

Harbour

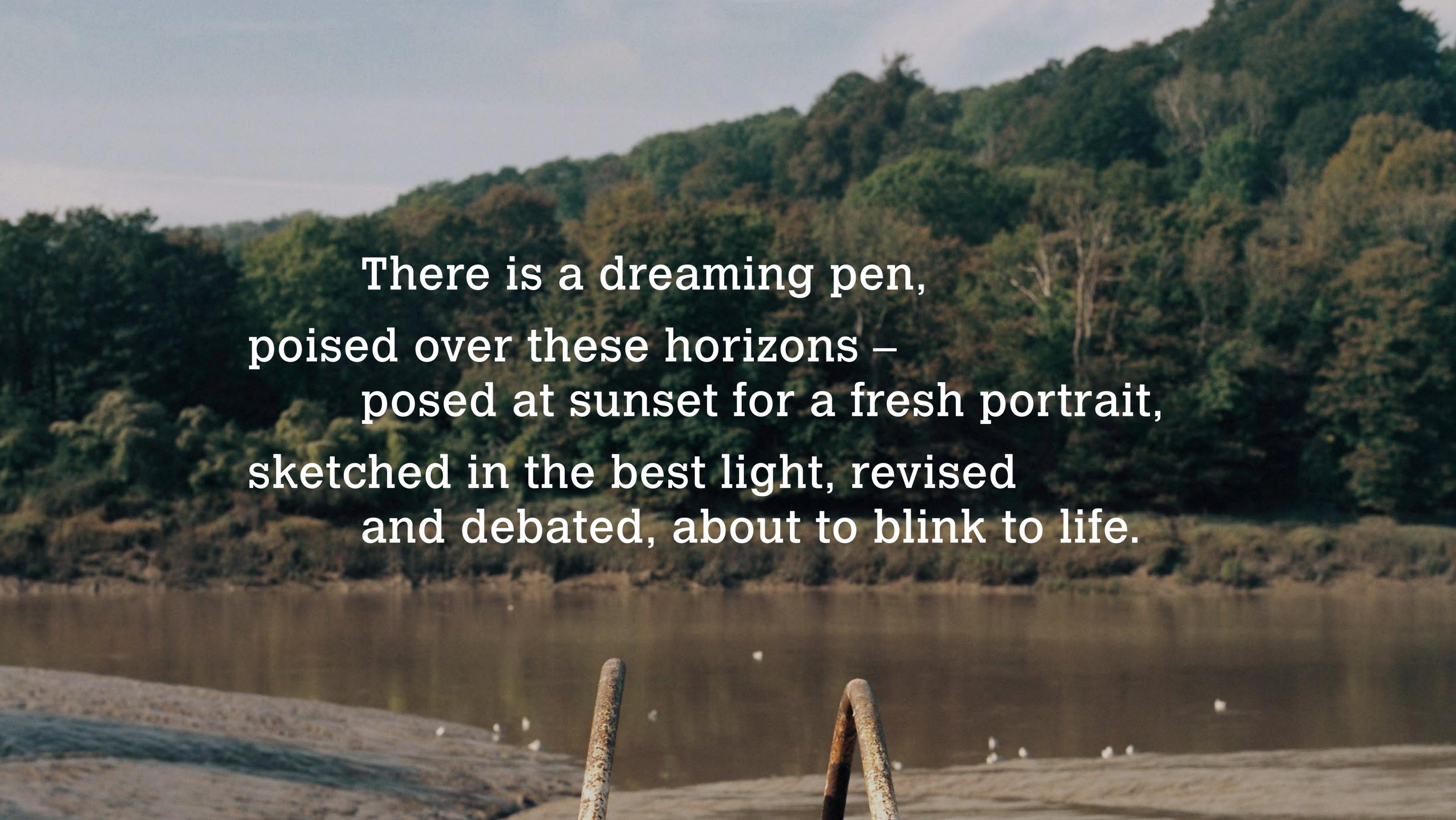
HopeS

A vision for Western Harbour

Why does Western Harbour need to change?

The western end of the Floating Harbour has evolved over the centuries, seeing feats of engineering, the changing fortunes of dock workers, and becoming a key route in and out of Bristol. As the city responds to a changing climate, aging infrastructure, the increasing threat of flooding and the need to provide quality places for people to live and work, it's important we shape a place that meets these challenges head on, while valuing what makes this part of Bristol so special and unique. This vision is the start of the process – the declaration of intent and a guide for the future creators, citizens and champions of Western Harbour and the city.



A scenic landscape featuring a dense forest of green trees on a hillside in the background. In the middle ground, there is a calm body of water reflecting the sky. The foreground shows a sandy beach with two rusty, vertical metal poles. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

There is a dreaming pen,
poised over these horizons –
posed at sunset for a fresh portrait,
sketched in the best light, revised
and debated, about to blink to life.

The western end of Bristol's Floating Harbour is primed for a new phase in its long history of transformation. In response to the challenges of our time and inspired by the hopes of an active community, its future will build on the area's heritage and identity shaped by pioneers such as Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Sylvia Crowe. With nature at its heart and infrastructure running through it, Western Harbour will become a climate exemplar supporting both community living and innovation. As a gateway and connection point, the area will be both edge and centre. This is a vision for Western Harbour, this is the story for its next chapter.

Western Harbour will



Be a distinctive gateway to Bristol



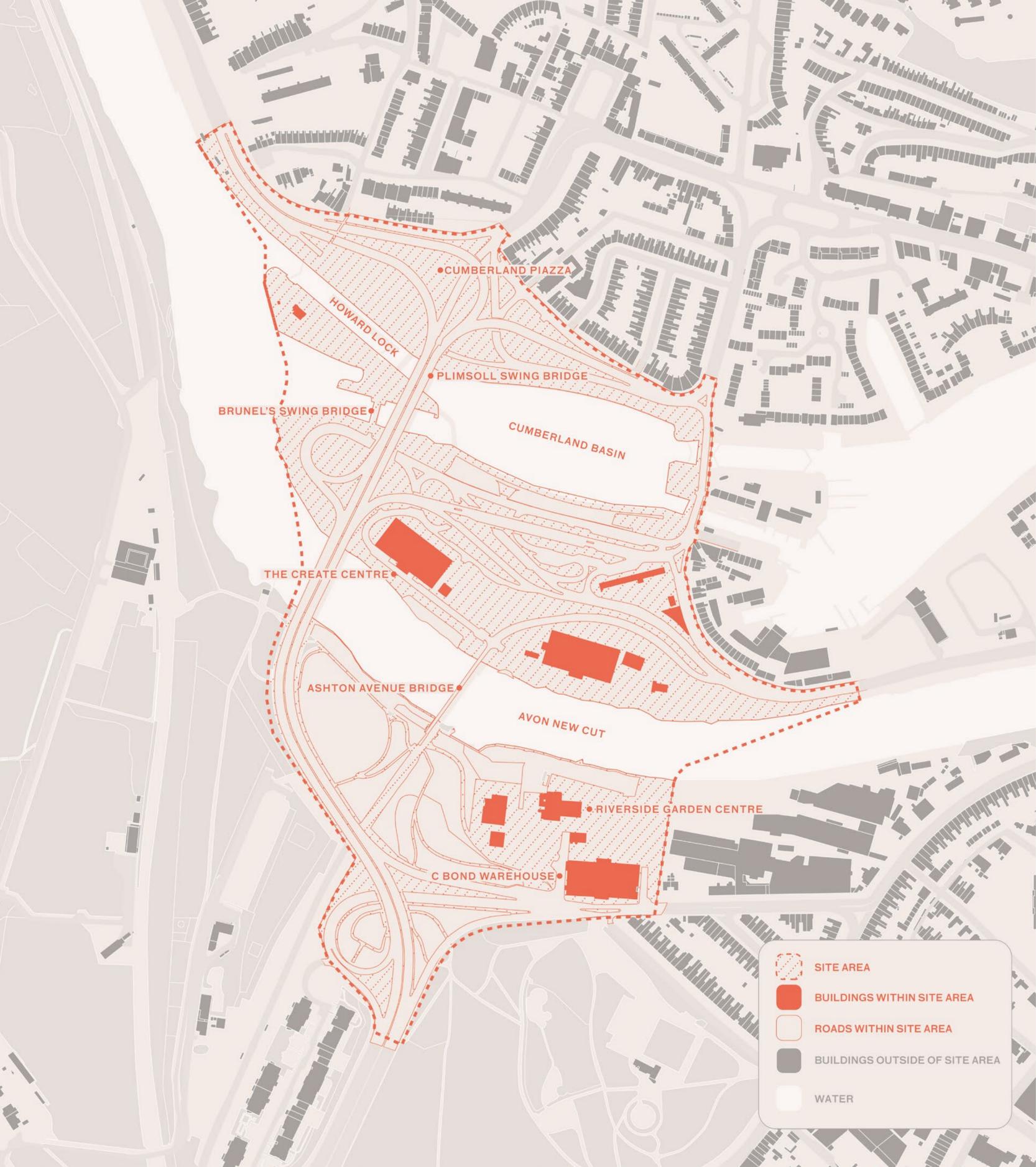
Support a thriving community



Build on its tradition of innovation

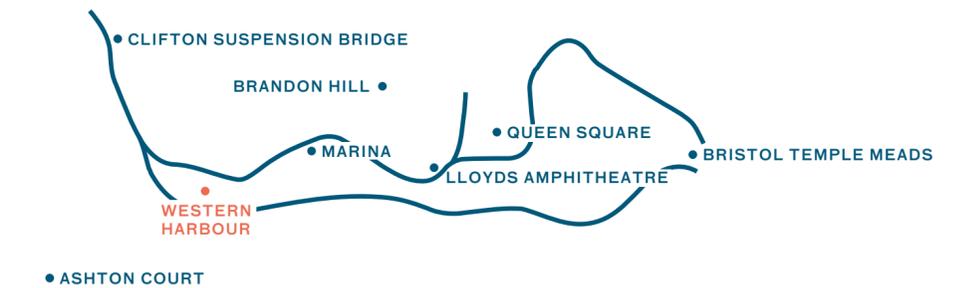


Embrace freedom and nature

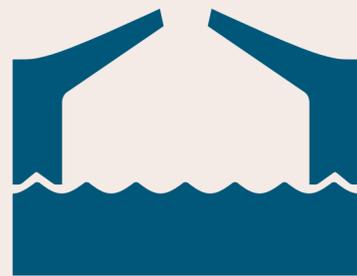


Where is Western Harbour?

The vision focusses on the western end of the Floating Harbour. It is an area that extends from Hotwells to Greville Smyth Park, and includes Cumberland Basin and the New Cut.







Western Harbour will be a distinctive gateway to Bristol

Commitments

Welcome to All

Western Harbour's significant historic role as Bristol's gateway between the city and the countryside, will be reflected in the new development attracting people from near and far to visit and stay awhile on land and water.

Reduce Local Traffic

Amenities will be located within walking distance whilst cycling routes will be legible and safe. Public transport and ferries will be prioritised over cars.

Create Connections

New pedestrian and cycling routes extending the harbourside walkway, will link into surrounding neighbourhoods, Ashton Court and beyond.

Celebrate Heritage

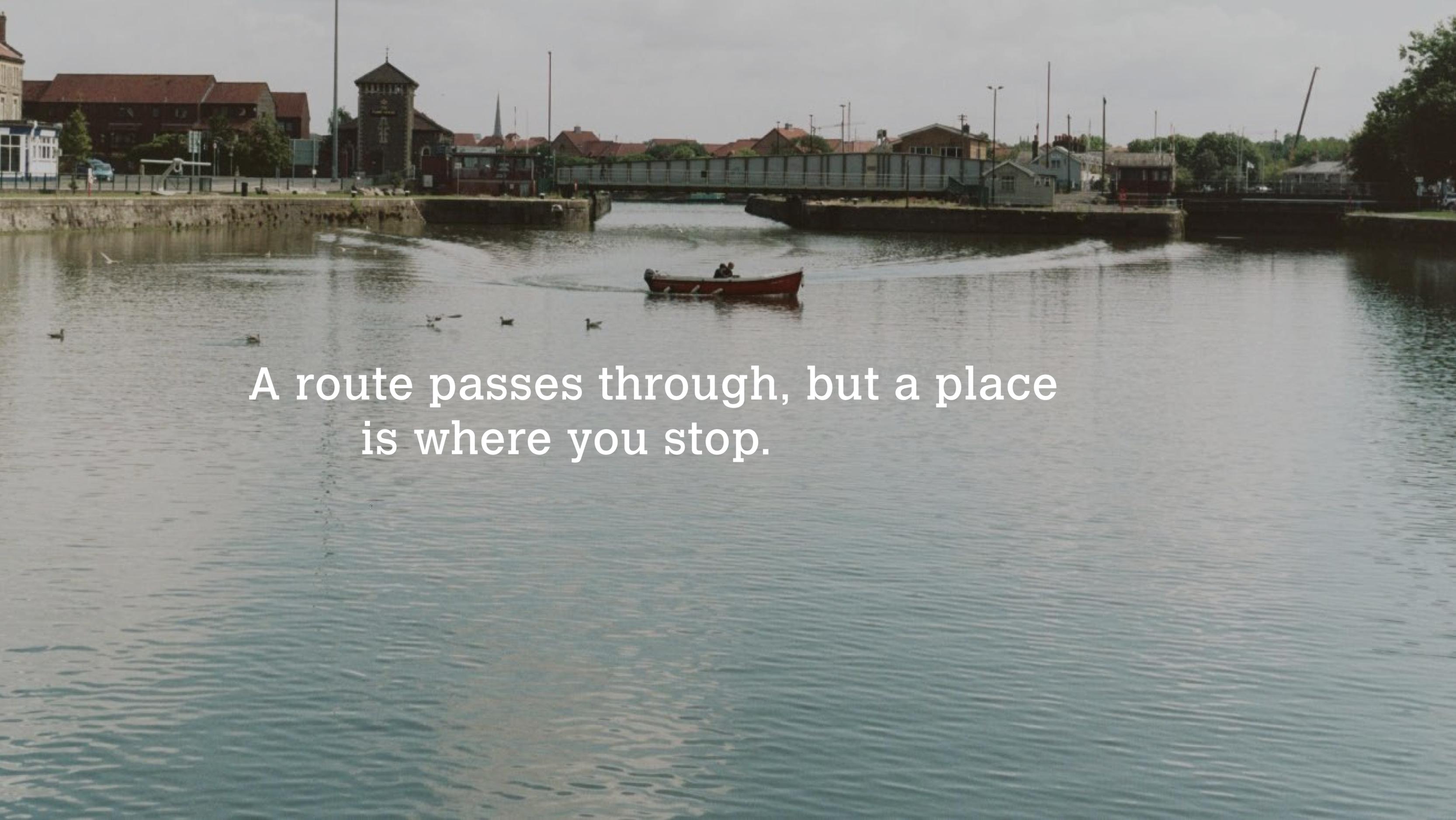
The heritage landscape will be explored and respected whilst looking to the future. Historic dock buildings and infrastructure will be restored, adapted, reused and explained. The Bonded warehouses will remain the dominant built structures within the landscape.

Have Character

New architecture and infrastructure will be of exemplar quality, distinct to Western Harbour, and respect the significance of existing local landmarks and views.

Encourage Culture

A bonded warehouse will be converted for mixed use and include a cultural hub for Bristol and beyond, offering a programme of national significance.

A wide river flows through a town. In the center, a small red boat with two people is moving across the water. Several ducks are swimming in the foreground. The background features a mix of buildings, including a prominent stone tower with a cross on top, and a bridge with a metal railing. The sky is overcast.

A route passes through, but a place
is where you stop.



Western Harbour will support a thriving community

Commitments

Inclusive Places

Places that are free and accessible to all, where everyone is welcome, whether you live here, work here, or just like to visit.

Provide Quality Homes

High quality homes, with a mix of sizes and tenures of which 50% are affordable, will support the community to grow over generations.

Support Enterprise

Local economic growth, training and job creation will be fostered through affordable space for small and medium businesses, and social enterprises.

Feel Safe

Eye contact from window to street level, active ground floors with a mix of uses, and a generous and playful public realm will create safe and lively streets.

Support Community

Facilities will be provided for the growing population, meeting the needs of existing and new communities.

Safeguard Treasured Assets

The treasured assets of Riverside Garden Centre and the pump track will be accommodated within the area for the existing and new communities to enjoy.

A photograph showing two men working on a large metal structure. The man on the left is younger, with a beard and glasses, wearing a brown t-shirt and dark trousers. He is holding a blue vise. The man on the right is older, with white hair and glasses, wearing a grey jacket over a plaid shirt and a high-visibility yellow vest. He is wearing gloves and looking down at a tool. The background features a sign with the website 'www.hotwells.org.uk' and the year '1849'.

Wearing a mud mask
of exfoliating cormorants, these horizons
are carefully hand-washing the crystals
of history, its pistons and cogs.



Western Harbour will build on its tradition of innovation

Commitments

Tackle Challenges

Building on the legacy of maritime ingenuity and engineering innovation exemplified by Brunel, the development will provide ground-breaking, innovative solutions for the city's 21st century challenges.

Integrate Resilience

A resilient flood defence system, sensitive to heritage assets, will be integrated into a playful and inclusive landscape design, forming a safe threshold between land and water.

Achieve Net-Zero

A pioneering climate resilient, net-zero in operation and regenerative development, leading the way for the city's sustainable future.

Run on Green Energy

Innovative green energy systems will be integral to all new buildings, ensuring efficiency on a neighbourhood wide level.

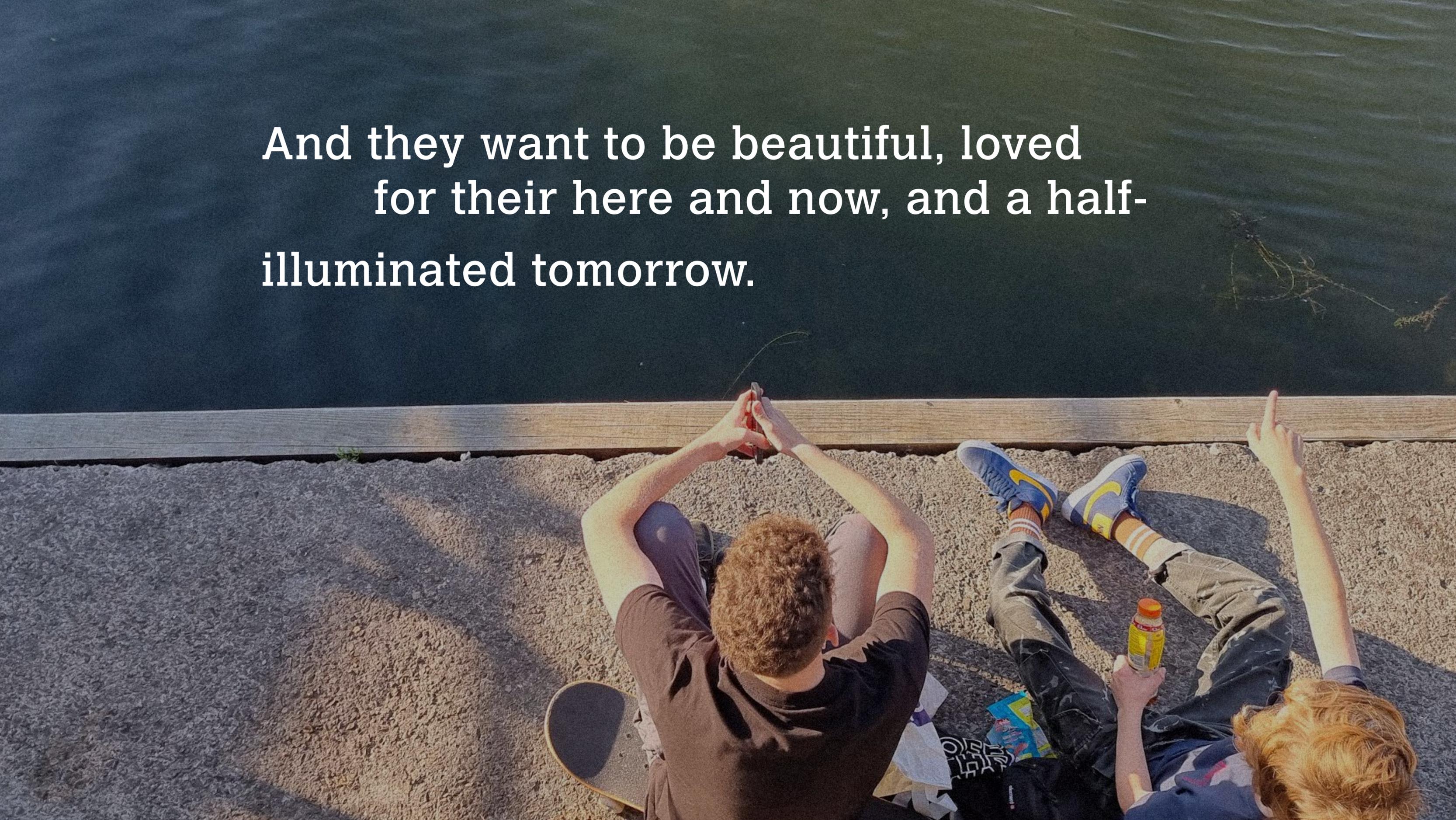
Build-in Sustainable Drainage

The built environment will integrate green and blue surfaces as sustainable urban drainage systems in landscape, streets and on roofs.

Biodiverse Built Environment

Biodiversity net-gain will be achieved through the integration of wildlife friendly habitats in buildings and the public realm, for example through planting, bat and bird boxes, green roofs, green walls and living structures.

And they want to be beautiful, loved
for their here and now, and a half-
illuminated tomorrow.





Western Harbour will embrace freedom and nature

Commitments

Celebrate the Waterfront

An extended harbourside walk will celebrate heritage, views and encourage activity on the water, while providing places to dwell and socialise.

Escape the bustle

The neighbourhood will offer a retreat from the hustle and bustle of the rest of the harbour, creating tranquil spaces where people can pause and reflect.

Promote Recreation

Access to the site's natural resources for play and recreation, will retain a sense of freedom and promote a healthy and active lifestyle for residents and visitors.

Provide Vantage Points

Beautiful public spaces to enjoy key views of the Clifton Suspension Bridge, Ashton Court and the Clifton escarpment both from within the area and across the city.

Nurture Ecology

Protection and enhancement of harbour and river wildlife corridors, as well as targeted rewilding projects, will nurture the area's ecology and biodiversity.

Connect to River Avon

New buildings and public realm will connect to the river corridor, provide access to nature and support the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.

Next Steps

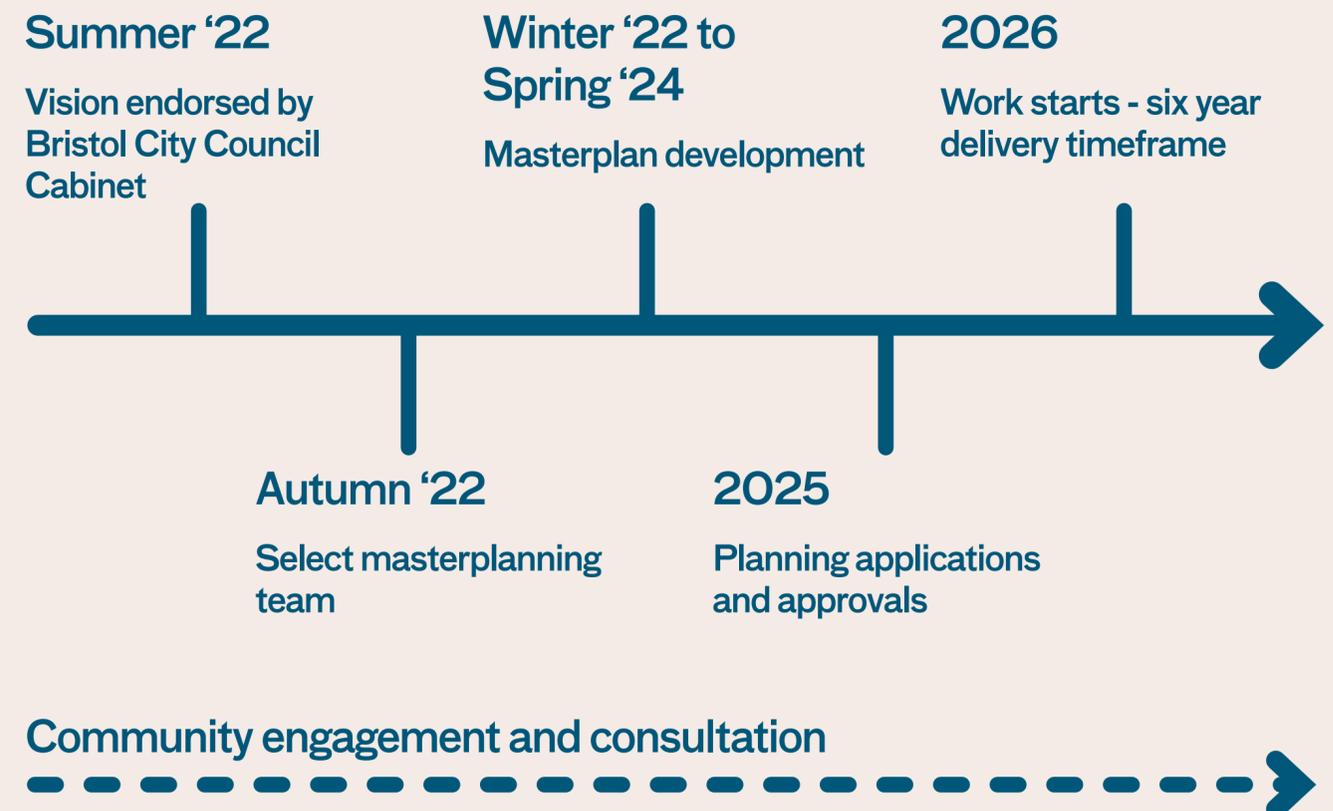
This vision has been the product of hundreds of encounters and conversations about the identity and potential for the area which took place from September 2021 to April 2022. It was endorsed by Bristol City Council's Cabinet on 12 July 2022.

This is the first step in shaping the future of the Western Harbour. Through further community consultation and engagement, a masterplan will be created to set out in detail how the vision's commitments will be achieved. This process will also inform the Local Plan Review.

We'll need inventive thinking to work through the challenges together, and establish common ground, and we hope the city will continue to engage with us to strive for the best outcome for the area.

www.harbourhopes.co.uk
[@harbourhopes](https://twitter.com/harbourhopes)

Indicative timeline



The Best Light

Caleb Parkin and Tom Sastry

Bristol poets Caleb Parkin and Tom Sastry were 'in-residence' in the area in Autumn 2021. This poem responds to the people they met along the way.

“This place could be beautiful, right?
You could make this place beautiful.”

–Good Bones by Maggie Smith

When you ask these horizons
if people ever called them beautiful
they will point you to the archive,
where words ring with hope
and faint sketches are green and peopled.
These horizons would say that once, they
dreamed of drivers, who longed to see
trees who, in turn, put down longing roots.
A route passes through, but a place
is where you stop. And these horizons
dream of a slowness which gives time to
look up; of being places and plazas,
safe pockets of silence. Wearing a mud mask
of exfoliating cormorants, these horizons
are carefully hand-washing the crystals of
history, its pistons and cogs. They are

adding detergent and softener to lawns,
tenderly rinsing grass-bright parks.
And they want to be beautiful, loved
for their here and now, and a half-
illuminated tomorrow. In their streetlights,
there's a twinkle making pavements
wider than the eyes of beholders: indented
with footsteps both ancient and new.
In their puzzles of shared-use shadows
and slipways, there's room for bold
flyover views, while questions skitter underpasses.
There is a dreaming pen,
poised over these horizons –
posed at sunset for a fresh portrait,
sketched in the best light, revised
and debated, about to blink to life.

Harbour Hopes

A Vision for Western Harbour

Updated July 2022

Photograph credits:

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Dougal Burgess
Rosanna Vitiello

Poetry quoted from 'The Best Light'
by Caleb Parkin and Tom Sastry

