

An aerial photograph of Plymouth, Devon, showing a dense urban area with a mix of residential and commercial buildings. The city is situated on a peninsula, with a large harbor area in the foreground. The harbor is filled with numerous boats and ships, and there are several piers and quays. In the background, the city extends into the surrounding countryside, which is characterized by rolling green hills and fields. The sky is blue with some light clouds. The text "Plymouth and South Devon Freezone" is overlaid in white, bold font, and "A snapshot" is overlaid in white, bold font below it.

Plymouth and South Devon Freezone

A snapshot

Why do we want a Freezone in Plymouth and South Devon?

Our Plymouth and South Devon Freezone will help us bounce back from the COVID pandemic and grow the local economy. We expect it to generate thousands of new jobs and over £100 million pounds of new investment over the next 10 years. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development predicts the global Ocean Economy will be worth more than £2 trillion by 2030.

As Britain's Ocean City, with its natural harbour and direct deep water access to the English Channel and Atlantic Ocean, Plymouth is ideally located for accessing European and global markets. Our freezone will harness the power of Plymouth's marine economy to drive economic growth and fund road network improvements that unlock underutilised employment land at Sherford and Langage.

The Plymouth and South Devon Freezone is about building on our strengths to drive growth across the region. We need to embrace this opportunity and make it work for us to deliver clean growth that will provide the high quality jobs we need for the future and protect our unique historic and natural infrastructure.

Our proposal directly targets key growth areas such as marine manufacturing, wind and wave energy and marine autonomy. Our success will bring in an immediate injection of at least £20m capital. With the locally raised element being funded through the additional business rates, the freezone will generate, there will be no diversion of Council funding from other priorities.

Partnership

- Our freezone will have a positive economic impact on the region's economy, particularly in the South Devon area and that is why Plymouth, South Hams and Devon councils have formed a partnership to ensure these benefits are fully realised.
- We already have a commitment from some of our biggest local employers, Babcock and Princess Yachts and working across the private sector, this will help us create over 1,000 new jobs over the first two years of freezone operations. Even at the bid stage we had a high level of interest from large advanced marine manufacturing firms wanting to identify a UK base.

Innovation and Investment

We aim to build on our strengths, our world class business and marine innovation assets, the Oceansgate Enterprise Zone, the University of Plymouth's Marine Institute, Plymouth Marine Laboratory and the Smart Sound ocean technology proving ground.

Our freezone will:

- Galvanise our existing innovation activity with a new innovation centre which will become a major collaboration hub for marine and defence innovation.
- Further develop our unique innovation platforms like Smart Sound for marine and defence solutions and the marine sector across South Devon.
- Enable us to prototype and bring new products to the international marketplace that are made in Devon.



- Unlock the developable land on the city's outskirts - we need to generate new job opportunities, which will also benefit from improved direct access to the A38 Devon Expressway.
- Operate gateway policies to ensure businesses setting up in these zones form powerful clusters around key themes and do not displace existing business activity.

Green growth

We are surrounded by areas of outstanding natural beauty and we are serious about our commitment to tackle climate change - that is why our bid is unique and different. We:

- Have built in our commitment to growing a green and sustainable city, to decarbonising marine manufacturing and by reducing the carbon impact of local commuting.
- Will encourage short sea shipping routes using smaller vessels that are more likely to decarbonise in the near future to reduce carbon heavy road haulage.
- Will utilise our existing port capacity to reduce our overall carbon footprint, e.g. we will look to import engines for Princess Yachts directly into the region.
- Will focus our innovation activity on clean propulsion, we will aim to attract marine engine manufacturers.
- To support Princess Yachts, Babcock and other clean propulsion R&D efforts..

Quality Jobs

We will aim to deliver economic growth that benefits as many people as possible. The Plymouth and South Devon Freezone will galvanise efforts to up-skill our workforce, including those vulnerable to redundancy as a result of the pandemic:

- By adopting the Lifetime Skills Guarantee and putting industry at the heart of the skills development agenda
- Establishing a Maritime Skills Academy working with the marine cluster that is already here and the new players that the freezone will bring.
- We will ensure a full range of quality jobs from entry level apprenticeships to highest value specialists ensuring that there opportunities at all skill levels.
- The clustering of marine focussed businesses will allow skills to be shared and provide opportunities for career progression.

Next steps

This is an opportunity to shape government policy and deliver our local agenda building on our brilliant work we have done to date.

- The Government is keen that Freeports are operational quickly and we will shortly receive some initial funding to develop our plans with our partners over the summer.
- So look forward to an update later this year and the launch of our Plymouth and South Devon Freezone in 2022. In the meantime keep an eye on #plymouthandsouthdevonfreezone for exciting news about our progress.

