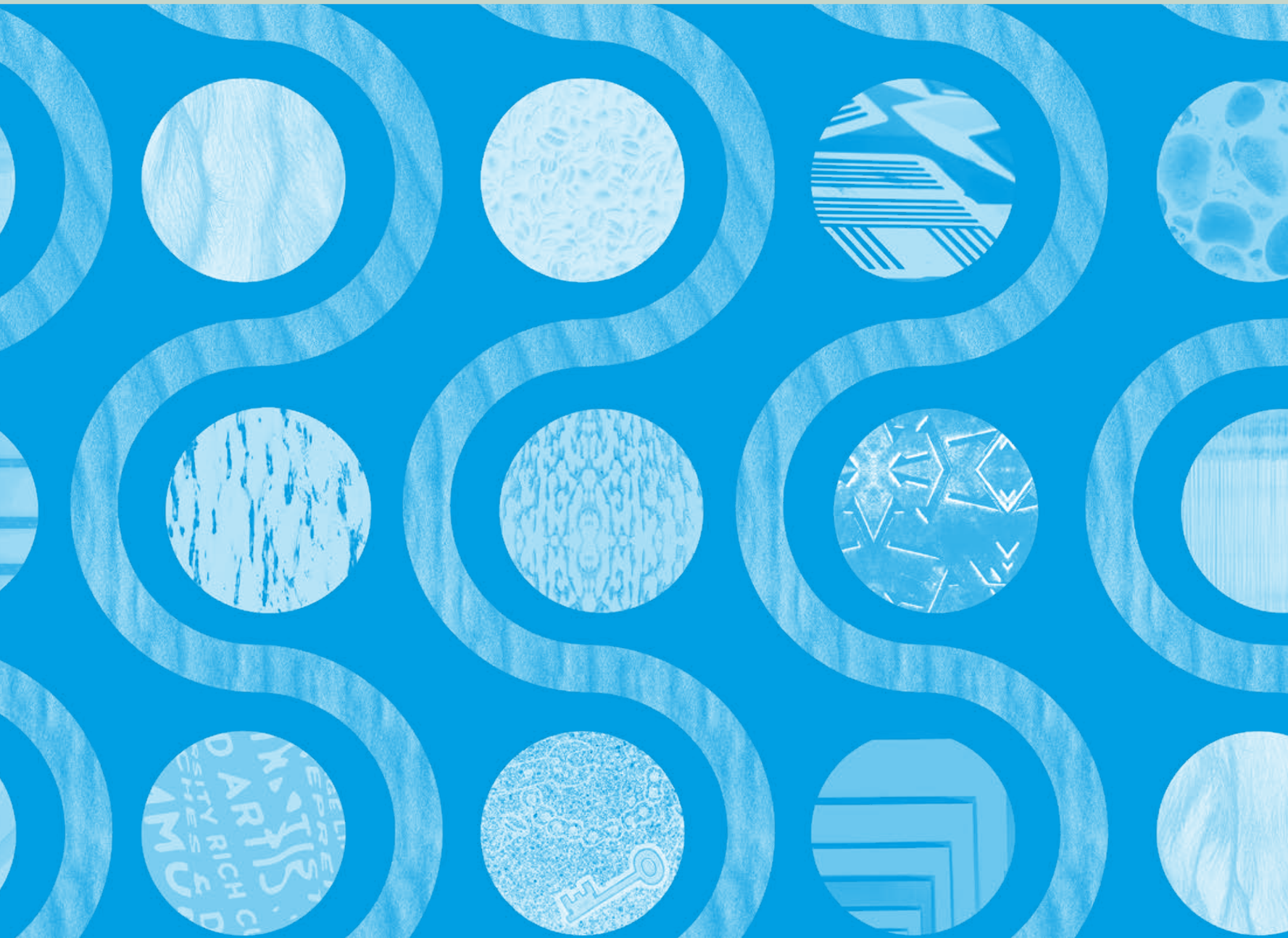
The BARRY STORY

Barry is unique in Britain. Nowhere else offers international industrial history and golden seaside resort in such proximity. Indeed, there are few places in the world that combine coal and candyfloss, ships and chips, bananas and bumper-cars so seamlessly.

Our town fits snugly between Wales's capital city of Cardiff to the east and our international airport a few miles to the west. Add to that a rail service that connects Barry to the capital in under 20 minutes, a glorious, golden coastline, fantastic green spaces, a brand new international enterprise zone, a hinterland of historic villages, market towns and oodles of heritage, and we have one great story to tell and one fantastic place to share with the world.

A PLACE OF PILGRIMAGE



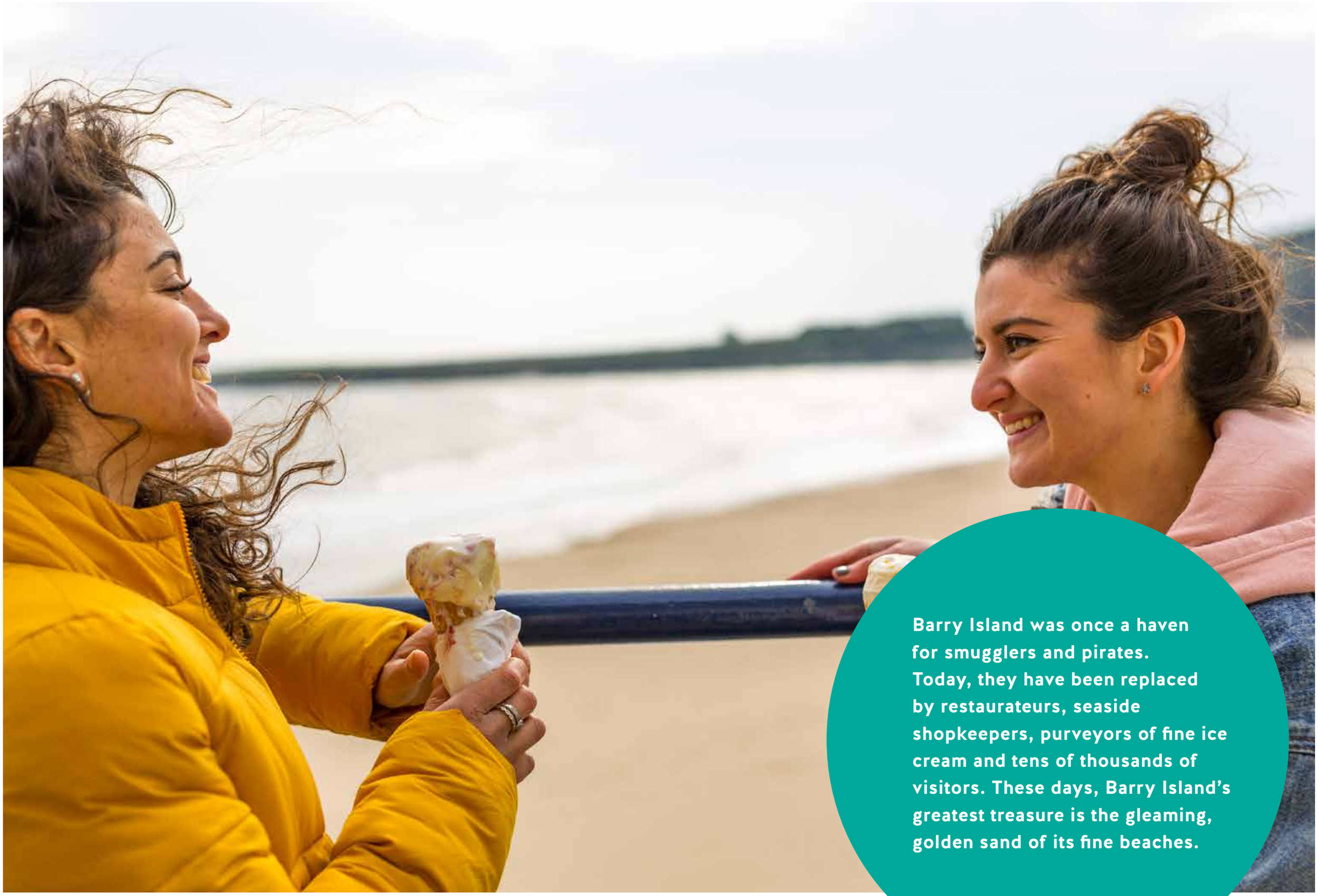
From the Early Medieval to the Middle Ages, Barry was an important destination for pilgrims. Four pilgrimages to St Baruc's church on Barry Island were considered equivalent to one to Rome.

Later, workers from all four corners of the globe journeyed to Barry to capitalise on the town's industrial boom years. Hot on their heels came miners, industrial workers and their families from across South Wales to worship the sun on our golden beaches.

The tradition of pilgrimage continues today with Gavin and Stacey fans who come in droves to pay homage to the sights and locations of the internationally popular TV show.

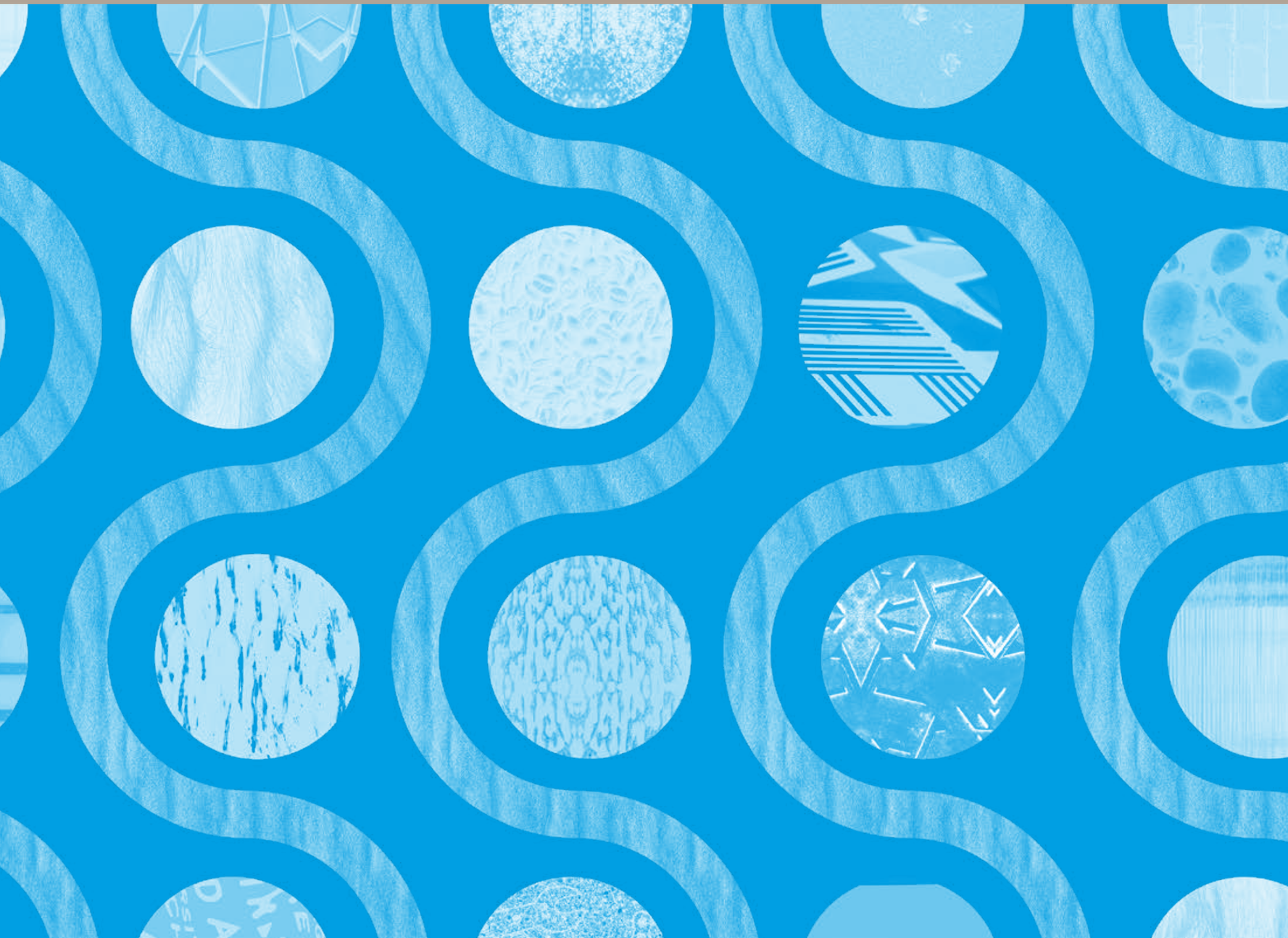
TREASURE ISLAND, GOLD COAST

The port attracted workers from around the globe, creating a rich multicultural community. In the midst of the industrial boom, day trippers began flocking in their thousands to Barry Island's strip of glistening sand, on the railway built to carry coal.



Barry Island was once a haven for smugglers and pirates. Today, they have been replaced by restaurateurs, seaside shopkeepers, purveyors of fine ice cream and tens of thousands of visitors. These days, Barry Island's greatest treasure is the gleaming, golden sand of its fine beaches.

COAL AND CANDYFLOSS



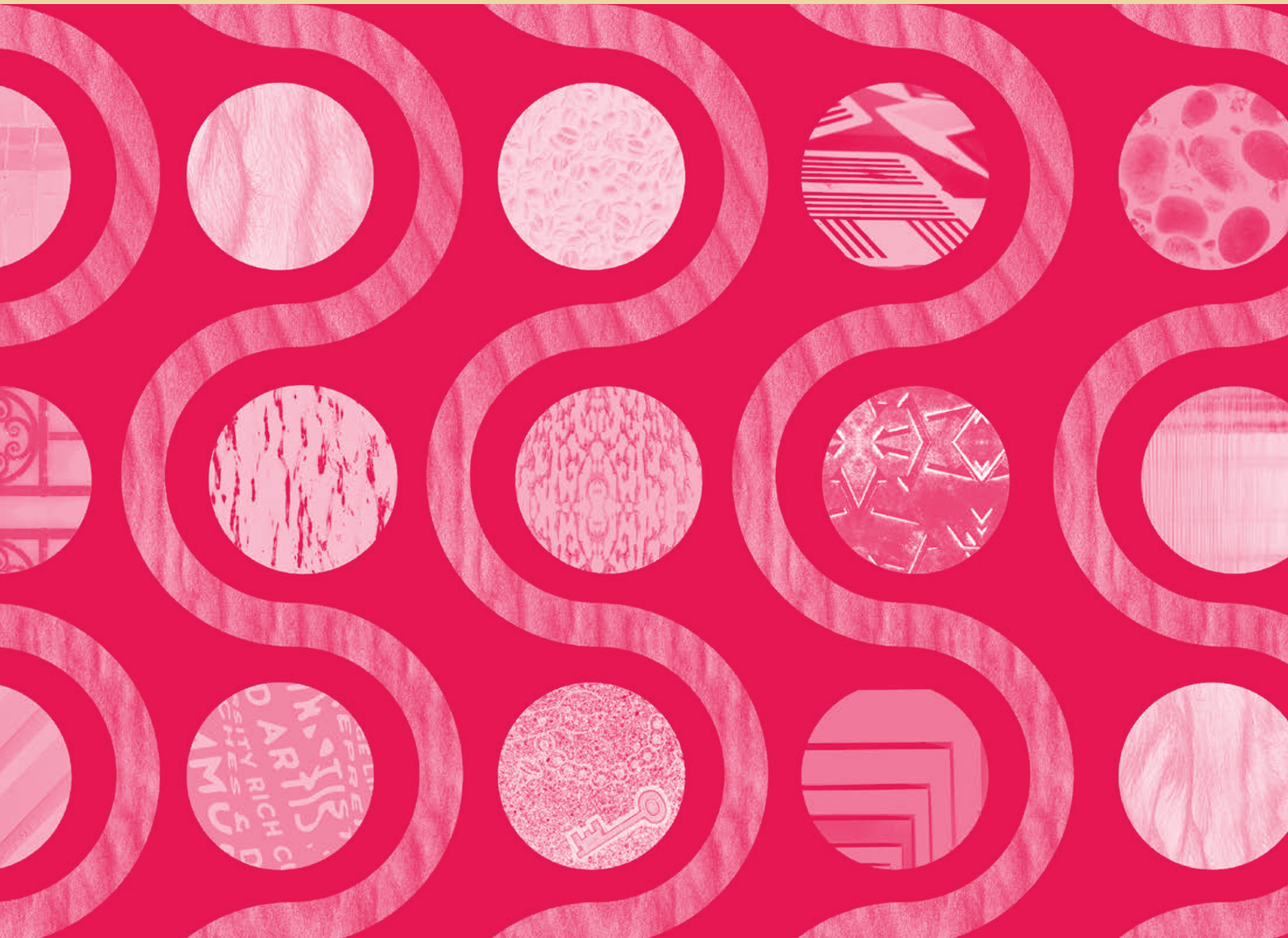
During the 1880s Barry was selected by David Davies and other leading industrialists to be developed as a coal port in order to relieve Tiger Bay in Cardiff, and expedite the export of coal from Davies's pits in the Rhondda. Barry Docks opened for business in 1889.

A group of colliery owners formed the Barry Railway Company and chose to connect the South Wales Valley coalfields with Barry, thus developing an industrial scale port. By 1913, Barry was the largest coal export port in the world.

The port attracted workers from around the globe and the demand for workers' housing grew, creating a rich multicultural community. Irish Navigators, labourers from the West Country and Scandinavia flocked to build row upon row of terraced houses in local limestone and brick.

The town flourished thanks to the workers and their families. In the midst of the industrial boom day trippers and visitors began flocking in their thousands to Barry Island's beaches and newly built Promenade.

A PLACE OF LEARNING, CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

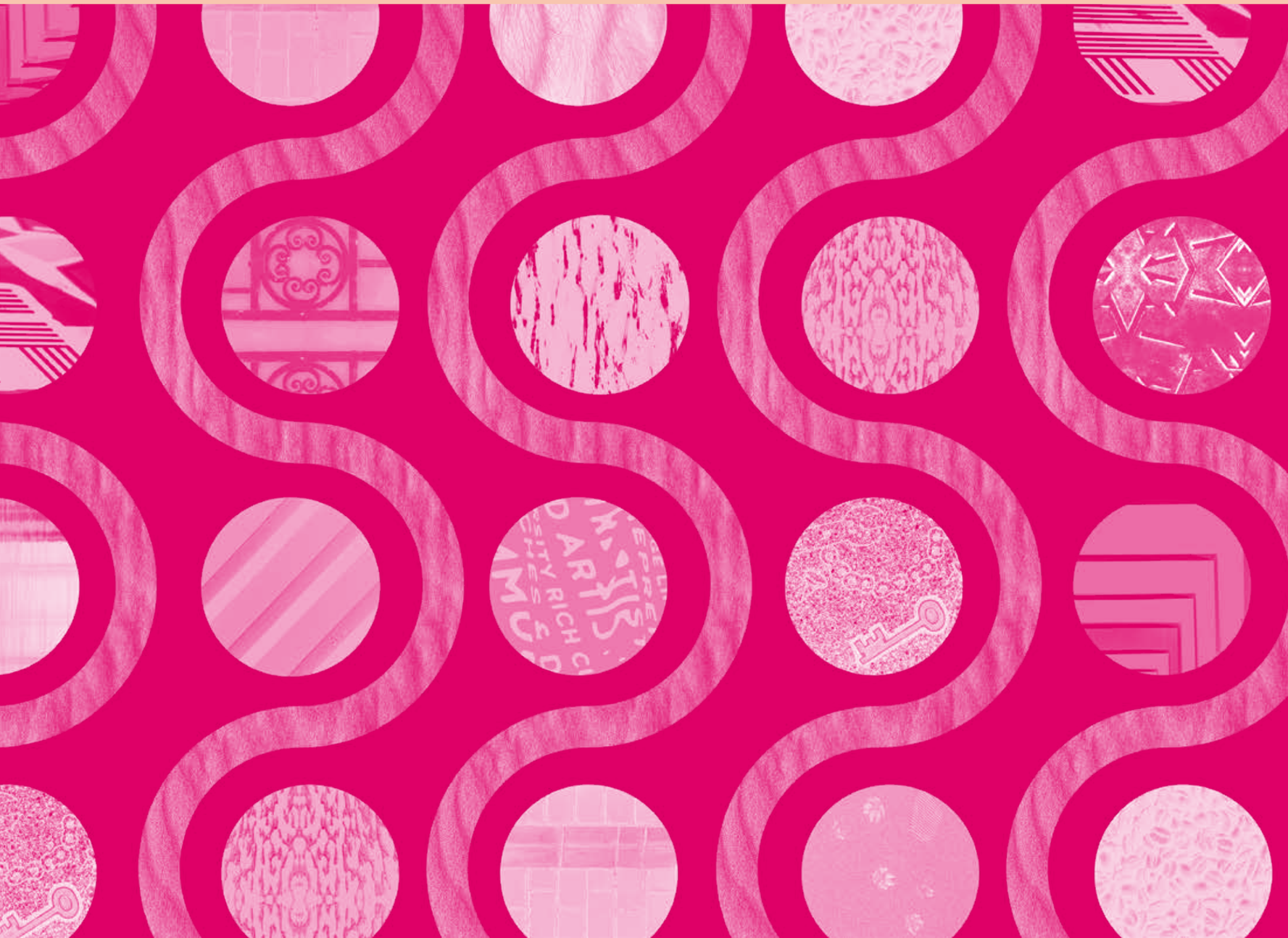


During the mid 20th century, The Glamorgan College of Education located in the town, was at the heart of the internationally renowned Barry Summer school. It espoused pioneering new approaches to art and education and attracted pupils and iconic artists from all over the world including Tom Hudson, George Brecht, Robin Page, John Epstein, Jazz musician Larry Adler and today's Royal Academy artist Terry Setch.

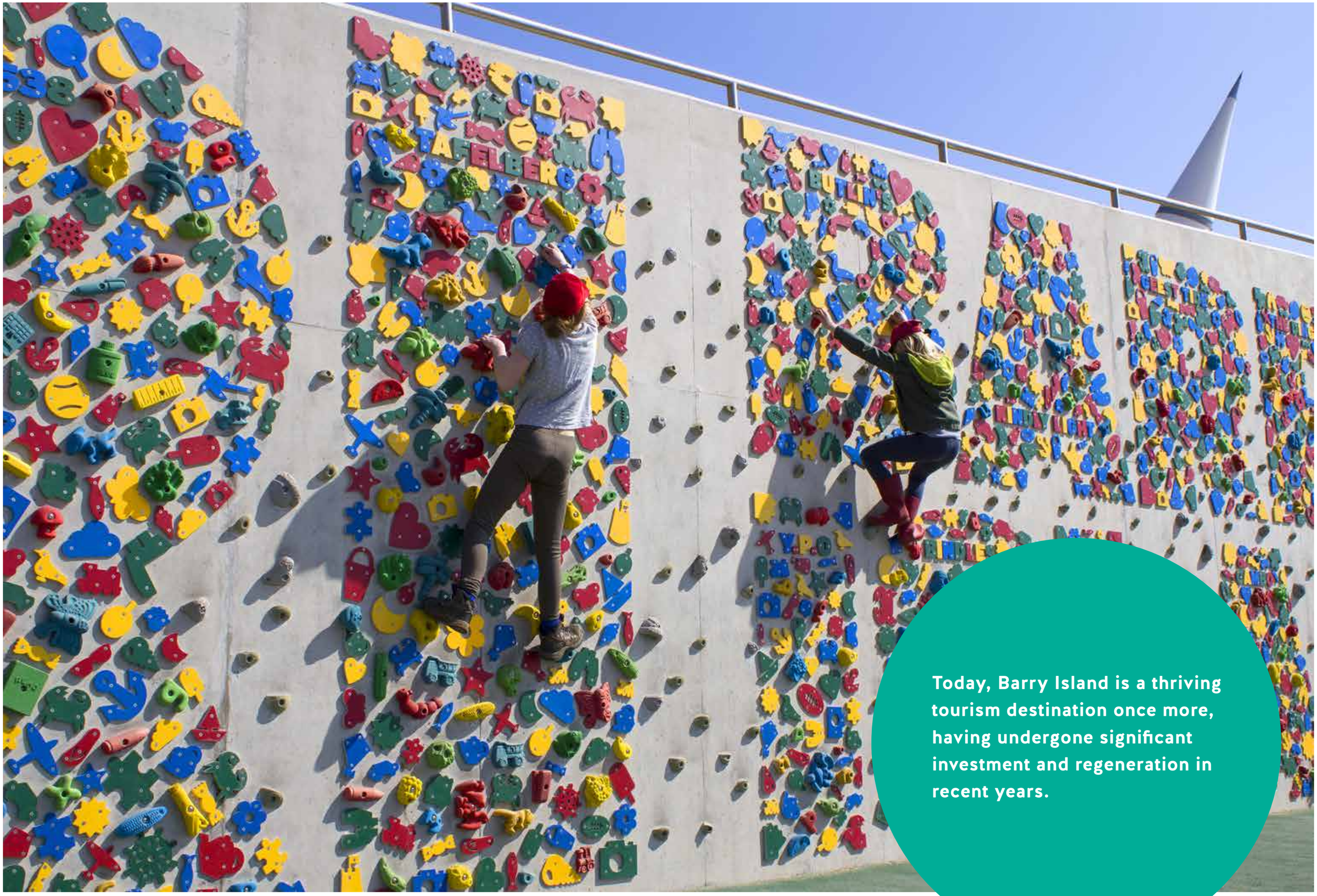
The tradition of providing excellent education continues to this day. Barry boasts some of the top performing schools in Wales.

The town offers three English medium secondary schools and one Welsh medium comprehensive. Additionally, Cardiff and Vale College maintains a campus in Barry, its largest site in the Vale, offering a vast range of courses and specialist training facilities.

A HISTORY OF HOSPITALITY AND FUN IN THE SUN



Barry has been welcoming visitors since the Victorian era, but really flourished once Barry Island was linked by rail to the mainland in 1896. It became a popular resort for miners, industrial workers and their families across South Wales and beyond. From humble beginnings, a funfair was established and from the mid 60s to the mid 80s, Barry was a jewel in the Butlin's holiday empire crown!



Today, Barry Island is a thriving tourism destination once more, having undergone significant investment and regeneration in recent years.

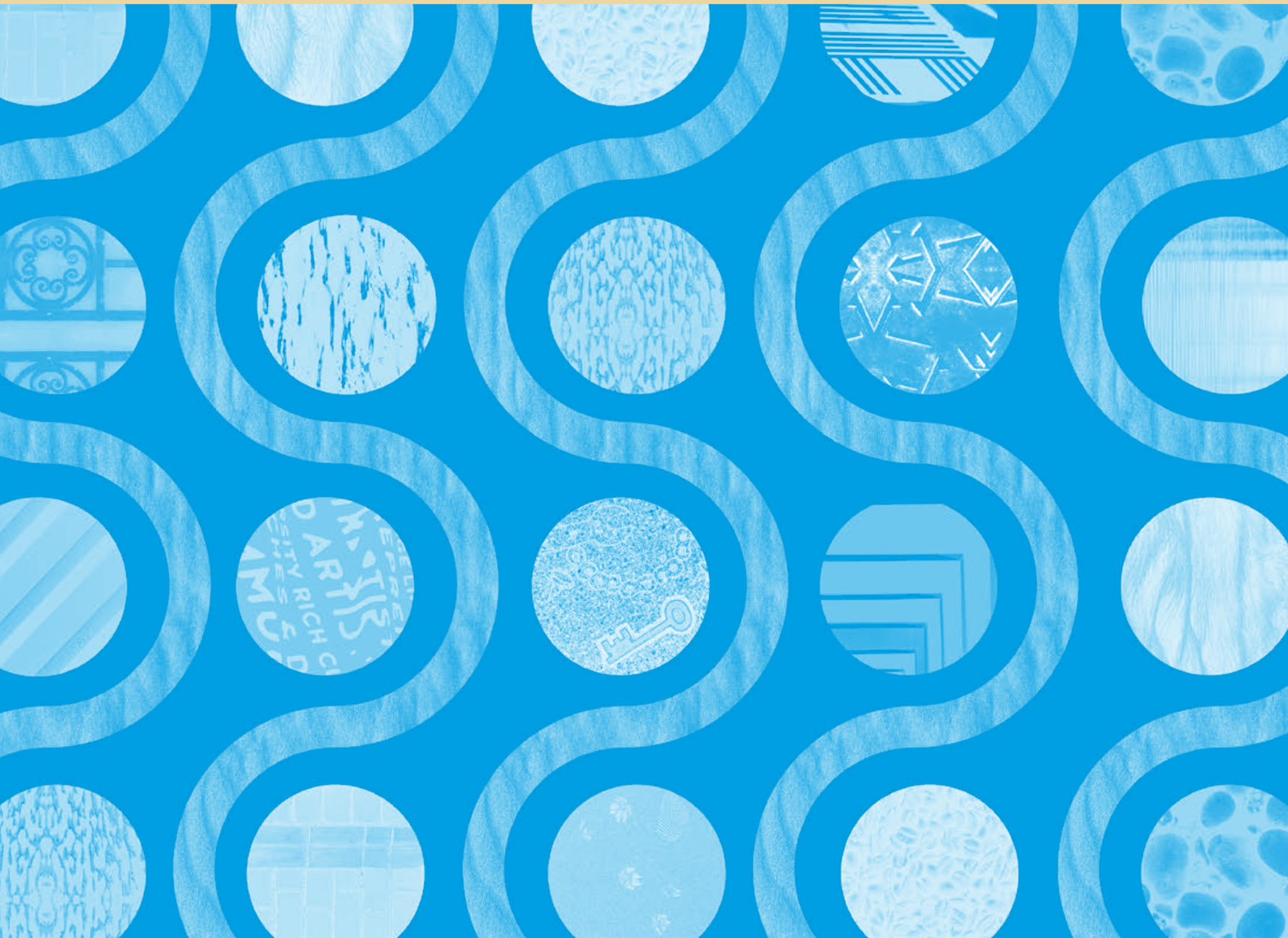
Vibrant beach huts have returned to Nell's Point, and a selection of cafés and eateries serving everything from top class fish and chips to artisan ice cream and Prosecco, have brought visitors back in their tens of thousands.

A VIBRANT, CULTURED TOWN

Our coastline forms a fantastic backdrop for a busy programme of annual events ranging from open-air cinema and triathlons to the spectacular Isle of Fire.

There’s always something cultural afoot at the Memo Arts Centre and The Small Space as well as annual artist-led events.

A TOUCH OF BARRY SWAGGER



Barry is now known worldwide thanks to the popularity of Gavin and Stacey, the British sitcom written by James Corden and Ruth Jones. It first hit the screen in 2007 and is now shown across the globe.

Capitalising on this and the regeneration of Barry Island, two local childhood friends developed a line of merchandise now exported worldwide, using a local nickname for the town, ‘Barrybados’.

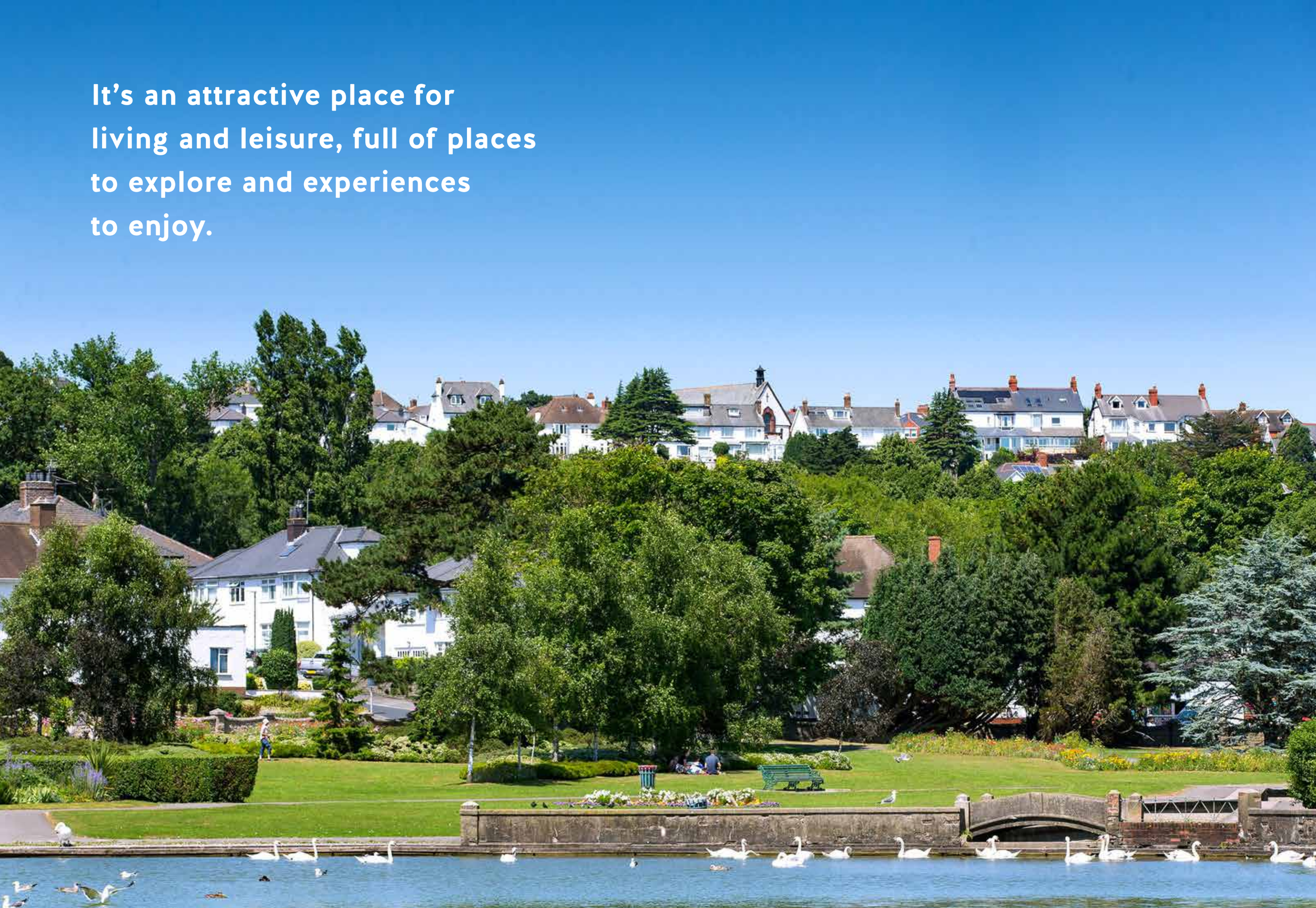
It’s just one example of ‘Barry swagger’, the maverick entrepreneurism that’s an intrinsic part of the personality of this place.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!

In recent years, Barry has consistently been at the top of a list, compiled by the Centre for Economic and Business Research, of the most desirable places to live in Wales, ranked by work-life balance, access to good schools and green spaces. On top of that, there's a vibrant and friendly community spirit here, with lots of clubs and activities to get involved with.

While our beaches and promontories are great outdoor spaces, Porthkerry Country Park offers wilder habitats to explore. The town has great sporting facilities: Jenner Park is home to Barry FC and a hive of athletics talent, while our YMCA is busy nurturing gymnasts for the Commonwealth Games. As if that wasn't enough, we're surrounded by the Vale of Glamorgan's rolling pastures, quaint villages, historic places and market towns filled with boutique shops and delicious eateries.

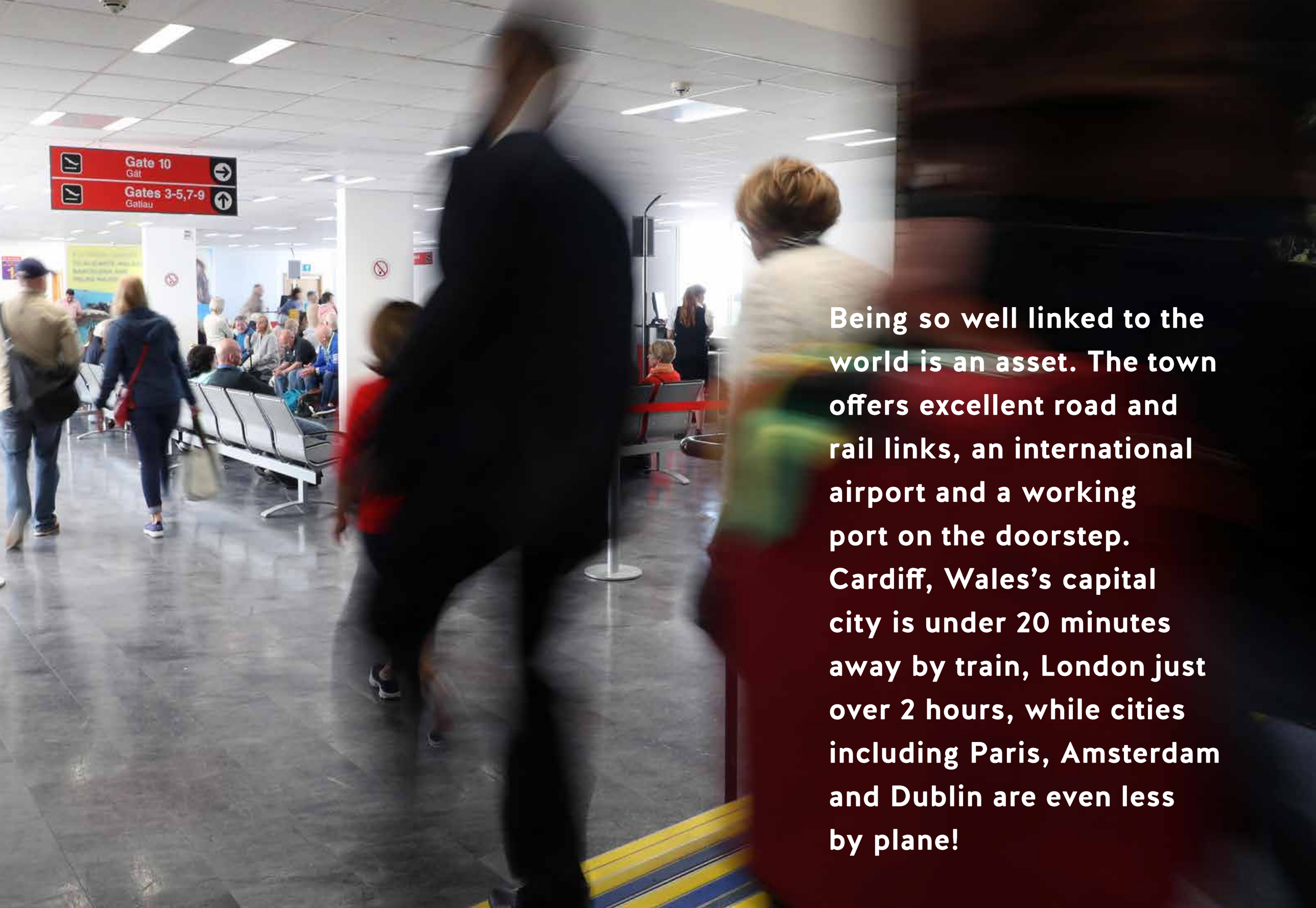
It’s an attractive place for living and leisure, full of places to explore and experiences to enjoy.



A PLACE FOR BUSINESS & INNOVATION, CONNECTED TO THE WORLD

Barry is a fantastic place to work. There's a new enterprise zone on our doorstep and we're looking to develop more business space.

The town is a hotbed of ambitious SMEs as well as a base for some well-established companies including Aston Martin, Lignia, Goodwash, Dow Silicones UK and Cabot Carbon.



Being so well linked to the world is an asset. The town offers excellent road and rail links, an international airport and a working port on the doorstep. Cardiff, Wales's capital city is under 20 minutes away by train, London just over 2 hours, while cities including Paris, Amsterdam and Dublin are even less by plane!

SPACE TO DEVELOP

What was once one of the world's busiest industrial ports now provides a canvas for prime quayside development opportunities.

Barry Docks development will connect the popular coastal resort of Barry Island with its historic town. It offers an opportunity to build the water focused leisure amenities, hotels, cafés, restaurants, housing and business spaces that will support Barry's flourishing and help us deliver our vision for the future.

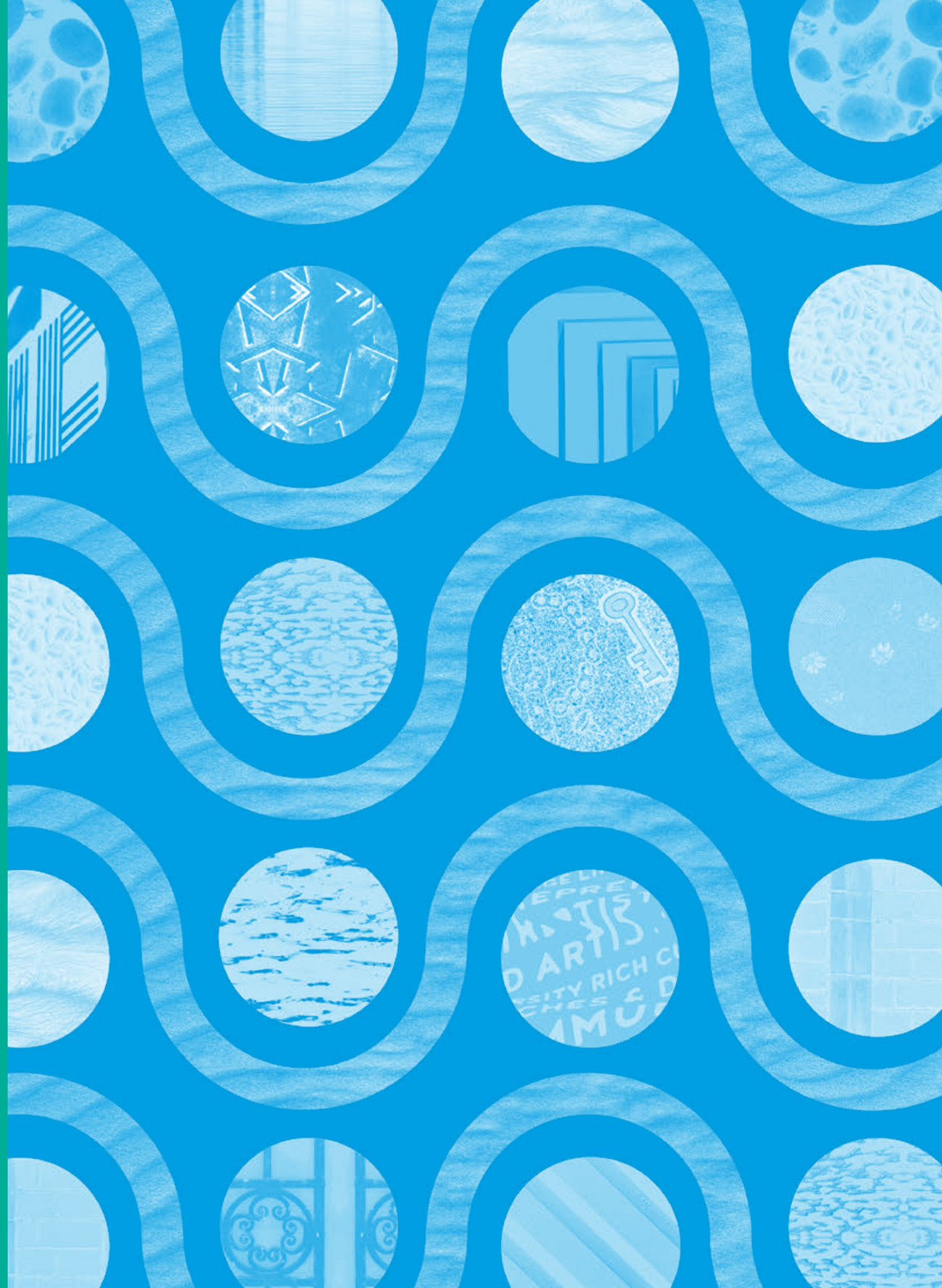
Already, innovative entrepreneurs have made their move and begun to develop Barry's reputation for great dining and innovative events. The good news is, there's space for more!

FROM COAL TO CLIMATE CHAMPIONING

While Barry was founded on coal and heavy industry, we know that our future depends on a commitment to cutting carbon. That's why we're investing in district heating schemes and why renewable and alternative forms of energy are central to our future planning. Currently Barry has six solar farms, with Associated British Ports developing another in the Barry Docks area. Altogether, our existing solar farms have a potential capacity of 42,048 MWh annually. With four train stations across the town, Barry already scores well on sustainable transport infrastructure, but watch this space for more initiatives as we move towards making Barry a greener town.

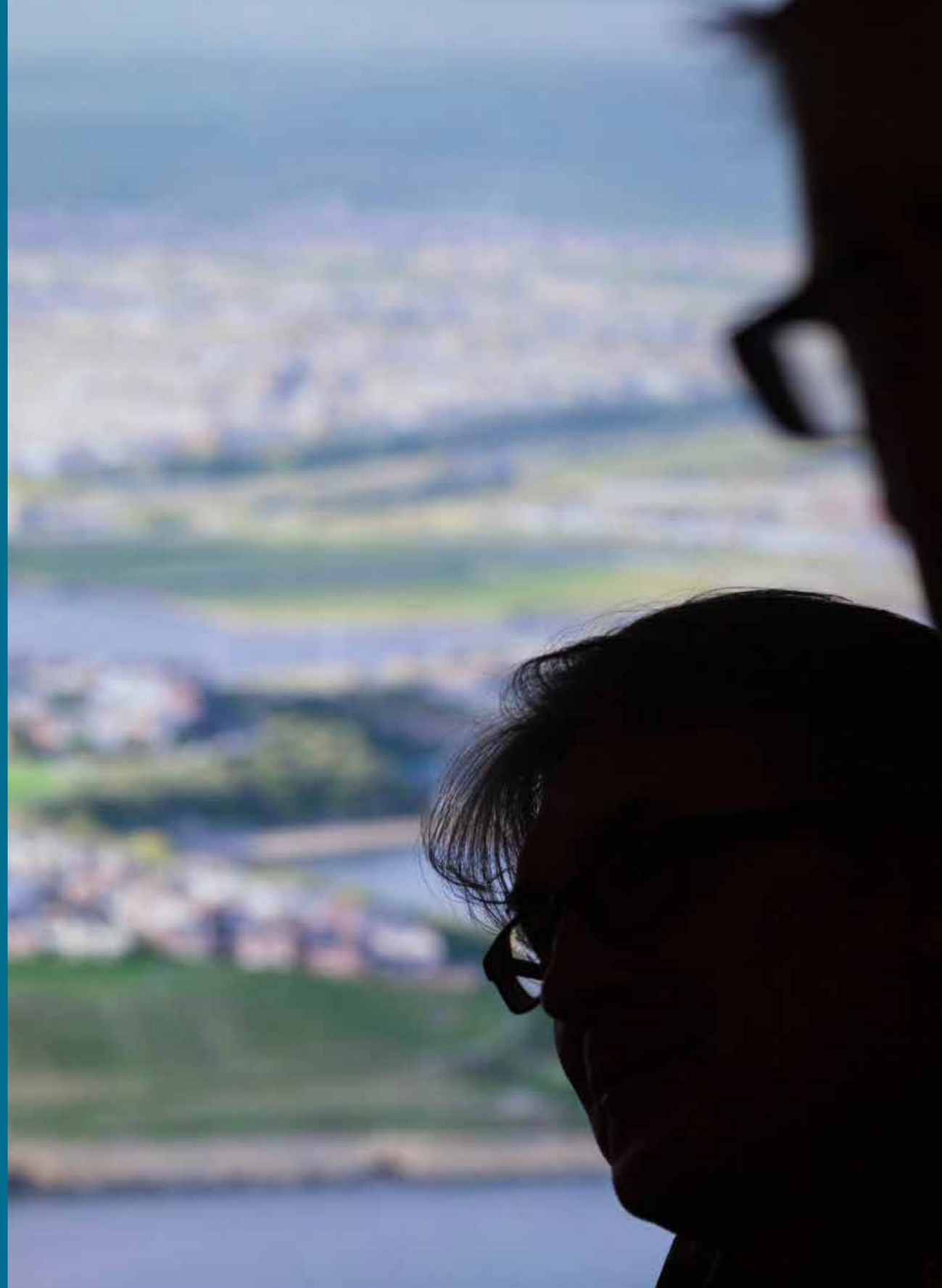
BARRY'S GUIDING THEMES:

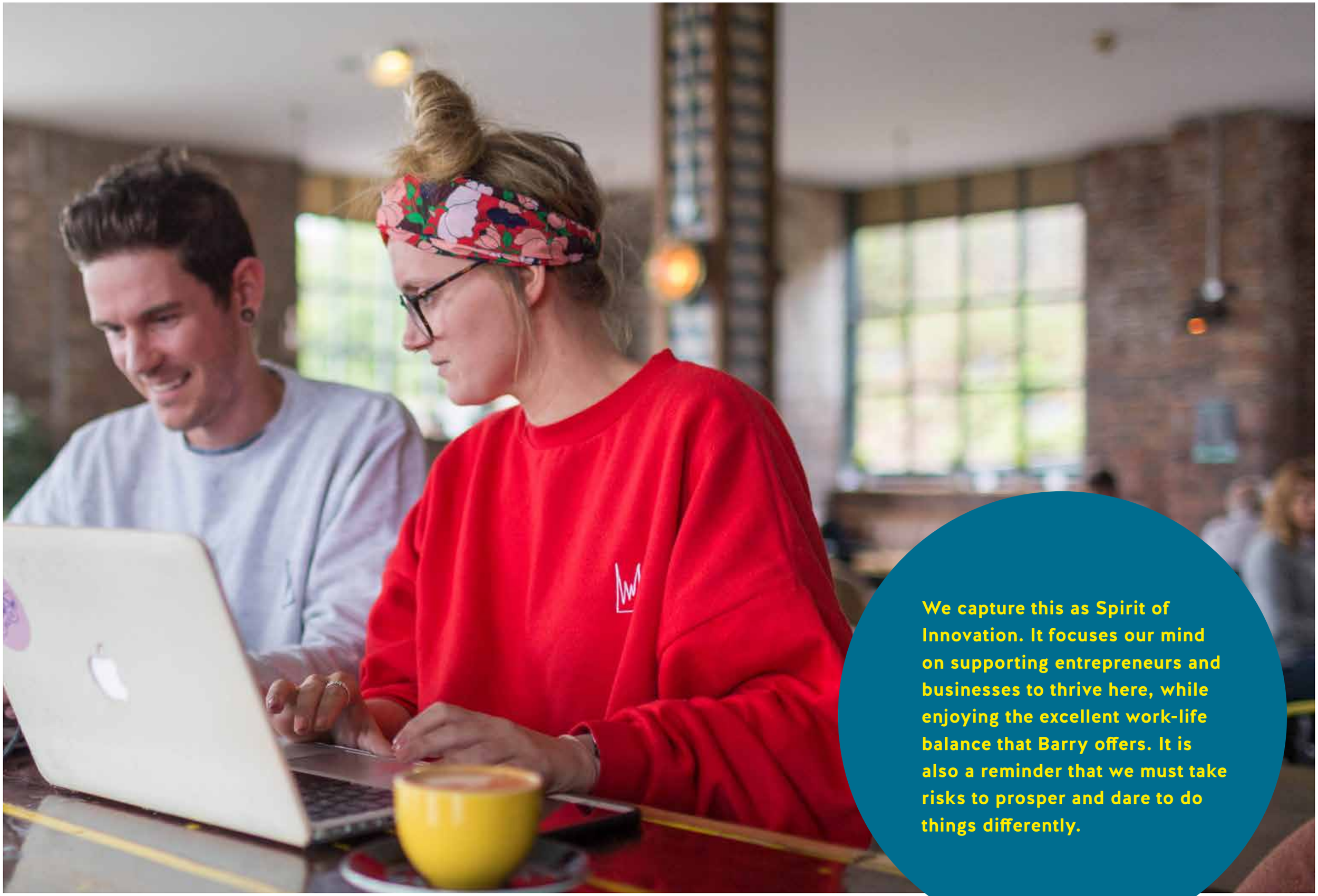
These themes now guide Barry's future developments.



Spirit of Innovation

Our history of coal export, international trade and communities built on diversity has informed the vibrant entrepreneurial spirit we find in the town today.





We capture this as Spirit of Innovation. It focuses our mind on supporting entrepreneurs and businesses to thrive here, while enjoying the excellent work-life balance that Barry offers. It is also a reminder that we must take risks to prosper and dare to do things differently.

Quayside and Seaside

Our tradition of pilgrimage and the candyfloss flavoured heritage of sun, sand and tourism that thrive here once more, is expressed as Quayside & Seaside.

This guides our thinking on how our quayside development is an opportunity to grow capacity within our leisure and tourism sectors. It will also connect our tourism hot spot of Barry Island to the town, with all that means in terms of economic benefit and connecting our local and visitor assets.

It’s about developing Barry as a great place to live, work and play.

BARRY - MAKING WAVES

Once, Barry had a massive impact on the world. Ships carrying black gold cut the waves to power the globe. We're re-capturing that confidence and driving forward a clear vision and strategy for our place, making things happen, driving change.

Once again we're making sure that Barry is making waves

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For further information please see:
www.barry.cymru / www.ybarri.cymru
This document is available in Welsh