



management, maintenance and promotion

12.1 Introduction

Implementing the recommendations set out in Sections 10 and 11 will **transform the appearance and experience of Dawlish** and help to create a **climate of confidence** in the town. The proposals reflect the community's mature recognition of the need to **change and modernise** the town, but also its desire to **celebrate** the best of Dawlish, **rediscover** neglected attributes, and **create** valuable new assets.

Dawlish town centre will be **the place that the people of Dawlish want it to be, the heart of community life, a magnet for people living in the Exeter/Torbay region, and an attraction for discerning, high-spending visitors**. The master plan proposals will play a decisive role in achieving the **five key objectives** set out in Section 9.

But **investing in the physical fabric is never enough**. We address the questions of costs, funding and resources in Section 13 but, in order to justify the substantial levels of expenditure that will be required, the works described here need to be complemented by dedicated resources to **implement** the master plan, and ongoing action to **manage** the town's new and improved assets, **maintain** the public realm to a high standard, and **promote** Dawlish town centre to a wider regional and national market. Delivering the

master plan will create the conditions for regeneration, but action is also required in order to seize the opportunities that will be created and turn them into sources of lasting competitive advantage.

12.2 Critical success factors

There are a range of different models for project delivery vehicles and town centre management and promotion but, in our experience, the three **critical success factors** are:

- the people providing the service should be **skilled professionals**, working full time on the job
- they should be **accountable to the community and sponsoring agencies** for achieving agreed results, although they must be given a degree of autonomy, subject to agreed ground rules
- they should be given **enough time to make a difference**: the job will never be finished, although the level of resources required may taper off over time.

12.3 Dawlish Tomorrow Partnership

Based on these criteria and the evidence from other small towns we believe that Dawlish Community Trust and Dawlish Town Council should get together with other key partners to form a **dedicated delivery partnership** which will be

responsible for three key tasks:

- securing the **implementation of the master plan**
- **town centre management**, and
- **marketing and promotion**.

As well as the Town Council and the Community Trust, the members of the **Dawlish Tomorrow Partnership** (DTP) should include the Chamber of Trade, community organisations, Teignbridge District Council and Devon County Council.

We anticipate that DTP will require an executive team of two, who will be answerable to the partnership board: a **town centre manager** (TCM) and an assistant. The manager should ideally be an experienced individual who has played a similar role elsewhere, but she/he must have experience in regeneration, property development or a related discipline. The appointed candidate is going to be **the face of Dawlish** so she will need to be a **skilled communicator** and an **effective advocate**. DTP will not control large capital or revenue budgets, so the TCM will also need the **influencing and negotiating skills** to identify potential funding sources and bid successfully for them.

12.4 Delivering the master plan

The role of DTP will change over time. In the first 3-5 years the emphasis will be on **delivering the master plan**. The key



stages in the process are described in more detail later in this report, but they can be summarised as:

- commissioning detailed **design proposals** for key projects, perhaps through design competitions
- securing **project funding** from the private sector, local authorities, development agencies, the Heritage Lottery Fund and other sources
- **procuring** a phased programme of works
- **project managing** the construction programme, and
- throughout the process, **championing the vision** and ensuring that high standards of design, materials and workmanship are maintained: it is better to **do a small number of things really well** than do more to an indifferent standard.

DTP will need to plan and implement an **early action programme**. This may include some “**early wins**” from the capital programme, but it is essentially about getting business and the wider community in a **state of readiness** to benefit from the investment – and **alerting potential investors** to the coming changes in Dawlish. Regular **communications events** will help to overcome initial scepticism and convince the community that the change is really happening.

There will be important **transitional issues** to address, such

as liaison with the Carnival Committee to agree operating arrangements while work is in progress in the heart of the town. But it will also be important to establish a long-term **management regime** for the sequence of spaces in the centre of Dawlish: this will determine what **uses** are permitted in different zones and how frequently, establish the **charging** policy and set out the **obligations** of users, for example to protect surfaces and keep them clean, and to make good any damage.

12.5 Town centre management

We anticipate that, during 2008-09, Dawlish Town Council will assume responsibility for the **management and maintenance** of public spaces and parking in the town centre, following a transfer of assets and budgets from Teignbridge District Council. These arrangements should be in place and functioning so that the new spaces created by the master plan can be adopted as soon as construction is completed. The **key functions** will be cleansing, gardening, routine repairs and maintenance and parking management. DTC and TDC should establish a **community fund** which will be augmented with revenue from fees, parking charges and sponsorship.

We recommend that the Partnership team should assume managerial responsibility for these functions, under the

direction of the board. We envisage the deployment of a two-person team, supplied with modern equipment, which will be a constant daily presence in the town (including weekends) on the lines of the services provided by the *mairie* in France. Their mission is simple: to **make Dawlish shine**.

At the same time, DTP will start to build a close relationship with **town centre traders**, developing joint marketing and promotional initiatives as well as business improvement programmes. This will require tact and judgement: a good town centre manager **encourages and supports** businesses but also requires them to **raise their game**. There is no place for “free riders”: businesses that do not buy into the vision for Dawlish Tomorrow cannot expect assistance.

12.6 Town centre promotion

Promotional activities will build up incrementally. The partnership board should aim to introduce new events and campaigns year-on-year, but it will be important not to **over-promise** prematurely or to **overstretch the capacity of the town centre** while the works are under way. Too much hype too soon will simply disappoint visitors. A pragmatic approach is called for: the reputation of Dawlish town centre will **build by degrees**, not overnight. For example, it should be possible to stage occasional markets from a very early

stage, but establishing a high-profile programme of **monthly markets** (for example, a cycle of food, crafts, antiques and books) should wait until the market place has been completed.

DTP should also explore opportunities to establish a **festivals programme**, building on the skills and enthusiasm of the community. Again, it will be important not to overtax the **energy and goodwill** of community activists: a small number of excellent events is better than a full programme of damp squibs. Two ideas that we believe should be examined in more detail are:

- a **spring arts festival**, based at the Shaftesbury, but with a programme of outdoor events such as concerts and open-air film screenings, and
- a **winter festival**, with white lights around the Lawn, weekly Christmas fairs on the market place, a big wheel in Piermont Square and spectacular fireworks to see in the new year.

DTP will provide the community with an **executive resource**, responsible to the Town Council and its partners and a dynamic **agent for change**. It will drive forward the implementation of the master plan and help to make Dawlish town centre a **lively and enjoyable place** throughout the year. The people of Dawlish are proud of their town: DTP

will ensure that their pride is reflected in a town centre that is **beautiful, bustling, welcoming and clean**.