

BRISTOL HARBOUR PLACE SHAPING STRATEGY

VISION 2024-2044

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DRAFT



DK-CM

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Vision for Bristol's harbour is a significant moment in the harbour's history. Created by multiple authors and stakeholders, and building on an expansive and far-reaching programme of engagement, it sets out a broad and ambitious vision for the future of the harbour and its next 20 years of growth and transformation. It is a key part of the **Harbour Place Shaping Strategy (HPSS)** produced by Bristol City Council and DK-CM in 2023-24.

Having set out a succinct **VISION** for the harbour that sets out what it will be like in the future, this document then sets out a series of **PRINCIPLES** that underpin that vision and give more detail on the various threads that will, together, deliver upon it. The content of these principles are contained under three overarching themes, which are as follows:

The harbour will be:

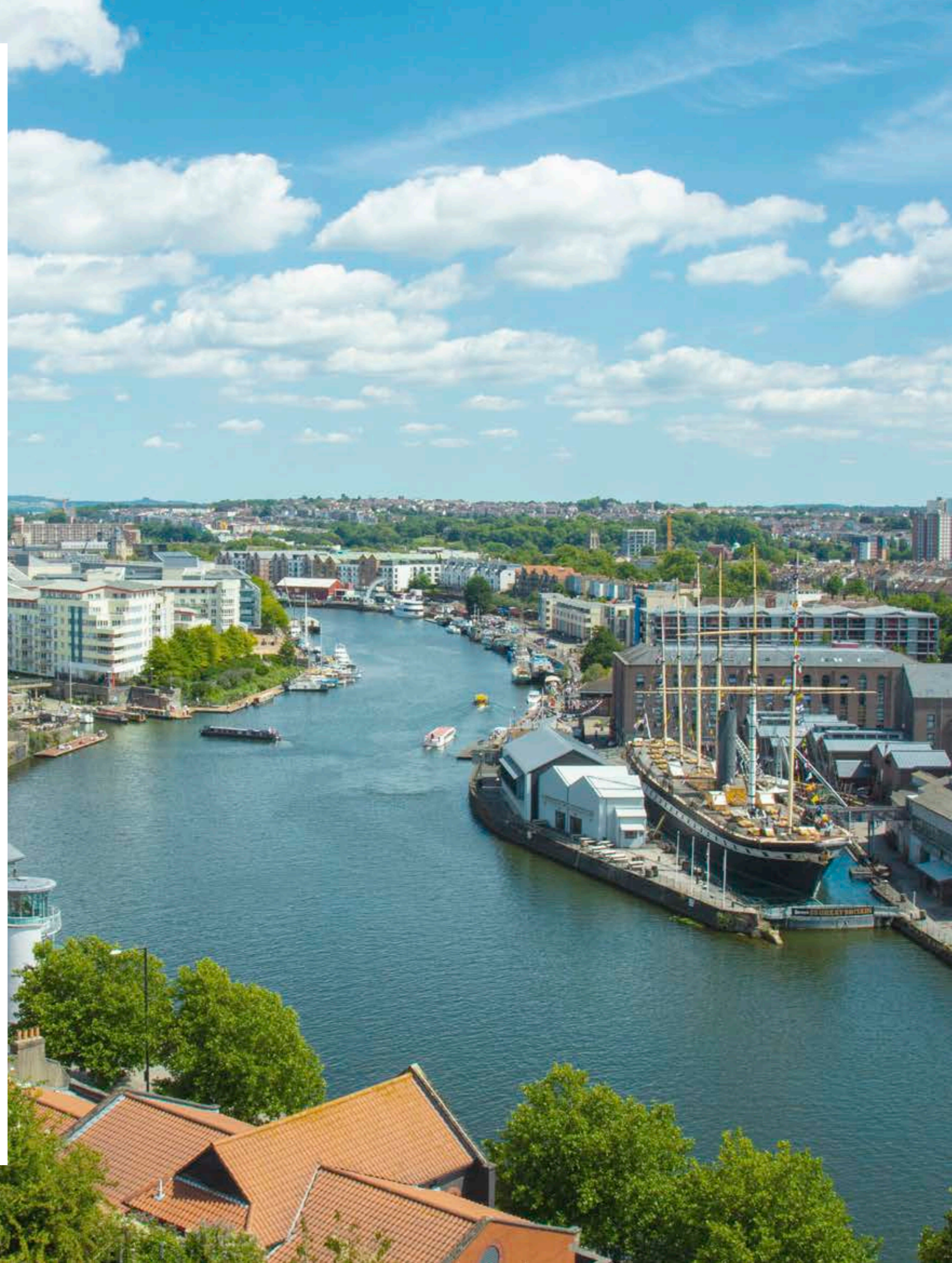
- Open & accessible
- Resilient & sustainable
- Industrious & creative

The harbour is not one place, but many, and it is used by many communities. Reflecting this, the Vision will ultimately be delivered in different ways with varied stakeholders across the harbour. The next stage of the HPSS is therefore a series of **Place Plans** which will zoom in to the many distinct places of the harbour and develop tangible proposals for their growth and transformation, always underpinned by this vision. These places, and the role they will play in fulfilling the vision, are set out in the **Places** section of this document.

Ultimately, to realise the potential and to achieve this vision, Bristol City Council seeks to actively engage with developers, businesses, users and the community to promote the unique qualities of Bristol's harbour and ensure the harbour's continued ecological, social and cultural value to the city. The delivery of this vision will depend on the availability of funding for key projects, partnerships with key stakeholders, and a collective spirit of working.

▶ pages 8-11
▶ pages 12-33

▶ pages 34-55





INTRODUCTION

The Harbour Place Shaping Strategy (HPSS) is a 20 year strategy to make Bristol's harbour:

- Welcoming to all Bristol's communities
- Able to adapt to climate change and better support nature;
- Thrive economically so that the docks become financially self-sufficient.

The strategy builds on regeneration successes over the past 40 years and establishes an ambitious and compelling vision which encourages landowners and other stakeholders to work together to make the harbour an even better place than it already is over the next 20 years. Core to this will be the creation of a high quality quayside and water space that can better support Bristol's growing population and comfortably cope with an increasing number of visitors. Change is always happening in the harbour, this is part of its vitality and richness - the role of the HPSS is to provide a strategy which will ensure that these changes are harnessed in ways that deliver on the priorities for residents, businesses and visitors.

The HPSS is consistent with the policies of the emerging Bristol Local Plan (November 2023) and has a hook to **Policy DS1: Bristol City Centre** which states that:

The Floating Harbour will be maintained as a location for maritime industries and water related recreation activities alongside its role as a visitor destination and heritage asset (consistent with the vision set out in the Harbour Place Shaping Strategy). Waterfront areas adjacent to the Floating Harbour, Feeder Canal and River Avon will continue to be revitalised, delivering a high quality, publicly accessible quayside and water space that can support Bristol's growing population, comfortably accommodate an increasing number of visitors and better support nature recovery.

The Harbour Place Shaping Strategy is in three parts:

- **Harbour Atlas** - sets out a nuanced, detailed and evidenced picture of the harbour today
- **The Vision** - sets out an overarching direction of travel and ambition for the whole harbour
- **Place Plans** - set out what can be done in tangible terms to deliver upon the Vision, recognising that Bristol's harbour is not one place but many, with a wide array of qualities, opportunities and challenges.

This Vision document presents the **Vision** itself, sets out the **Principles** that inform it, and sets out a series of places that will each be subject to a detailed Place Plan. The principles emerged out of research and engagement during Stage 1 and were thoroughly tested and developed 'in public' during Stage 2.

Beyond these plans, the Vision is intended to stand in the long-term as a statement of intent for the future of Bristol's harbour.

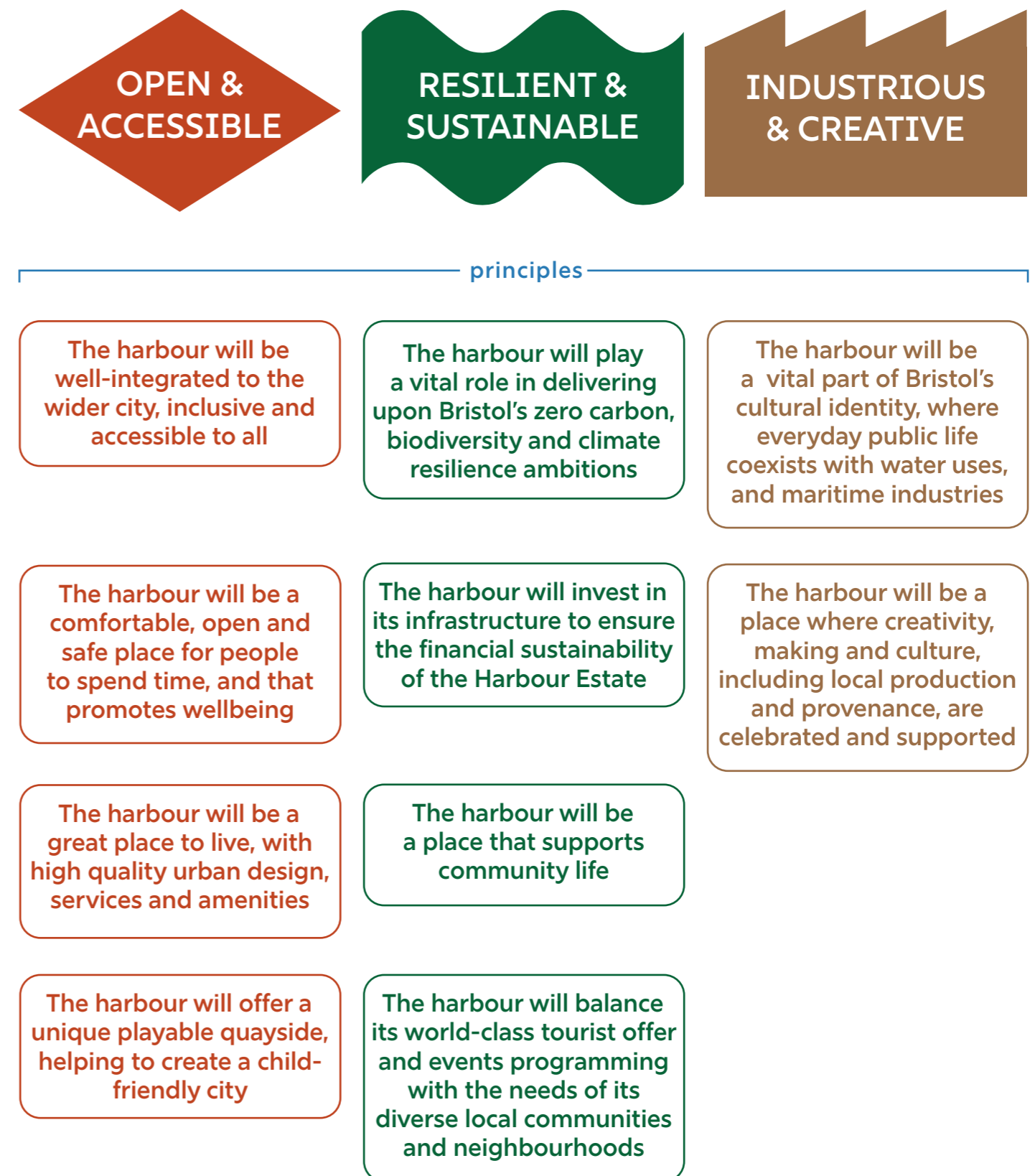
A VISION FOR THE HARBOUR

Bristol's harbour, closely integrated as it is with its city, will be a vital and self-sustaining part of Bristol's culture, identity and public life.

- It will be a welcoming and unique place to **live** - whether on or adjacent to the water.
- It will be a thriving place to **work**, particularly in the cultural, maritime, and creative industries.
- It will be a safe, exciting place to **play**, from everyday adventures on a weekend walk and a lively destination for visitors through to supporting wellbeing and waterborne sports and leisure.

And all of these things will be more **accessible**, to all of Bristol's communities, than ever before.

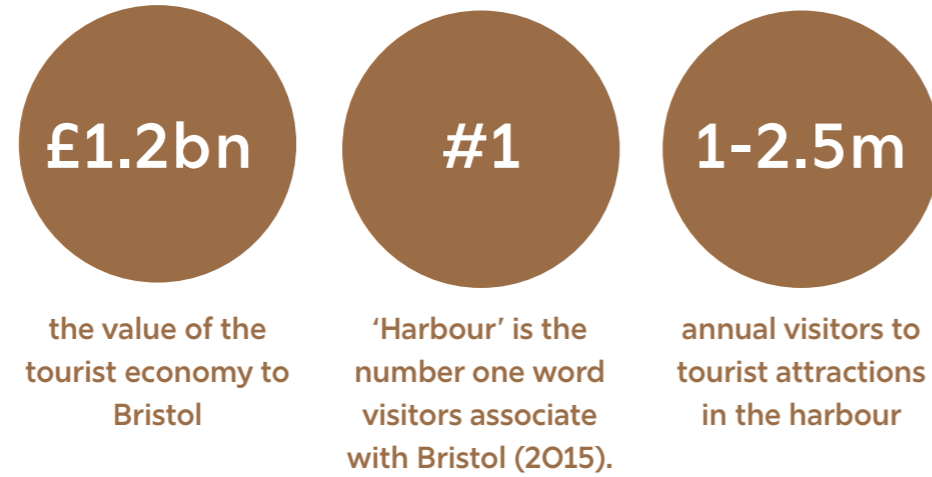
BRISTOL'S HARBOUR WILL BE:



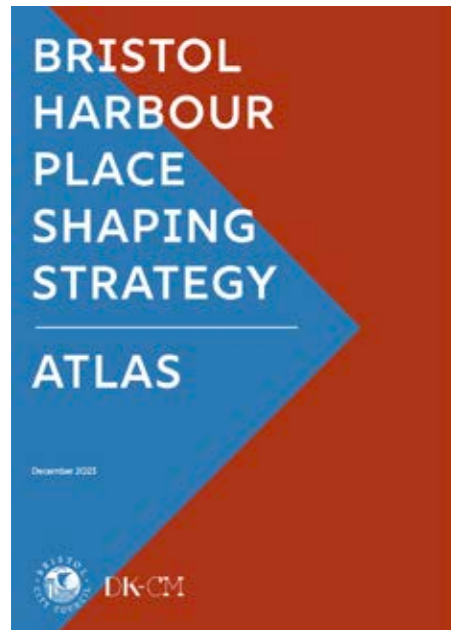
The Vision at a Glance

- A 20-year Vision
- 10 Principles for positive change
- Multiple stakeholders ready to work together to make that change happen

The Opportunity



The Process



WHAT IS: THE ATLAS
Building a collective portrait of Bristol's harbour as it is today, summarised in the publication *Bristol Harbour Atlas* (2023).

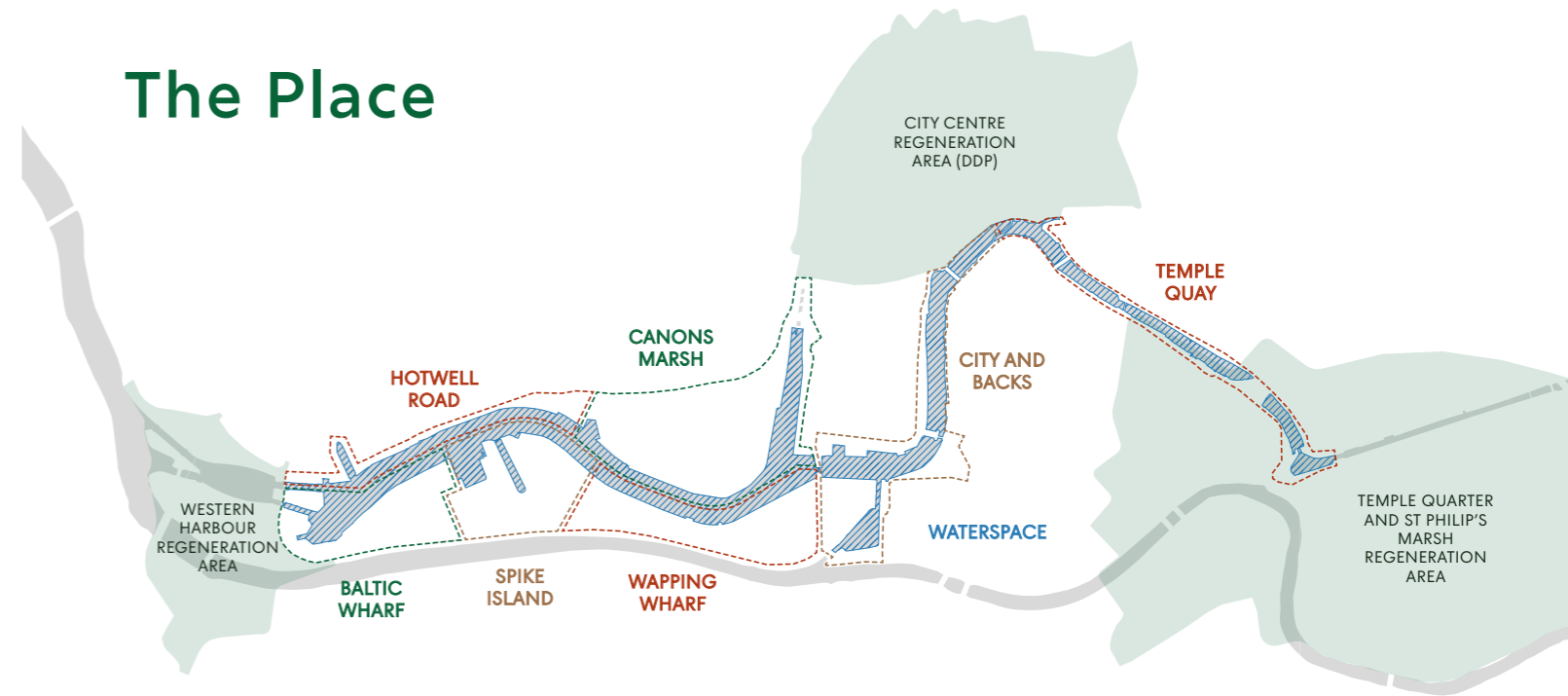


WHAT SHOULD BE: THE VISION
developing a collective vision for the future of Bristol's harbour, tested through further online engagement and an exhibition at M Shed.



HOW WE GET THERE: PLACE PLANS
This happens next - detailed place-by-place analysis and proposals developed with key local stakeholders, supported by a Delivery Plan & Strategic Outline Business Case.

The Place



7 KEY PLACES identified that together cover the whole of the Floating Harbour and have the potential to weave together the city centre, Western Harbour, Temple Quarter/St. Philips Marsh and the wider city.

28 HECTARES OF WATERSPACE threading through the city and with the potential for hugely diversified uses and activities.

40+ UNIQUE MARITIME & CREATIVE BUSINESSES in the Albion Dock and Underfall Yard areas alone.

The Key Words

OPENNESS	WATER QUALITY
DIVERSE HERITAGE	PLAY SAFETY
BIODIVERSITY	MARITIME INDUSTRY
CREATIVE INDUSTRIES	LOCAL BENEFIT
WORKSPACE	ENHANCED TOURISM
GREEN SPACE	ACCESSIBILITY

The Concerns

PRINCIPLES

◆ The harbour will be welcoming to the wider city inclusive and accessible to all

Getting there

The harbour will be easier to get to, with Metrobus services along Cumberland Road, being expanded into the evening and Sundays. As Temple Quarter is developed bus and ferry services to the east of the harbour will be expanded.

Exploring the harbour

The harbour has a huge range of events, activities, and attractions which cater to different audiences, seasons and times of day. A central harbour hub will collate and showcase places and activities in the harbour, providing visitors and Bristolians with an opportunity to follow the heritage trail, art trail, or play trail around the Harbour. People will be able to navigate their way easily by following attractive and informative signage that celebrates local gems and shares alternative histories of the city and its harbour. Patronage of the steam train and ferries will grow as awareness builds.

Public transport

The harbour will be well-connected to the surrounding city and neighbourhoods with frequent, low emission public transport and active travel options. Commuters and visitors will be able to get on an electric ferry at Temple Meads and get off at Underfall Yard, or cross from Spike Island to Canon's Marsh via a regular service. A new Harbour Loop bus route will connect with Temple Meads, Park & Ride, ferry stops and cycle hubs to allow people to live, work and play across the harbour.

Harbourside walkway

Continuous, legible routes - most often directly alongside the water - will weave through the harbour and will remain open for public use. Routes will connect through the rejuvenated Underfall Yard; the floating gardens alongside Castle Park; and to the Temple Meads Quarter, the gateway to Bristol.

Water access

Locals and visitors will be able to participate in water activities for leisure, competition, school trips, sightseeing, or just to try it out. Access points for these activities will be focussed towards the western end of the harbour with clusters of improved facilities for public and private use allowing access for those with additional needs. The water space itself will support varied and simultaneous water activities at different times of the day, week and year.

Welcoming and inclusive public realm

Bristol's Harbour will be an accessible and positive place for people, including those with mobility, visual, hearing, sensory and neurodiverse needs. People will be able to move around the water's edge, stopping as they go to enjoy the views, eat their lunch or read a book. Historical elements in the public realm will be celebrated in an inclusive and accessible way.

Right What if places like Totterdown Basin provided important pedestrian connections whilst also giving people the chance to engage with nature and the water?





◆ The harbour will be a comfortable, open and safe place for people to spend time, and that promotes wellbeing

Openness

Space around the harbour, particularly close to the water, will be protected and enhanced to provide a sense of openness and calm within the city, supporting the harbour's important role in providing Bristolians with places that feel free and expansive within the city centre. These will be 'places of no obligation' where people of all ages can feel comfortable resting, exercising, socialising or playing.

Safety

Navigating the harbour can be troublesome due to busy roads, cycle lanes, open water and bridges. The balance of space for cars, bikes and pedestrians will be redistributed to avoid collisions and pinch points. Clear, well-lit, and easy-to-follow routes will provide safe connections around the harbour regardless of people's mode of travel. Signage, safety equipment and clearly marked designations around the harbour will educate people about how to keep themselves and others safe around the water.

Left What if softened water edges at places like Baltic Wharf could improve people's relationship with the water and make it possible to swim safely in the harbour?

Comfort

The harbour will provide relief and comfort for visitors and residents working, navigating or just spending time in the harbour. Interventions to support this will include sociable and sheltered seating; open green space; clear sight-lines and navigation. There will be more toilets publicly available and to the standard of the Watershed's award winning inclusive toilets.

Representation

Bristolians will be able to see their culture represented and celebrated in the harbour, be it through food, music or stories. Buildings and external spaces will host a range of permanent and temporary uses or events such as markets, festivals and exhibitions. Building frontages will be opened up to showcase activities and events; whilst public realm space will provide interventions such as seating, stages and signage.

Wellbeing

The harbour will support people's physical and mental wellbeing by providing better access and infrastructure for open green space, play and exercise. People will be able to have picnics by the waterside, attend a weekly harbour loop running club, swim in the harbour, and skate in the amphitheatre. The public realm will provide opportunities for informal play and exploration, allowing space for people's individual interpretation and use.

◆ The harbour will be a great place to live, with high quality urban design, services and amenities

Living in the harbour

A home in the harbour will be special, not only because of the architecture but because of the unique urban life that the harbour provides. Residents will be able to access some of the city's most expansive views, best and most authentic food, vital culture and public life all from their doorstep. New residential development should provide their residents with spaces to relax and recharge; play and garden; perhaps even providing designated areas for bbqs and community parties.

Identity and public space

The public spaces of tomorrow's harbour will combine the distinctive, post-industrial qualities of the old docks with fresh, contemporary design that celebrates the harbour's unique character whilst also making a public realm which is legible, enjoyable and safe. Moving through the harbour, people will experience a series of distinct places: they will know where they are and be helped to navigate the harbour's many complex spaces.

A diverse and inclusive harbour community

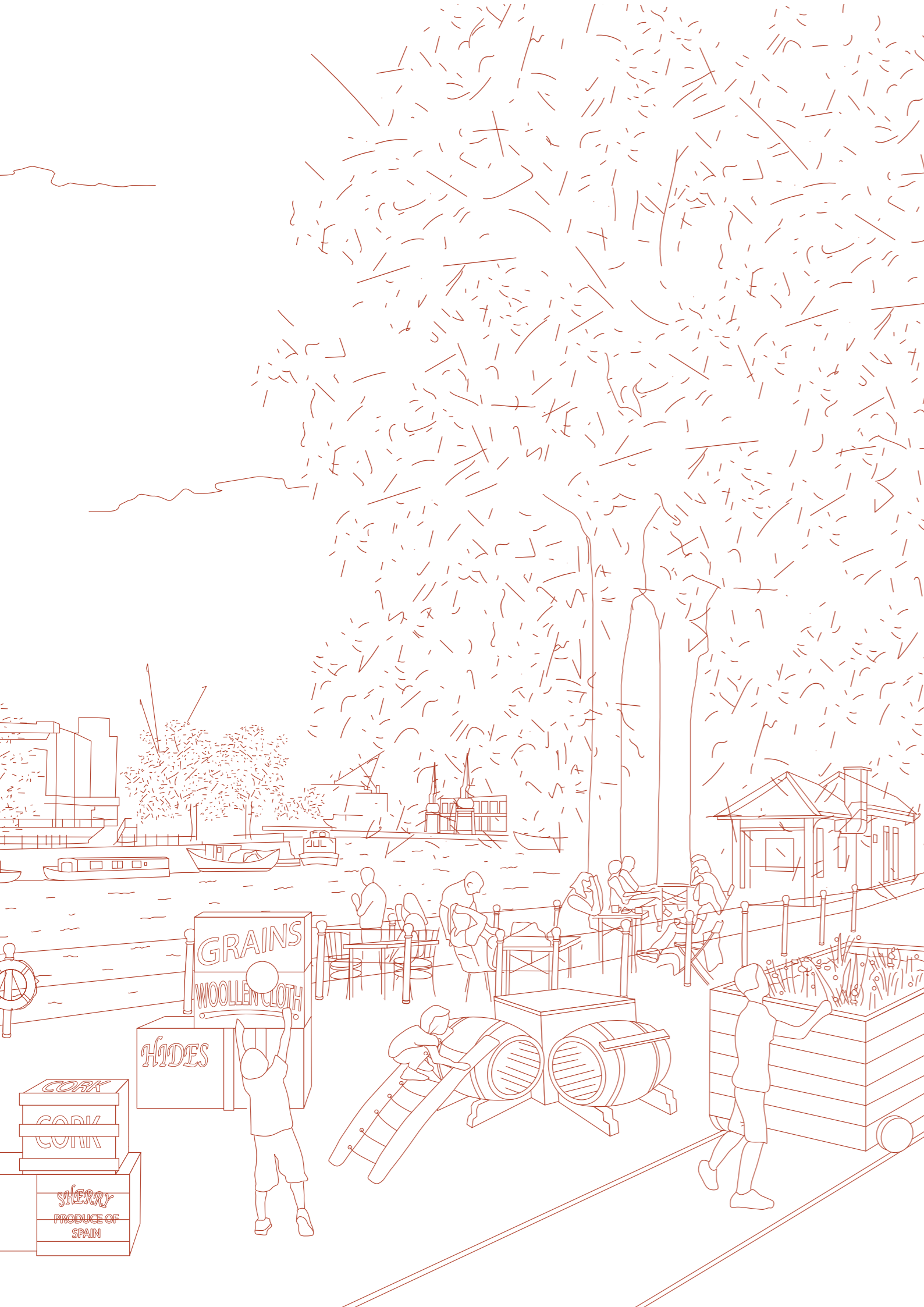
The opportunity to live in the harbour should be open to all regardless of income and at all stages of life. New developments should provide affordable housing across a range of tenures.

Mooring

The harbour will provide an exemplary standard of urban moorings throughout the harbour, with good quality amenities evenly distributed across the various sites. Visitors will benefit from welcoming visitor moorings that are located to help them access the best that Bristol's harbour and the wider city can offer. Resident moorings will provide secure, well-serviced and peaceful places to dwell. Well-sited commercial moorings will provide space for independent businesses, hotels and shops in appropriate places throughout the harbour.

Right Could the harbour set a new standard for biodiverse urban moorings, for example at Capricorn Quay?





◆ The harbour will offer a unique playable quayside, helping to create a child-friendly city

Child's play

The harbour will offer a safe, playable landscape along the length of its quayside. Future generations of children will continue to be able to balance on the historic train tracks, crawl over maritime anchors and cool off in paddling pools. Alongside this, new opportunities for play will be explored which could be as simple as new playable lines on the ground but could be as ambitious as a child-friendly lido, a seasonal urban beach, or an outdoor nature classroom. On top of all this, play provision will be gender-inclusive and designed so that everyone is welcomed and given space to play and express themselves.

Working out

The harbour's popularity as a place to work out is growing. The harbour of the future will further support this through things like jogging routes, trim trails, water fountains, changing rooms and lockers, as well as spaces that promote activities like yoga or meditation. Sports events such as the marathon and triathlon will continue to be encouraged, with new events added that provide opportunities for more diverse groups and more mixed abilities.

Left Could the historic railway tracks become part of a more ambitious sequence of play opportunities throughout the harbour?

Hanging out

The harbour is already a popular place to simply hang out, particularly for those that can afford to visit the many hospitality businesses. The harbour of the future will provide many different types of hanging out space, designed to attract a greater diversity of people. This might involve tiered seating round a small performance space, reclining seating in a sunny spot of the harbour or picnicking and barbecue areas.

Education and exploration

Tomorrow's harbour will be a place for everyone, young and old, to engage with the built and natural environment. Integrated into a child-friendly public realm will be opportunities for education and exploration, whether that is through hands-on nature and citizen science projects, or immersive projects that seek to tell the stories of the harbour.

Animation and cultural happenings

Spaces in the harbour will be interesting and inspiring – lively places in which people can engage with each other, where creativity can flourish and where new forms of cultural expression are supported. The public realm will be animated through performance, street art, creative interventions and cultural 'happenings'. Skateboarders, skaters, and street artists will be welcomed as an important part of the harbour's spectacle, enabling these existing activities to flourish alongside new activities.



The harbour will play a vital role in delivering upon Bristol's zero carbon, biodiversity and climate resilience ambitions

Green space and biodiversity

Existing and new habitats on land and in water will enhance the biodiversity of the harbour. The harbour's public spaces will be more porous, varied and verdant, providing climate resilience particularly during heatwaves. People will be able to stay cool in the shade of the trees, explore a network of green spaces and engage with wildlife.

Energy generation

The harbour will fuel water source heat pumps, a low-carbon energy solution, for local businesses and residents, bringing Bristol closer to its net zero goal. People will be able to see the energy centres in action and learn about the trailblazing technologies that are keeping Bristol's Harbour at the forefront of innovation. The energy centres will be well integrated into the harbour's public realm and new developments.

Clean and safe water

The harbour will be a place where people can safely swim, kayak and fish all year round in consistently good quality water. Following the delivery of the flood defence measures along the New Cut and Cumberland Basin, businesses and residents will not need to worry about the risk of flooding. Attractive landscaping, drainage and filtration will help to keep the water clean and pollution free, allowing habitats to thrive.

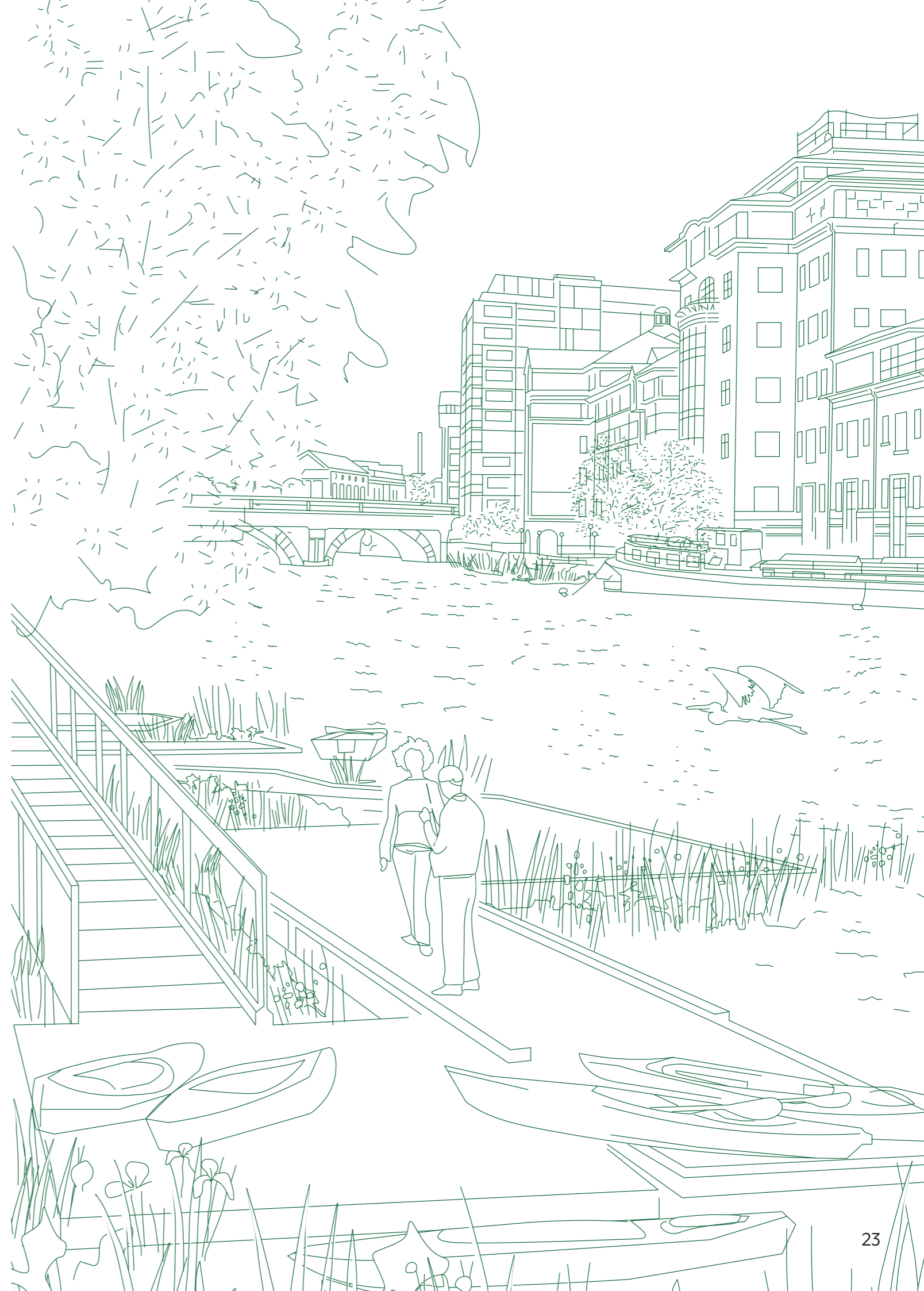
Retrofitting existing buildings

The harbour is full of buildings like Underfall Yard that tell its unique story whilst also providing vital space for industry, culture and other uses. These historic buildings will continue to tell the history and evolution of Bristol's Harbour whilst providing energy efficient and low-cost spaces to live and work.

Low-carbon transport

Affordable, well connected and low-carbon public transport will be available for locals and visitors to the harbour. 'Park & Ride' and car parking will be located to best support active travel, improve air quality and provide access to local businesses. Fewer cars will need to access the harbour as there will be affordable electric bikes, cargo bikes, ferries, buses, and charging points on offer. Energy centres will provide low carbon charging facilities for the transport fleet to provide on-site, low-carbon, transport options.

Right Could places like Temple Quay become a haven for wildlife and an opportunity to engage with nature?



The harbour will invest in its infrastructure to ensure the financial sustainability of the Harbour Estate

Intensification of underutilised areas

Opportunities will be explored for intensifying activity in underutilised areas of land and water within the Harbour Estate. This could involve reusing some car parking areas for mixed use developments, including housing, or replacing some tired single-storey industrial sheds with better quality workspaces at higher density.

Refurbished building stock

The existing buildings and infrastructure in the Harbour Estate will be retrofitted to provide future-proofed, resilient, and cheap-to-run spaces for businesses and organisations. Electrical equipment and fittings will be energy efficient, renewable energy will be produced on site, and buildings will be exceptional in energy performance terms.

Excellent infrastructure

The harbour will provide fit-for-purpose infrastructure that is well maintained and efficiently repaired to provide continuous and consistent access, use and navigation of the harbour. Essential to maintaining quality of craft is the continuing presence of infrastructure, facilities and skills to supply maintenance services.

Water transport

Ferry transport throughout the harbour will be a well-used and affordable mode of transport for visitors, commuters and locals. Accessible ferry stops will be evenly and strategically distributed with frequent services, particularly in the evening and on weekends, and with a timetable that supports commuting. Increased usage will generate income to re-invest back into the service and the surrounding Harbour Estate.

Waterspace efficiency

The harbour waterspace will be reconfigured to allow new and existing water activities and moorings to coexist throughout the day. Mooring types will be varied across the harbour with groupings and increased capacity complimenting the uses and activities on the surrounding harbourside. New commercial moorings such as floating markets, saunas and bookshops will be located across the harbour to diversify and increase the water-activity offer. The provision of additional mooring pontoons will be secured through development of waterfront sites.



Left Could areas like the Harbour Inlet see shops and cafés happening on the water as well as on land?

The harbour will be a place that supports community life

Providing for communities

The harbour is home to many people and will continue to be a home for many more people in the future. Local amenities and facilities such as community centres, GP surgeries, grocery stores, and play space will make the harbour a local centre that provides for residents' needs.

Cultural value

A number of assets, organisations, networks and producers within the harbour provide huge cultural value. This value will be supported and enhanced by implementing an alternative method of financial evaluation which sees the harbour continue to thrive as a creative, cultural and industrial area that contributes to the economy of Bristol.

Recognition for volunteers

Greater recognition will be given to the vast number of volunteers who maintain the harbour's maritime heritage, go litter picking on the water, run sporting activities, deliver rewilding initiatives and much more.

A harbour for everyone

The harbour will provide exemplary access to water sports and leisure activities with engagement programmes reaching underrepresented schools, families, young people, residents and communities. The charitable work of existing watersports providers in the harbour will be supported through new funding opportunities and networks.

Right *Could underutilised harbourside spaces such as at Phoenix Wharf provide much-needed space for community activity?*





The harbour will balance its world-class tourist offer and events programming with the needs of its diverse local communities and neighbourhoods

Many things to many people

Bristol's Harbour will be supported as a space that can be many different things to many different people. There will be a morning to evening economy with options for different budgets, interests and ages. Families will be able to have a free day out; tourists will be able to see the harbour's heritage; and locals will be able to commute on the ferry.

Community meanwhile uses

Following the success of projects like the temporary Roller Disco in Redcliffe Wharf, new uses and activities will be tested across underutilised land in the harbour. Local communities and visitors will be able to feed back on what they need and value as part of a rolling and responsive programme of temporary uses.

Public transport

Public transport, including coach drop off and pick-up, will be well-integrated with key tourist attractions such as the SS Great Britain to provide convenient, and affordable alternatives to car use.

Left Could the water at locations like Prince Street Bridge be animated by community activities and exceptional visitor experiences?

Responsible tourism

The harbour will provide a varied tourism offer that attracts visitors at different times of the day, week and year to balance peak periods. Visitors will stay for longer periods of time, explore broader areas of the city, and utilise local supply chains and skills.

Promoting public events

Public spaces throughout the harbour will be designed not only to be delightful everyday spaces but also to make it easy and convenient to stage events, be it street markets, fairs, temporary events for kids or performances. Infrastructure such as power and water will be provided as well as the right public amenities to support events, including the Harbourside Festival.

Evening economy

The evening economy will be diversified, showcasing the best of Bristol's vibrant cultural offer. New venues and activities will be less about drinking and provide inclusive, safe spaces for all to feel welcome - places to come together, celebrate and relax. New venues will be particularly welcomed in parts of the harbour that feel isolated and unsafe at night, as part of wider initiatives to improve lighting and accessibility.

The harbour be a vital part of Bristol's cultural identity, where everyday public life coexists with water uses, and maritime industries

Local distinctiveness

The harbour is made up of many places and many local institutions that have huge value and cultural significance to Bristol's many communities. The importance of these places will be recognised and their distinctiveness celebrated and enhanced, for example through engaging, place-specific signage design, sculpture and so on.

A vibrant mix of uses

The harbour already provides a number of places where different kinds of public life, activity and culture co-exist in exciting and lively ways, for example the way that youth sailing happens alongside people socialising on the harbourside. These adjacencies are part of the excitement and joy of the harbour and, whilst there is potential to better manage how these uses co-exist, the harbour of the future will continue to be a place of contrasts and exciting, surprising experiences.

The Floating Harbour as Heritage

The harbour is not just a place that is home to remarkable heritage; it is heritage itself: an extraordinary work of industrial engineering with a story to tell that should involve and engage the whole of Bristol. This unique industrial story will be celebrated throughout the harbour.

Maritime craft and industry

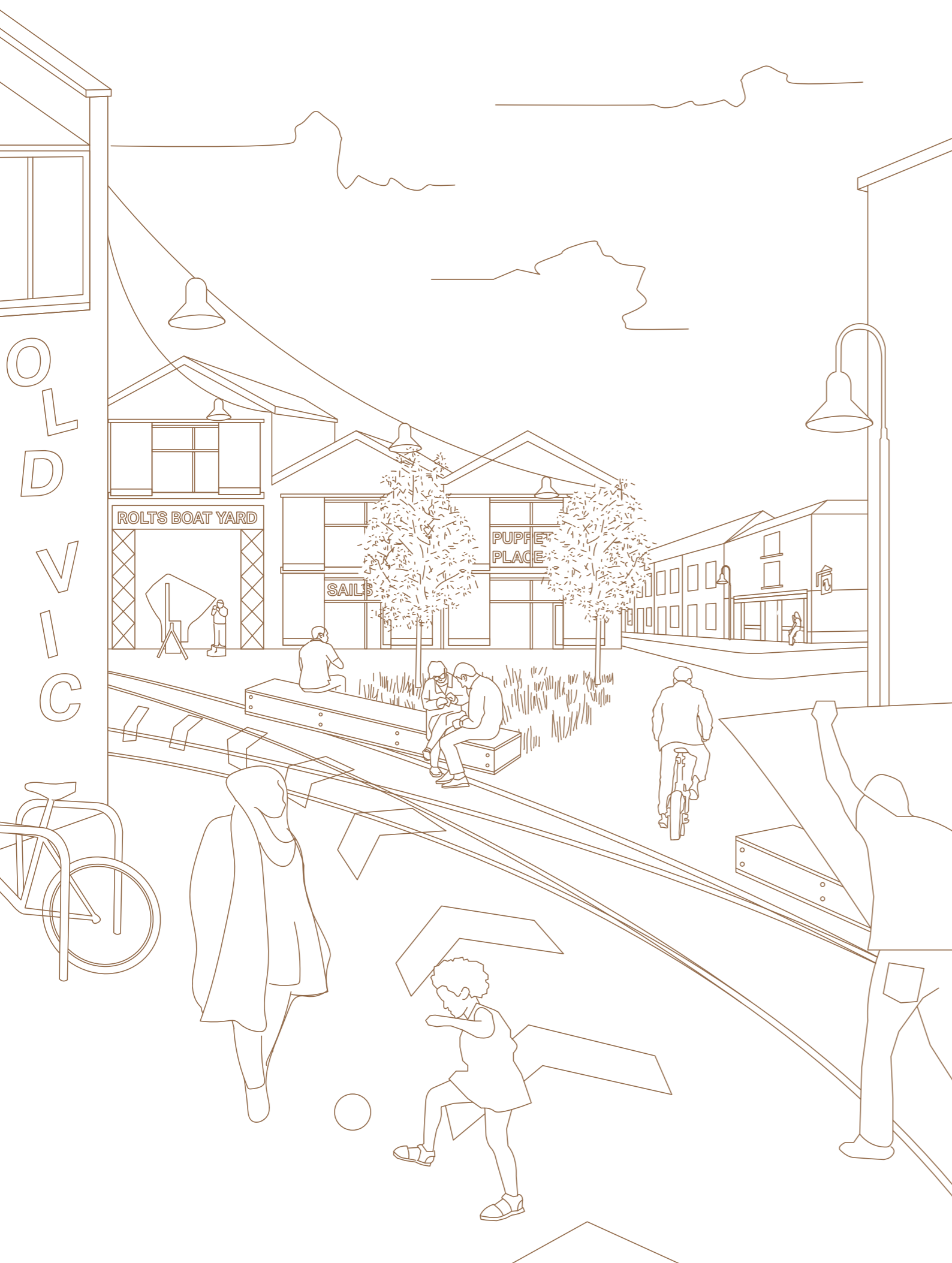
Since opening itself up to the wider city, the harbour has become a place where Bristolians and visitors can directly experience maritime crafts, industries and culture, from the historic (but still active) workshops at Underfall Yard to contemporary chandlery and boat-building. This existing strength will be pushed further in tomorrow's harbour, with established and start-up craftspeople and companies supported to locate themselves in the harbour and to make their activities publicly accessible.

Storytelling

Every Bristolian should find stories, narratives and meaning in the harbour that is relevant and meaningful to them. Some of the narratives of the harbour, such as the visionary engineering that created it in the first place, are well told and documented. Others, such as the experiences of those who worked in the City Docks or for whom the harbour was their first taste of the city and the wider region, have not been so well told until now.

Right Could places like Underfall Yard become even more accessible, sharing their activities and history with wider audiences?





Bristol Harbour will be a place where creativity, making and culture, including local production and provenance, are celebrated and supported

Local provenance

From a much-loved bacon butty to a locally-sourced fried oyster or a fine sharing bottle of Somerset cider, the harbour is emerging as a place to access the best of Bristol and Somerset's food cultures - and in a way that suits diverse audiences and markets. The value of businesses and organisations that bring these products and dishes to the harbour's 'table' is huge and will be properly supported and cherished.

Boosting young voices

Cultural initiatives in the harbour, such as art commissions, will work to better celebrate and amplify the voices, activities and production of young creatives, both those already living and/or working in the harbour and those who do not.

Made in the harbour

The harbour is already a powerhouse of local craft, skill and making. Investment and commissioning will make use of this incredible local expertise to create a harbour that is 'made' by harbour-based businesses - whether the drinks in local cafes or the benches that provide seating on the water's edge.

A good home for creativity

The creative businesses, producers, artists and makers that have made a home in the harbour will benefit from well-maintained, affordable and energy-efficient premises, with processes in place to tackle maintenance, promote long-term leases and build confidence in the harbour as a home to creatives. These businesses and creatives will be able to access support and shared amenities and will feel part of a wider, mutually-supportive network of creative enterprises.

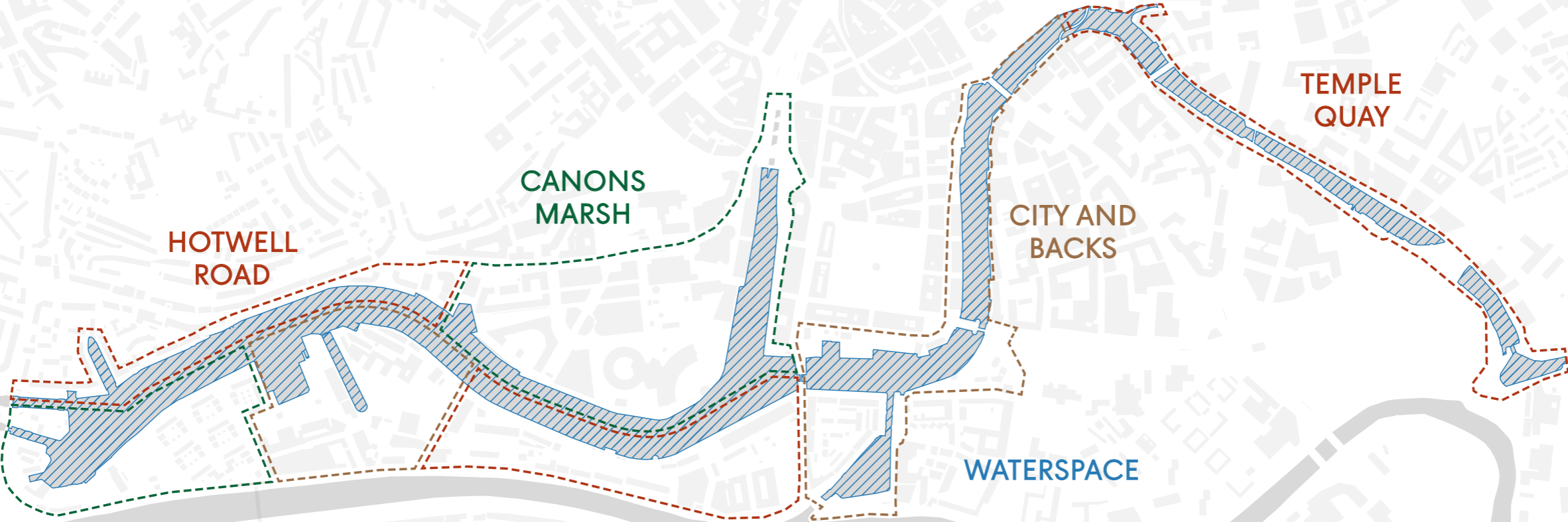
Left Could the things made and created at Albion Dock be better celebrated?



PLACES

PLACES

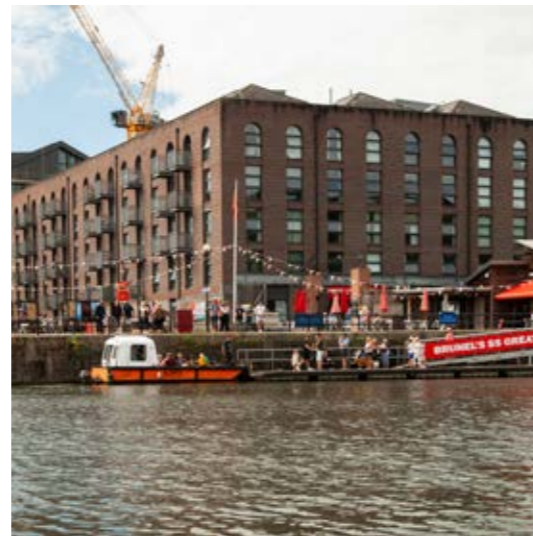
The first step in delivering the Vision is to break the harbour down into 7 distinct but interconnected Places, plus the waterspace itself. It is important that the harbour continues to provide for a variety of audiences and so the harbour has been split into areas to reflect different characters, atmospheres and activities. For each of these Places, detailed strategies will be developed, which we call 'Place Plans'. This section sets out each of the Places in turn and provides a high-level proposal for its future, emerging from the wider Vision principles.



THE WATERSPACE

TODAY

The 'waterspace' of Bristol's harbour was generated by the various waves of industrial engineering of the early to mid nineteenth century that transformed a series of natural watercourses into the Floating Harbour of today. Whilst the sluicing and lock systems have been simplified since the dock's industrial heyday, the waterspaces have remained fairly unchanged and have found a diverse range of evolving uses. Leisure activities have been increasing since the 1970s making the harbour a focal point for tourism and watersports. Ferries and some activities like rowing make use of the full area of water, while others are concentrated in particular zones, with youth sailing and similar activities concentrated to the west.



TOMORROW

The Waterspace will accommodate a diversified array of uses tuned to the needs of Bristolians and visitors, including a population of water users, with amenities and services provided to a good standard throughout. Uses will vary a great deal, from areas dedicated to sport and leisure through to peaceful wildlife habitats. These will have been added to the waterspace in a way that achieves a harmonious and productive balance between uses whilst respecting the industrial heritage of the floating harbour.



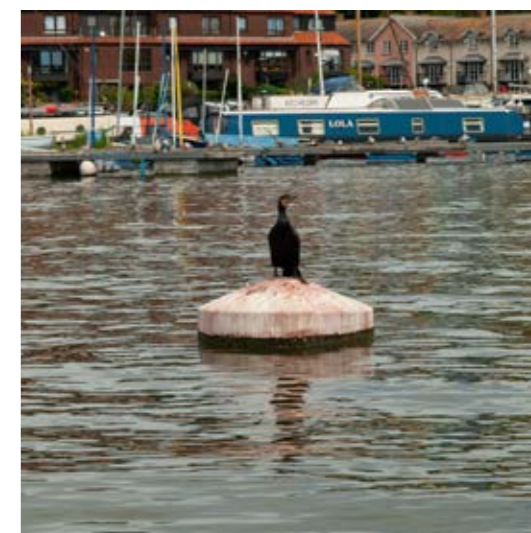
OPPORTUNITIES

- An opportunity to add and enrich uses to the waterspace in a holistic way, and to sensitively modify the existing navigational channel to enable new and diversified uses.
- Strengthen the role of the water in tackling the climate emergency through improved biodiversity, habitats, ecology and species conservation. Provide educational opportunities such as nature classrooms and floating gardens.
- Support Bristol's zero carbon energy strategies and improve climate mitigation in Bristol by using water source heat pumps to generate low carbon energy for businesses and homes.
- Expand and enrich access to the water for all Bristolians.
- Provide more diverse commercial and leisure opportunities and connection between land activity and water activity.
- Expand and redistribute moorings to provide suitable facilities and areas of residential, commercial and leisure use.
- Meanwhile strategies to test on-water uses and activate development land.



CHALLENGES

- Balance between water access and water safety, specifically public safety measures around inland water. Minimal emergency access points to the harbour to get people out of the water safely.
- Maintaining good water quality to support water activity and mitigate the effects of heavy flooding, rainfall and polluted water run-off.
- Maintenance of harbour estate and infrastructure including harbour walls, mooring facilities, pontoon decking and ecosystems.
- Impacts of flood risk on development and water activities and the harbour's limited ability to mitigate this.
- Balance of harbourside operational space, developments and public realm.
- Lengthy process to obtain licences for activity in the harbour.
- Conflicting uses in some areas - *refer to individual places for particular instances.*



HOTWELL ROAD

TODAY

Hotwell Road is a key artery between Bristol and regional roads to the west of the city, where traffic dominates. Thanks also to the steep topography sloping up toward Clifton Wood, harbour-related uses are spread along quite a thin south-facing water's edge. To the west, at Rownham Mead and Poole's Wharf small neighbourhoods of private housing have taken the place of industrial uses, and the water's edge plays a role in leisure-orientated water uses.



TOMORROW

The quayside walk will be a more comfortable place to dwell alongside the water and a much better place to 'move through' for pedestrians. To the west, the water edge will be safer and more accessible. Mardyke Car Park will have improved public realm and expanded leisure uses, making an accessible leisure space for all Bristolians. To the east, opportunities will be taken to enrich the existing provision of moorings and ecospace, such as Capricorn Quay.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Create a safer and more accessible water edge, especially for leisure users through the addition of stable pontoons designated for public and/or private use.
- Rebalance the movement corridor to make a better experience for pedestrians, cyclists and other active travel users.
- Improve connections between the Floating Harbour, the city and Cumberland Basin.
- Greening to improve habitats and air quality.
- Create an enhanced public space, activity hub and water access point at Mardyke Wharf & Young Bristol/Pooles Wharf Outdoor Activity Centre.
- New residential moorings with wildlife habitats and boater facilities at Capricorn Quay.
- More commercial moorings with diverse uses.

CHALLENGES

- Continuing impact of road and traffic - noise, pollution and safety.
- Adjacent residential area may constrain or impact upon expansion of leisure uses, requiring a particularly sensitive approach.
- Some in-water uses are limited opposite the mouth of Albion Dock due to operating requirements.
- Open structures or 'false quays' beneath Capricorn Quay are a safety issue, particularly for water users.

CANONS MARSH

TODAY

Once dominated by railway and gas works, parts of Canon's Marsh were redeveloped using Millennium funding. The area includes significant public spaces such as Millennium Square, Cascade Steps, Anchor Square and the Lloyds Amphitheatre, as well as cultural institutions with the curious and the Bristol Aquarium. The place also includes St. Augustine's Reach, the mouth of the river Frome, where the harbour reaches into the heart of the city and its transport connections, and where waterside nightlife, hospitality and outdoor events take place.

TOMORROW

Canon's Marsh will be consolidated as a fresh, contemporary focal point for Bristol's civic and public life. Its significant public spaces - among them the Lloyds Amphitheatre and Millennium Square - will be rejuvenated to better support public life with, for example, better amenities for temporary events, and enhanced shelter and shade for increasingly unpredictable weather. Existing mooring provision, supported by in-water greening, will be expanded for diverse types of craft. The harbour edge beside the Amphitheatre will be a natural home for tall ships and other 'special' visiting craft.



OPPORTUNITIES

- 'Retrofit' the area's key public spaces to better support existing uses and promote new ones, particularly in relation to play, family-friendly activities, and significant temporary events.
- Capitalising on current developments such as Lloyds, Waterfront Place and the new energy centre, to diversify uses within existing buildings and spaces, and bring more variety to the water edge. Encourage and accommodate informal activities such as skateboarding to activate these spaces.
- St. Augustine's Reach represents a prime location to build a desirable, mixed-use array of moorings targeting visitors and public-facing businesses, supported by well-organised public spaces and activity along Narrow Quay. This could include hotels, shops and restaurants.
- The existing array of visitor attractions are a huge asset and could play a larger role in activating and programming the area.
- Softer landscaping, including tree planting along Anchor Road.
- New energy centre to provide low carbon energy to homes and businesses in the area.

CHALLENGES

- A relative lack of trees and greening which should be tackled through new planting and ecological interventions on both land and water.
- Some pedestrian and cyclist bottlenecks/hotspots such as at Pero's Bridge.
- Some spaces that feel isolated despite their importance, such as Lloyds Amphitheatre, with little to hold people in these spaces outside of curated events.
- A sense that parts of Canon's Marsh already seem tired and dated and the curation of activities within its spaces can sometimes seem stale and uninspiring.
- Balancing development aspirations with a need to preserve a public realm that can support an active programme of events including the Harbourside Festival.
- Lack of activities and places of interest along Hanover Quay.



BALTIC WHARF

TODAY

Where the floating harbour connects with Cumberland Basin and the Avon beyond, this place carries strong associations with the harbour's industrial and maritime history, and is home to Underfall Yard, the Harbour Office, The Cottage Inn, the Novia Scotia, and multiple maritime clubs, societies and valued organisations. The water here is heavily programmed with leisure and youth uses which provide significant social value in the area. Much of the land to the east is currently occupied by the Baltic Wharf Caravan and Motorhome Club.



TOMORROW

Baltic Wharf will remain the heart of the harbour in terms of operations, youth, and leisure activities. Youth and leisure services will be opened up to wider audiences through enhanced and shared amenities and access points, and supported by a public realm that promotes appropriate access to the water. Underfall Yard, much-loved by the public, will be a rejuvenated hub of harbour operations and will recover its role as a vital place to access harbour-related industries and crafts, and explore the story of the harbour. With an increased residential population and more commercial space to complement what's already there, the area will be a lively mixed-use neighbourhood with the harbour as its key asset.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Designated as part of a Development Strategy Area, Baltic Wharf looks likely to see significant residential development, representing an opportunity to target investment to support and expand the place's existing strengths and qualities making it a great place to live.
- Rejuvenation of Underfall Yard, a hugely loved institution.
- Reputation for leisure and youth waterspace retained and expanded.
- The creation of a world-class urban water leisure location with a watersports centre that provides facilities for a range of existing water activities.
- New energy centre to provide low carbon energy to homes and businesses in the area.
- Public access to safe and controlled swimming in the harbour.
- Remodelled harbour edges to provide space for inclusive water access, relaxation and nature.
- Enhance Avon Quay as a destination for leisure and commercial uses alongside enhanced existing charitable activities.

CHALLENGES

- The place as a whole can feel quite hard to find and access, especially after dark and in the context of closures due to the 2023 fire at Underfall Yard.
- Many of the organisations providing water-based activities are operating out of buildings that lack adequate facilities, are in poor repair, and are on short leases which discourage investment.
- Limited dockside facilities for changing, storage and cycle parking restricts the capacity of organisations activity and offering.
- Public transport to this part of the harbour is limited.
- One slipway for all water activities, including public access, causes congestion and delays to activities.



SPIKE ISLAND

TODAY

Spike Island is home to cultural institutions large and small, among them the SS Great Britain Aardman Animations, Spike Island, Puppet Place and the Bristol Old Vic Scenic Workshop, as well as a small but long-standing residential community, Albion Dock and Bristol Marina. The Albion Industrial Estate accommodates a number of light industrial and maritime businesses amongst which are coffee trucks and world-famous street art. Direct public access to the water is less here than in neighbouring places, however the marina slipway is well used by the City of Bristol Rowing Club and Bristol Gig club. The SS Great Britain ferry landing is a node for ferry services and also for the dedicated cross-harbour ferry to Hannover Quay.



TOMORROW

Spike Island will continue to be a vital hub for cultural and making institutions, and wherever possible these institutions will be more accessible, visible and celebrated. The Albion Dockyard will be transformed into a world-class maritime attraction inside a thriving working shipyard. An increased residential community will be carefully integrated such that it co-exists positively with tourist, cultural and making institutions. For all Bristolians, walking through the area will be an easy and rewarding experience that connects you with the best of what Bristol makes and creates, as well as with its rich maritime history.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Exemplary urban mixed-use community where cultural activity, a growing residential population and light-industrial making coexist and enrich each other.
- Albion Dock proposals will boost visitor attraction to the SS Great Britain and wider area.
- Capitalise on the likely mixed-use residential development and intensification at the Maritime Car Park to provide activated, clear, legible and functional public realm.
- New energy centre to provide low carbon energy to homes and businesses in the area.
- Better cross harbour ferry service and more legible connections to public transport along Cumberland Road.
- Urban intensification to provide more opportunity for makers, creatives and cultural institutions that should underpin the future of this place.

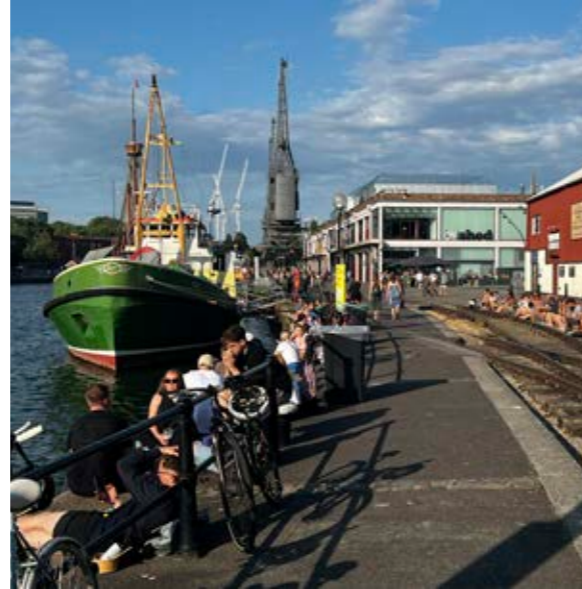
CHALLENGES

- Legibility, especially where the key public route leaves the water's edge, is a key challenge across the site.
- The proximity of intensified residential development to existing cultural and light-industrial uses, though this is also a key opportunity to create a unique place.
- Parking and vehicle access currently dominate much of the ground plan, and this will need to be carefully balanced in future proposals to ensure that harmony is achieved between parking provision, vehicular access and an enhanced public realm.
- Provision for coach parking is limited but forms one of the most common modes of transport for visitors to the area.

WAPPING WHARF

TODAY

Wapping Wharf, long home to M Shed (formerly Bristol Industrial Museum) and the Harbour Railway, is increasingly a destination for food and leisure uses and a point of access to the wider harbour. This has been achieved by the development of Wapping Wharf itself as a mixed-use area, which offers well-used bars and restaurants (especially at Cargo) and an independent bookshop.



TOMORROW

Wapping Wharf will become Bristol's South Bank, a go-to place for culture, play and hanging-out. Museum Square is rejuvenated as the area's principle meeting space, where working exhibits and heritage vessels sit comfortably alongside outdoor film screenings and picnicking school parties. The mix of uses will grow and diversify, with trends visible today expected to intensify - a more permanent good quality food offer for example, capable of drawing customers from across the city. Thanks to its central location, its offer, and venues like M Shed, as well as a much-enlivened public realm and waterspace, the Wapping Wharf area will be reinforced as the gateway to the wider harbour, a place from which the wider harbour.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Existing quality as a 'gateway' provides an opportunity to better support access to the wider harbour.
- Wapping Wharf and environs are home to beloved institutions like the M Shed, Brunel's Buttery and the harbour railway.
- Enhance and intensify moorings, including residential, especially to the west aligning with wider residential communities.
- A natural home for tall ships and other 'special' visiting craft, potentially bringing the place more into dialogue with Canon's Marsh across the water.
- Improved public realm which retains the industrial character of the area whilst providing legible and safe routes and spaces.

CHALLENGES

- Museum Square has many competing needs and is currently failing as a public space.
- Creating an accessible and beautiful public realm due to complex layouts, routes and the presence of both cobbles and railway track.
- North-south connections are a challenge due to level changes and the railway, which contributes to legibility issues
- Quayside parking is particularly challenging in this place due to complex public realm & highways and conflicting uses.
- Prince Street Bridge is a key part of the place's status as a gateway and is currently a bottleneck.
- Water edge safety, especially with increased footfall.



CITY AND BACKS

TODAY

North of Redcliffe Bridge, activity in and along the harbour generally decreases, with the quayside at The Grove dominated by car parking and Merchants Quay and Bathurst Basin being primarily residential areas. The waterspace becomes narrower and more enclosed by buildings, and also more integrated with the wider city. It is defined and framed by a series of spaces, for example Welsh Back and Redcliffe Back, where urban districts intersect with the harbour. Also included as part of this sequence is Bristol Bridge, the historical centre of the city.

TOMORROW

As a new vibrant part of the harbour, with an enhanced public realm, this area will increasingly be part of people's harbour walk. New mixed use developments at The Grove and Redcliffe Wharf will provide new destinations and points of interest around the harbour. A coherent and welcoming public realm will invite people to the water's edge and host an array of activities and programmes appropriate to the city centre. Existing hubs of public life and activity will be consolidated and expanded. At key locations, for example at Bristol Bridge, significant public realm interventions will have brought the water and the city much closer together and creating a new public waterside.



OPPORTUNITIES

- The Bristol Bridge area is part of the historic heart of the city and has strong potential to be a major focal point that brings harbour and city together.
- Enrich Bathurst Basin with public realm interventions, new moorings and new uses that are sensitive to adjacent residential neighbourhoods.
- Existing restrictions to the navigation channel suggest that there are opportunities to adjust the channel along this stretch to accommodate other uses.
- Currently dominated by parking and challenging public realm, the Grove car park is a significant opportunity in the heart of the city to add new uses and possibilities to the harbour's provision of activities.
- Improvements to current mooring provision for water users.

CHALLENGES

- Incoherent public realm and piecemeal access to the waterspace, especially at Redcliffe Back.
- The place has notable deficiencies in terms of access to green open space and play space.
- Water edge safety, especially with increased footfall.



TEMPLE QUAY

TODAY

This stretch of the harbour is dominated by office and commercial developments of the postwar and subsequent periods, built on or close to the water's edge, and the waterspace is comparatively narrow and linear. The place runs from Castle Park and the city centre through to Temple Meads station and Totterdown Basin, and in due course to the wider regeneration of Temple Quarter and St. Philips Marsh.



TOMORROW

Temple Quay will become a key artery from the city centre to the rejuvenated Temple Quarter, with Bristolians thinking of them as a key public space when using Temple Quarter and Temple Meads station. The use of the waterspace will have been diversified, with the potential for independent commercial activity explored and an increased provision for wildlife habitats and urban greening.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Some restrictions on new human uses make the water corridor here an ideal location for biodiversity and habitat generation, building on an existing outstanding biodiversity habitat at Totterdown Basin
- The development of University of Bristol's Business School at Temple Quarter will have a transformative impact on Totterdown Basin
- Temple Quarter and St. Philip's Marsh regeneration will give Temple Quay new purpose and direction.
- Additional moorings to compliment the adjacent land uses and new communities.
- New water links towards the Silverthorne Road development and beyond.

CHALLENGES

- The place has notable deficiencies in terms of access to green open space and play space.
- Biodiversity, including existing outstanding habitats, may be challenged, constrained or damaged by new development.
- Private ownership of the water edge has historically had a limiting or negative impact on continuity and new uses.

GLOSSARY

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