

An aerial photograph of a coastal scene. In the foreground, a person stands on a sandy and pebbly beach, holding a longboard with a vibrant orange and white striped pattern. The beach is bordered by a dense line of green seaweed. To the right, a person is standing in the shallow, clear blue water. The water's surface is textured with small ripples, and the seabed is visible through the transparent water. The overall scene is bright and sunny, with clear shadows cast on the beach.

DNCO prd



This project takes a citywide approach,  
thanks to the support of the following partners



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***PRINCESS***

**The Box**



UNIVERSITY OF  
PLYMOUTH



ARTS  
UNIVERSITY  
PLYMOUTH

This research report responds to Destination Plymouth's brief, covering these areas:

### Talent attraction research

- Evaluate the city's four growth sectors
- Identify key assets within Plymouth
- Size of the market demand and supply
- Competitive clusters
- Talent attraction and retention factors
- Strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for Plymouth

### Perceptions research

- Explore positive and negative perceptions of the city as a visitor and talent destination
- Perceptions of its location, lifestyle, and opportunities
- Understand differences between internal and external views
- Helpful direction for brand refresh

Research has found that wider perceptions of Plymouth are lagging behind the realities of the city

All of the report findings will form the basis of Plymouth's city rebrand, which aims to:

- Better reflect and amplify Plymouth's positives
- Raise self pride within the city
- Attract talent to live and work here
- Create a unifying story to tell the world

Ultimately, this research will lead to a stand out city brand narrative and identity with a focus on attracting talent



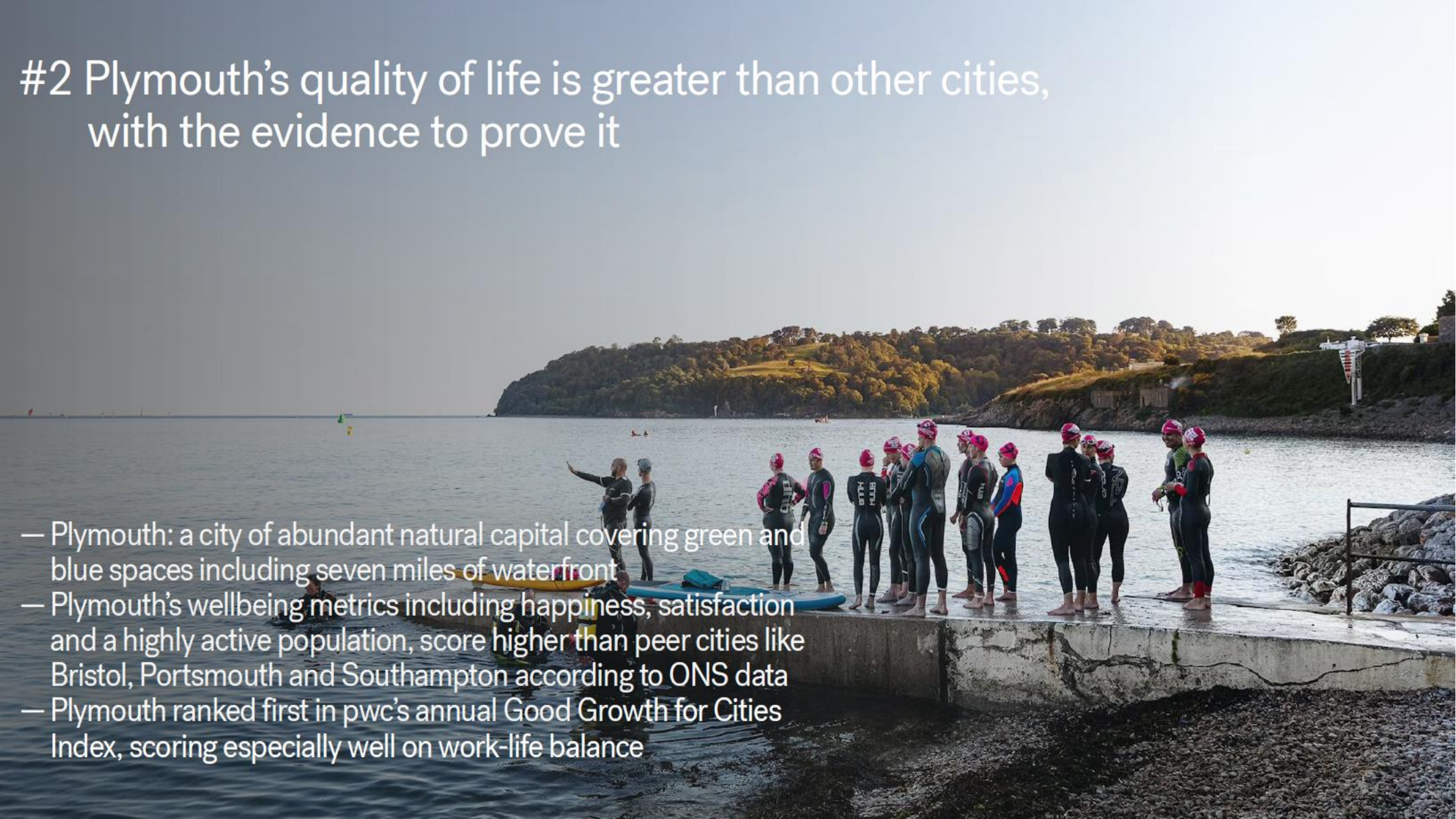
# #1 The ocean is Plymouth's most recognisable and powerful asset, and its full potential is yet to be realised

- Home to the UK's first National Marine Park
- Plymouth Sound has multiple designations of marine protected areas and supports diverse marine life
- Largest naval base in Western Europe and largest manufacturing base in South of England
- The ocean is Plymouth's economic engine, Plymouth holds 38% of England's jobs in marine industries
- A unified story of industry, innovation, quality of life and beauty have not been told as a whole



## #2 Plymouth's quality of life is greater than other cities, with the evidence to prove it

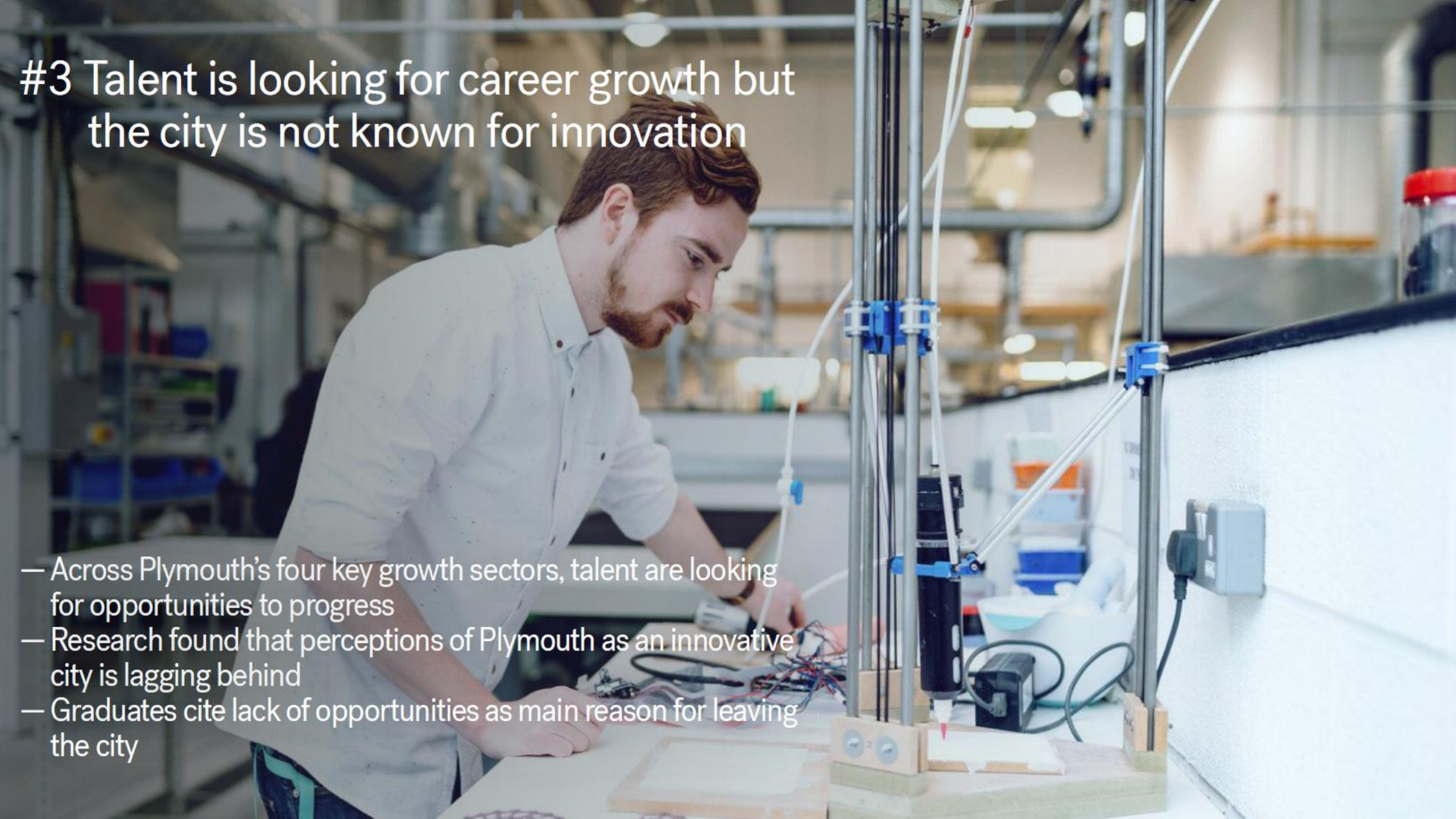
- Plymouth: a city of abundant natural capital covering green and blue spaces including seven miles of waterfront
- Plymouth's wellbeing metrics including happiness, satisfaction and a highly active population, score higher than peer cities like Bristol, Portsmouth and Southampton according to ONS data
- Plymouth ranked first in pwc's annual Good Growth for Cities Index, scoring especially well on work-life balance





### #3 Talent is looking for career growth but the city is not known for innovation

- Across Plymouth's four key growth sectors, talent are looking for opportunities to progress
- Research found that perceptions of Plymouth as an innovative city is lagging behind
- Graduates cite lack of opportunities as main reason for leaving the city





## #4 Plymouth's creativity, cultural offer and creative industries have the potential to shift perceptions of the city

- Perceptions research found that people were surprised about Plymouth's exciting cultural offer
- From the The Box to Theatre Royal, TR2, Arts University Plymouth and University of Plymouth, the city is emerging as a city of creativity and culture
- Creative problem solving and creative production are both strengths of Plymouth's — demonstrated in engineering and technical roles in the city





## #5 More than a naval city: the fiercely loyal Plymouth community will rally to give you the support you need

- Plymouth works as one crew, legacy of a well known naval city
- Grassroots initiatives such as Clean My Patch and Nudge Community Builders show the power of community
- Supports the stat that a third of the city active volunteers and gives back
- Here, collaboration trumps competition
- Gain the support and confidence to forge your own path





## #6 The multicultural, interdisciplinary city with an independent spirit

- History shows Plymouth's rebellious streak when the cannons were turned back on its own people
- The city is increasingly diverse even though it's not immediately visible
- External perceptions are lagging behind
- Strong preference for supporting independent businesses





#7 Smeaton's Tower, the hoe, and the blue grey green have come to represent the city in people's minds, but is it radical enough to change external perceptions of the city?

- The refreshed brand needs a surprising element
- True to Plymouth as well as moves the dial
- Avoid overly common tropes in visual and narrative





## Four key opportunities

- #1 Celebrate the ocean's all-encompassing benefits: from creative inspiration to scientific discovery
- #2 Make Plymouth synonymous with greater quality of life
- #3 Showcase opportunities and how innovation threads the city's past, present and future
- #4 Define creativity's USP: combination of maximum access and production

## Five themes to consider

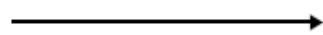
- Plymouth's economic specialisms contribute to national security, from defence to research
- Capture the friendliness and community feel as a welcoming city
- Show full family support to ease talent's decision to move to Plymouth
- Proactively connect young talent with existing opportunities within the city
- Reflect Plymouth's future story: £6 billion pipeline from the council and private sector's investment into the city will be transformative to attracting talent



## The big objectives

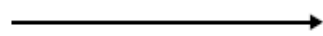
We do this by being

1 — Change perceptions of the city  
in order to attract talent



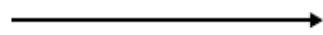
**Surprising**  
(not just lighthouses)

2 — Instil civic pride and capture the  
personality of its people



**Relatable**  
(not fancy or cold)

3 — A brand that partners want to  
adopt and use



**Practical**  
(not complicated)



We need a story that overrides  
negative perceptions of the city

#1

“Just about the navy”  
Innovative city

#2

“No opportunities”  
Career growth

#3

“Far away”  
Lifestyle location

#4

“No culture”  
Creativity is all around

#5

“Not diverse”  
Empowering community



An aerial photograph of Plymouth, England, showcasing its coastal features. In the foreground, the large, semi-circular Plymouth Hoe is visible, with its blue-tinted water and surrounding concrete structures. To the right, a prominent red and white striped lighthouse stands on a grassy hill. The background shows a dense urban landscape with various buildings and a clear blue sky.

# Plymouth, Britain's Ocean City



Valuable brand equity

## Plymouth, Britain's Ocean City

Britain: nationally  
important

Ocean: big, evocative,  
captures the imagination

City: dynamic,  
opportunities, urban



# #1 500 years of innovation

From Charles Darwin to Greta Thunberg,  
remarkable voyages start in Plymouth

Plymouth brings people to the edge of discovery. For over five centuries, the world's most extraordinary journeys have begun here — from the Pilgrims who searched for freedom, Charles Darwin's scientific expedition to Greta Thunberg's zero-carbon sail.

Innovation threads our past, present and future. A port town turned modern city, alive with the spirit of discovery. We pursue breakthroughs in healthcare, marine science, defence and engineering. Plymouth inspires people to go boldly, so join us and see where life takes you.



A man in a dark jacket and light-colored trousers is crouching on a rocky beach, looking down at something in his hands. The background shows a wide expanse of sand, the ocean, and a clear sky with some light clouds. The overall tone is serene and contemplative.

#2

# The horizons are bigger here

Up to 7,000 job opportunities in  
high-growth sectors over the next 5 years

Set to be a leading economic engine of the UK, Plymouth is placed for opportunity. We're growing with up to 7,000 jobs in the next five years. Together with a thriving business ecology, we nurture passion into purpose, transform work into lifelong careers.

The impact of our work ripples across the world. The largest cluster of marine scientists in the UK carry out vital research that can only happen here, within Plymouth Sound and its multiple designations of protected marine areas. We are also home to the largest naval base in Western Europe, where we play a fundamental role in the UK's national security. Plymouth's economic specialisms are unique to the city and central to our nation's future.

Three universities, each leading in their fields including art, engineering and healthcare, are raising the next generation of talent. Life in Plymouth expands with possibilities.



A woman with her eyes closed and a serene expression is floating in dark water. She is wearing a blue swim cap and a small hoop earring. The background is a blurred, natural setting, possibly a moor or a body of water with rocks.

# #3

## The city wild about nature

The only UK city to be between  
a national park and a national marine park

Ask anyone in the city and you'll likely find wetsuit and wellies in their boot. We're a city united by our love for the outdoors — whether walking through muddy trails in the moors, braving a cold plunge in the sea or paddleboarding as the sun sets. Our location is our greatest pride and advantage.

The abundance of natural capital brings a greater quality of life. Between the untamed wilds of Dartmoor and the historic Tinside Lido, Plymouth is a source of connection, wellbeing and wonder for everyone. Here, you're always close to the next big adventure.





#4

# Plymouth's creativity has no bounds

8,000 people worked in creative jobs in 2023

Plymouth creativity is defined by our passion for making, bold thinking and knack for problem solving. From the studios in Alma Yard to the working dockyard, creativity flows through our city.

It's a place that continues to evolve through experimentation. Artists collaborate with ecologists, designers join forces with engineers. And with affordable spaces, digital labs and leading arts education, we create opportunities in the city and on the global stage.

We embrace creativity for all. Discover diverse cultural programming that make the most of our beautiful landscape and enjoy theatre shows that preview before the West End. Creativity is the positive force that rallies and inspires us all.

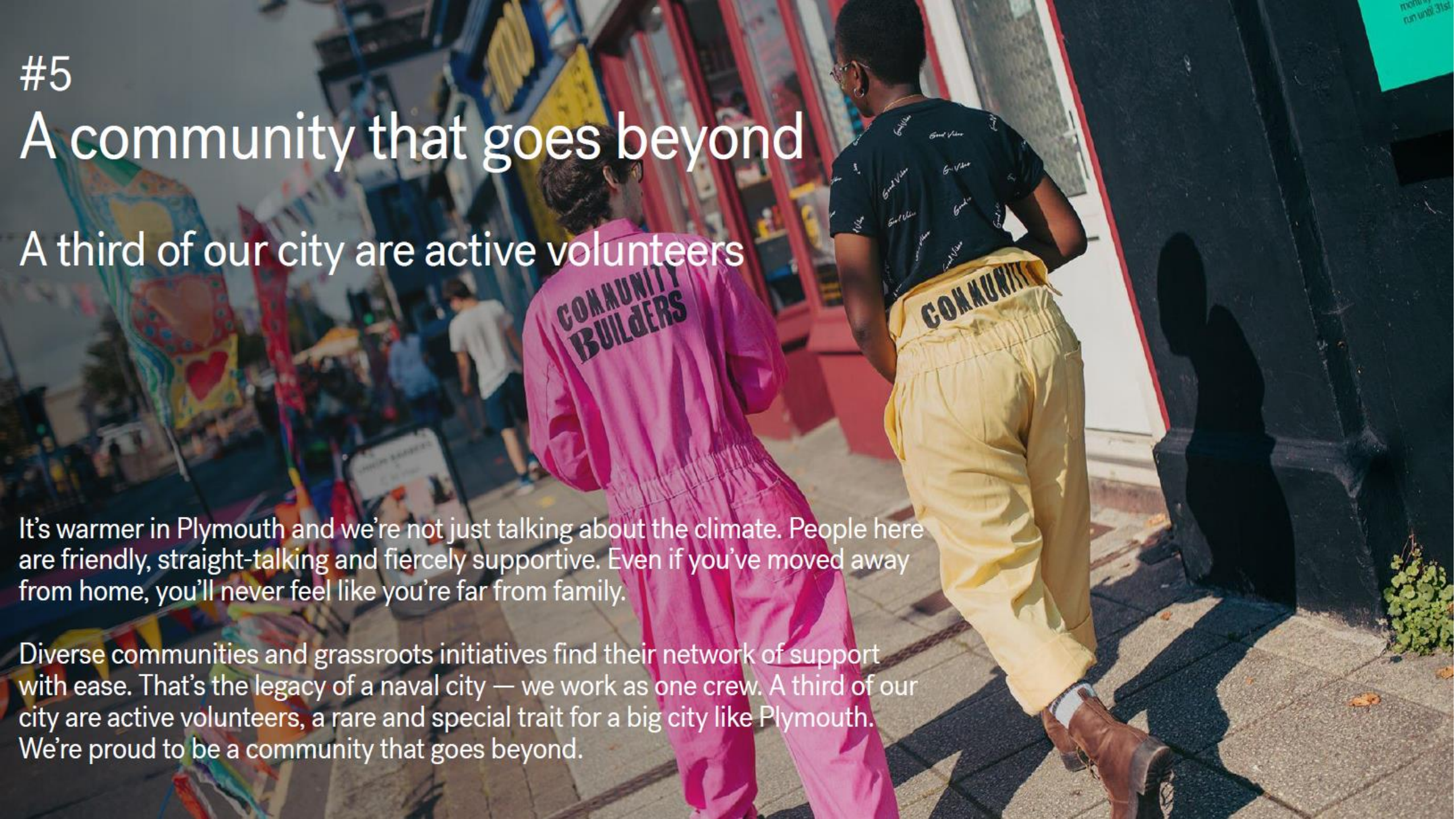


# #5 A community that goes beyond

A third of our city are active volunteers

It's warmer in Plymouth and we're not just talking about the climate. People here are friendly, straight-talking and fiercely supportive. Even if you've moved away from home, you'll never feel like you're far from family.

Diverse communities and grassroots initiatives find their network of support with ease. That's the legacy of a naval city — we work as one crew. A third of our city are active volunteers, a rare and special trait for a big city like Plymouth. We're proud to be a community that goes beyond.





# #6 We're charting an exciting future

A city centre transformation alongside a broader £6 billion pipeline investment into the city

Beyond the cobbled streets of the Barbican, our city's mid-century architecture makes us unique. The original vision was to create a truly modern city centre — clean, bright, democratic and optimistic. Today, we're reviving the vision and investing in our city more than ever.

Starting with a revamped city centre, we will bring back the scale, grandeur and vitality to Armada Way. Plans include a more connected cultural quarter, new homes, a campus dedicated to green and marine skills, and a rejuvenated waterfront. Plymouth is changing and we look forward to having you on board.





Plymouth, Britain's Ocean City  
**Make life an adventure**





# Plymouth, Britain's Ocean City

## **Make life an adventure**

500 years  
of innovation

The horizons are  
bigger here

The city wild  
about nature

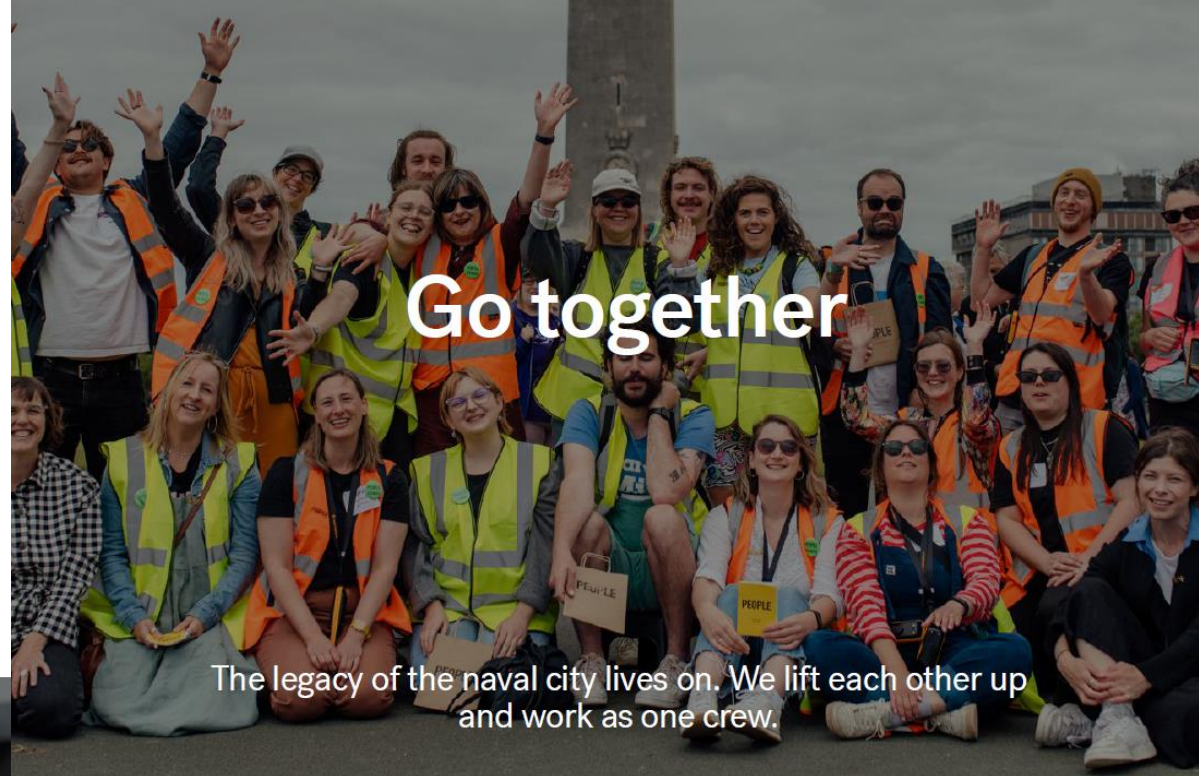
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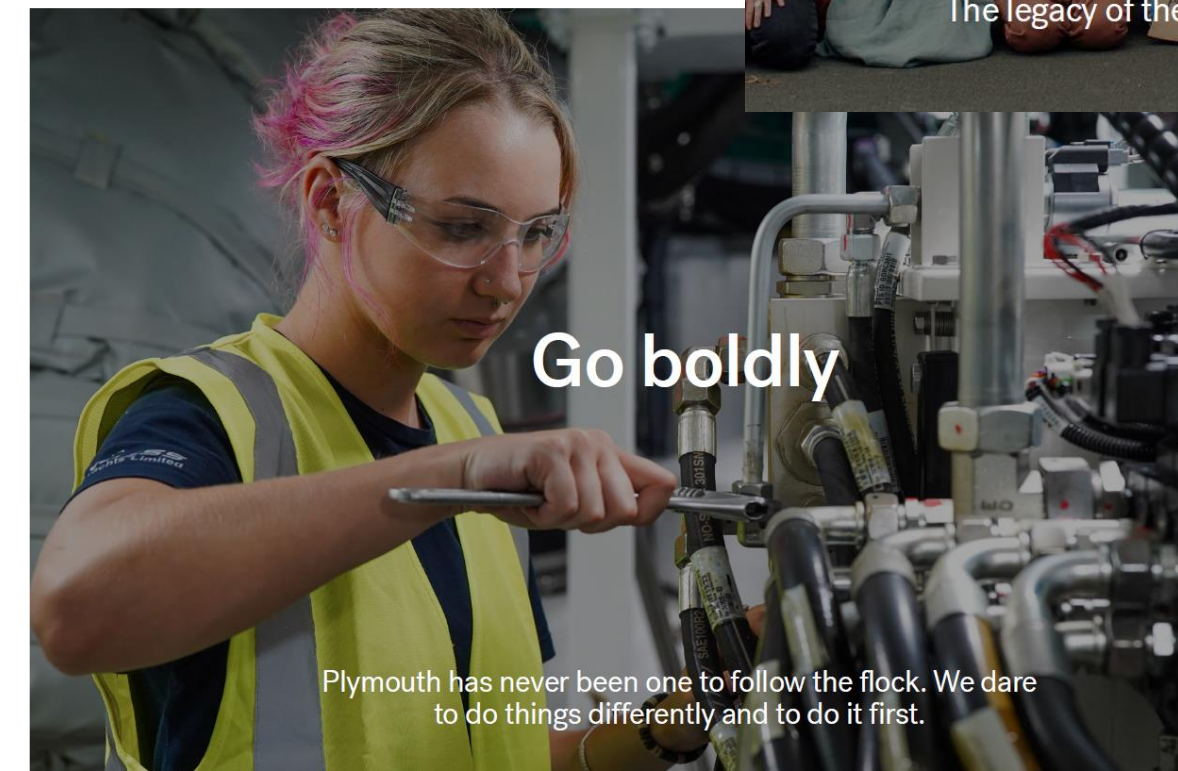
We're charting  
an exciting future



# Our values

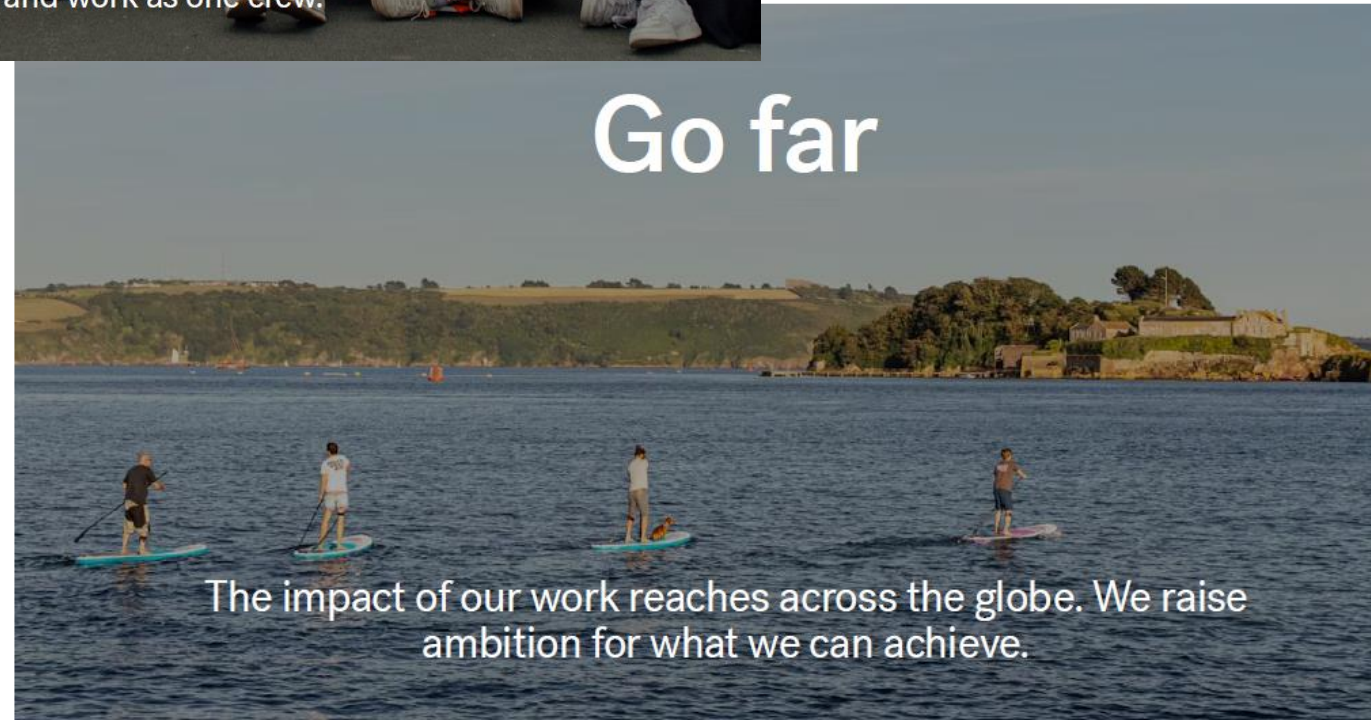


The legacy of the naval city lives on. We lift each other up and work as one crew.



Go boldly

Plymouth has never been one to follow the flock. We dare to do things differently and to do it first.

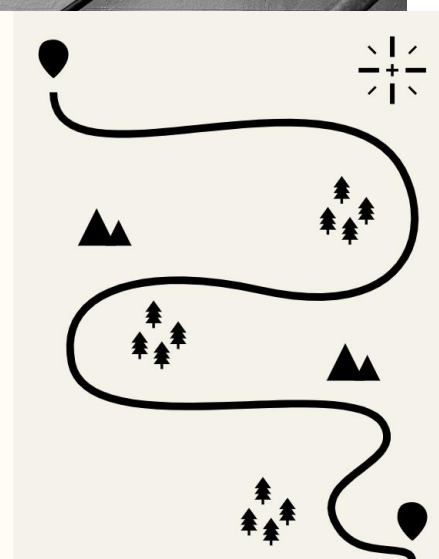
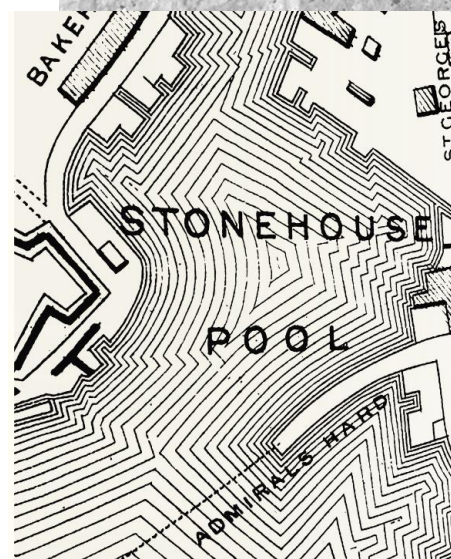
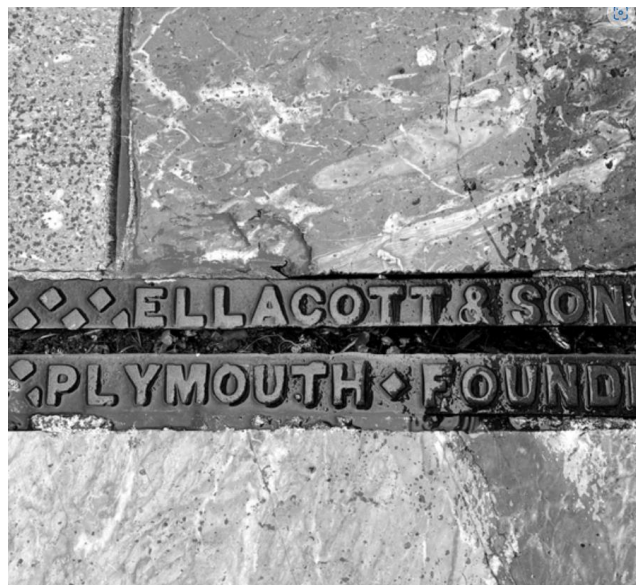


Go far

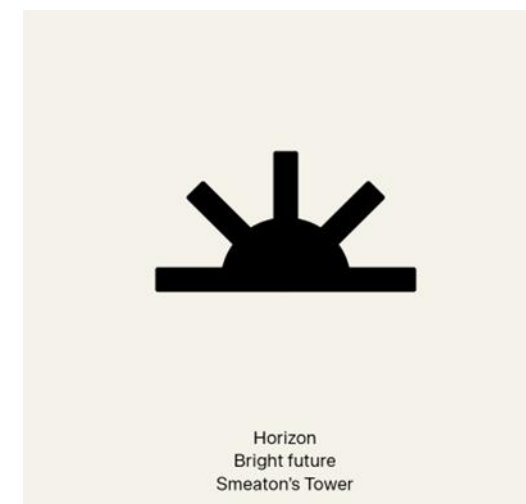
The impact of our work reaches across the globe. We raise ambition for what we can achieve.



# Using our heritage to shape our future

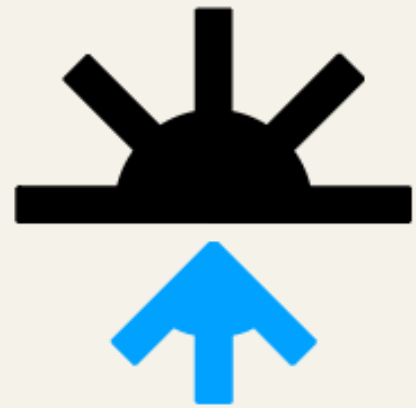


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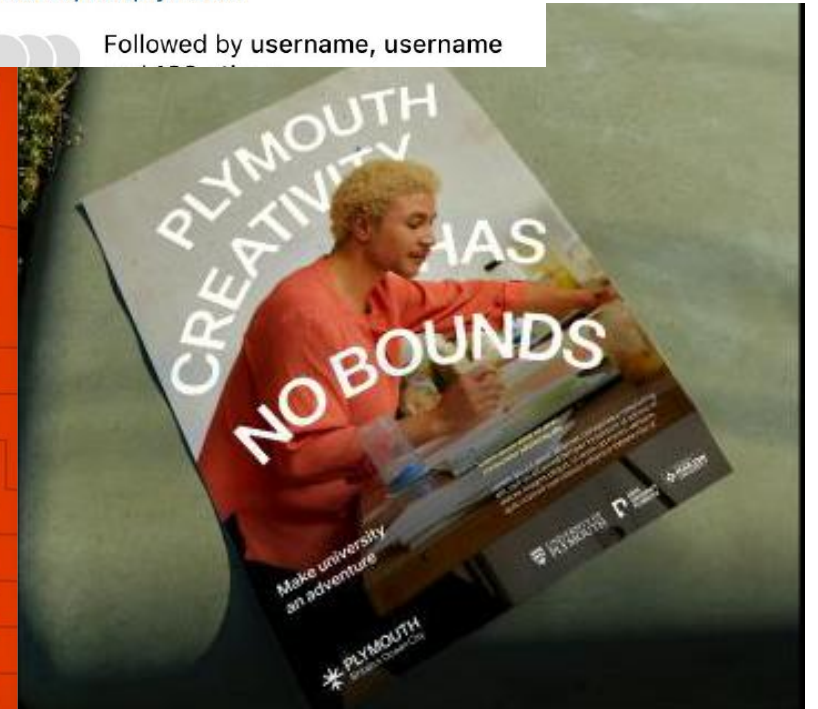
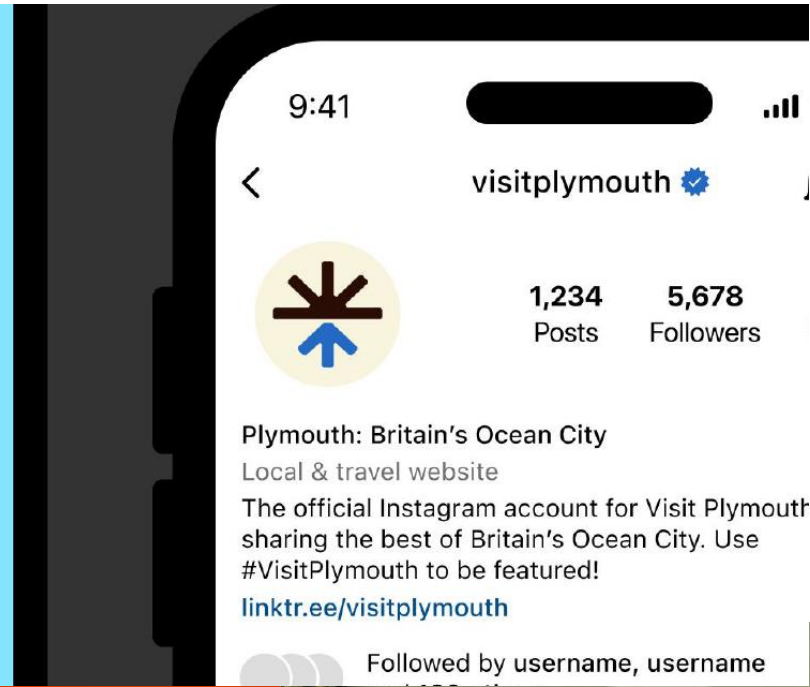
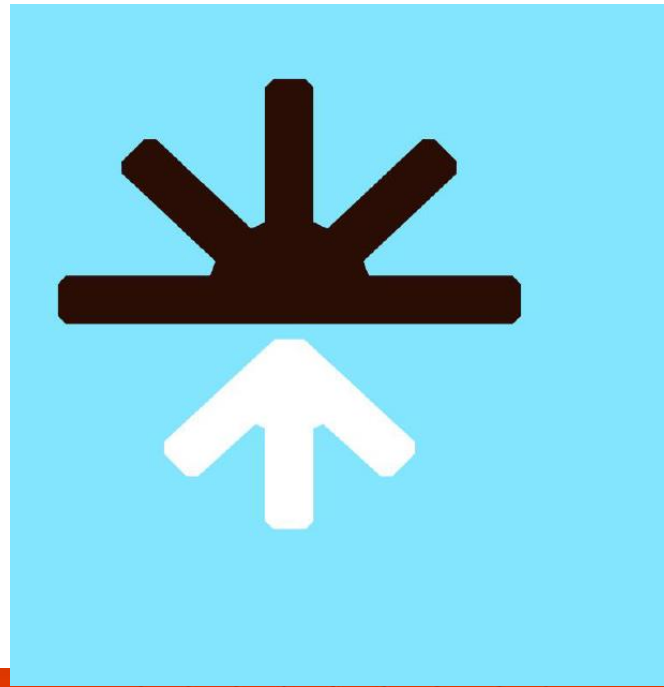
A new approach to reflect our re-positioning



**PLYMOUTH**  
Britain's Ocean City

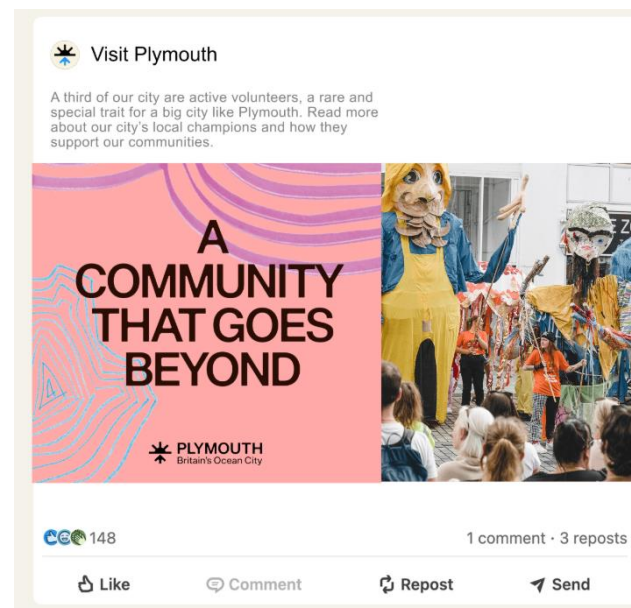


# Applications





# Applications





# Example Linkedin post: how we can begin to apply the narrative



**Babcock International Group**  
Promoted

Build a future and make a real difference as an Engineer at Babcock



The horizons  
are bigger here

Register your interest for an Engineering role



Engineering work that  
makes a difference

Learn more about the work we do



Make work  
an adventure

Apply now



DNCO

