinated 'front door' for ASC. This co-produced and coordinated approach prioritised accessibility, responsiveness, inclusivity, and prevention. Leadership of what are now often referred to as Human Learning Systems
- Director, SPINDL CIC Supporting local place based change via facilitating connection, capturing and sharing knowledge and providing direct 1:1 and team based support to LA's and wider stakeholders.
- Conducted a number of Ripple Effect Mapping evaluations, including on the introduction of asset-based community development by Worcestershire County Council Public Health; the impact of Safe Soulmates CIC in supporting neurodivergent people in and around Cambridge; 'A Community led Care' test and learn, led by Cwmpas and REM of the Social Leader Cymru Programme 2025.
- Simon is also a part of the CLORE Alumni, having completed an online CLORE social leadership course themed around social prescribing in 2021.
- Recently led model development for a strengths based ecosystem approach to wellbeing for the Local Government Association and ADASS in England, as outlined here:

[Collaborative community approach to supporting the adult social care front door: implementation guide | Local Government Association](#)