

Tuesday, 26 May 2026

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of **Overview and Scrutiny Board** will be held on

Wednesday, 3 June 2026

commencing at **5.30 pm**

The meeting will be held in the Banking Hall, Castle Circus entrance on the left corner of the Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

Members of the Committee

Councillor Long (Chair)

Councillor Bryant

Councillor Cowell

Councillor Douglas-Dunbar

Councillor Fellows

Councillor Johns

Councillor Law

Councillor Spacagna (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Stevens

Councillor Tolchard

A Healthy, Happy and Prosperous Torbay

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Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

Email: governance.support@torbay.gov.uk - www.torbay.gov.uk

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
To receive apologies for absence, including notifications of any changes to the membership of the Board.
2. **Minutes** (Pages 5 - 16)
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings of the Board held on 22 April and 6 May 2026.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
 - a) To receive declarations of non pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda

For reference: Having declared their non pecuniary interest members may remain in the meeting and speak and, vote on the matter in question. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.
 - b) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda

For reference: Where a Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest he/she must leave the meeting during consideration of the item. However, the Member may remain in the meeting to make representations, answer questions or give evidence if the public have a right to do so, but having done so the Member must then immediately leave the meeting, may not vote and must not improperly seek to influence the outcome of the matter. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.

(Please Note: If Members and Officers wish to seek advice on any potential interests they may have, they should contact Governance Support or Legal Services prior to the meeting.)
4. **Urgent Items**
To consider any other items that the Chair decides are urgent.
5. **Budget Monitoring 2025/2026 Quarter 4 Outturn** (To Follow)
To consider the Budget Monitoring Report for Quarter 4 2025/2026 (to include Revenue Budget and Capital Budget monitoring together with financial and delivery details of the Capital Programme) and make recommendations to the Cabinet.
6. **Performance Report - Quarter 4 2025-26** (To Follow)
To review the Council's key performance indicators and make recommendations to the Cabinet.
7. **Review of Council Tax Premiums for Long Term Empty and Second Homes** (Pages 17 - 38)
To review the Policy for Council Tax Premium for Long Term Empty and Second Homes.

8. Revised Memorial Bench Policy

To consider the revised Memorial Bench Policy and make recommendations to the Cabinet.

(To Follow)

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Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

22 April 2026

-: Present :-

Councillor Long (Chair)

Councillors Brook, Cowell, Douglas-Dunbar, Fellows, Foster, Law, Nicolaou, Stevens and Tolchard

(Also in attendance: Councillors Barbara Lewis (virtual), Chris Lewis, David Thomas and Tranter)

69. Apologies

It was reported that, in accordance with the wishes of the Conservative Group, the membership of the Board had been amended to include Councillor Brook in place of Councillor Spacagna for this meeting only.

70. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

71. Social Mobility in Torbay

The Board received a report on Social Mobility in Torbay, introduced by the Cabinet Member for Place Development and Growth – Councillor Chris Lewis. Members were advised that the report focused on partnership working aimed at improving life outcomes for residents, ensuring that starting circumstances do not determine long-term outcomes.

The Board received a presentation from the Director of Public Health – Lincoln Sargeant, UK SPF Programme Manager - Gemma Fitsimmons, Consultant in Public Health - Julia Chisnell and Liz Muir - Torbay Communities covering (see [Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Board on Wednesday, 22 April 2026, 5.30 pm](#)):

- Progress achieved through multi-agency working.
- Improvements in early years and school readiness.
- Work to prevent young people becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- The contribution of programmes funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).
- Risks associated with the ending of UKSPF funding in March 2026.
- Recent investment proposals to support economic growth.

Members questioned the following points:

- How could successful projects and partnerships be sustained following the ending of UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding?
- What long-term benefits were expected from continued investment in social mobility initiatives?
- How early should intervention begin to have the greatest impact on aspiration and outcomes?
- How many supported businesses remain operational after two years? (A written response would be provided.)
- What work was being undertaken with local businesses to engage children from age 11 onwards?
- How were children eligible for free school meals being supported to narrow development gaps?
- How effectively were young people being tracked across education and employment pathways?
- What was being done to connect young people from different areas to successful existing programmes?
- Was there an overarching strategy for engagement between schools and employers?
- How were mental health services being integrated into education and employment support?
- How were barriers unrelated to skills or motivation being identified and addressed?
- What support was available for people requiring long-term or intensive assistance into work?
- What provision was available locally to support speech and language needs?
- How could the legacy of community-based programmes be secured once funding ends?
- What work was being done to support children in Brixham to link with the Torquay Coastal Navigators?

The Board received responses which included the following:

- Early years and school readiness are key priorities, with ambition to improve the proportion of children with Good Level of Development (GLD) scores and narrow the gaps with those eligible for free school meals through targeted intervention.
- Engagement with local businesses is taking place through work experience, site visits, careers hubs and employer-led activities, although practice varies between schools.
- There is currently no single overarching strategy for business-school engagement, though multiple programmes are active.
- Targeted employment support programmes are in place for different cohorts, including those ready for work and those requiring wrap-around support.
- Mental health challenges are a significant factor for many individuals; relationship-based support and trust-building are essential to addressing underlying barriers.

- Government-funded employment programmes are supporting individuals who would not otherwise be work-ready, with early positive engagement.
- Improvements have been made in SEND support and speech and language provision although there is still more to be done (further details on the number of speech and language officers and provision to be provided in writing).
- UKSPF-funded programmes have delivered strong outcomes but are coming to an end; alternative funding sources are being explored.
- Officers are working to align existing and future initiatives, including employment, health and regeneration programmes, to maximise impact.
- The work of the Torquay Coastal Navigators Network project will be replicated across all networks in Torbay.

Members welcomed the progress made to date and acknowledged the strength of partnership working across public, voluntary and private sectors.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the Cabinet be recommended:
 - a. to explore options for an external careers fair inviting representatives across all different sectors including professional and creative sectors; and
 - b. to identify the financial gap in funding following ending of UK Shared Prosperity Fund and consider how they will address this as part of the budget setting progress; and
2. that the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board writes to the local Members of Parliament, Local Government Association and Torbay and Devon Combined County Council, on behalf of the Board, and recommends them to lobby Government on how they will address the gap in funding following the ending of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support social mobility in Torbay, highlighting our demographics and the success of the work to date using that fund.

Chair

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Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

6 May 2026

-: Present :-

Councillor Long (Chair)

Councillors Cowell, Douglas-Dunbar, Fellows, Foster, Johns, Law, Spacagna (Vice-Chair) and Tolchard

(Also in attendance: Councillors Bye, Barbara Lewis, Chris Lewis, David Thomas, Jacqueline Thomas and Twelves (virtual), plus Ndbisi Obasi – Primary Academy Parent Governor Representative)

72. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Stevens.

73. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 8 April 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

74. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

75. Terra Firma - English Riviera Geopark Review

The Board considered a report and presentation on the Terra Firma project and the future governance and delivery of the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark from the Cabinet Member for Tourism, Events & Culture and Corporate Services - Councillor Jackie Thomas and the Chair of the English Riviera Geopark Organisation – Nick Powe. Key points included:

- The Terra Firma project was intended to strengthen governance, clarify delivery arrangements and improve long-term sustainability of the Geopark.
- Proposals included transitioning the English Riviera Geopark Organisation into a Community Interest Company (CIC), with clearer roles, governance and accountability.
- Geological and cultural heritage were closely linked to tourism and place promotion, and Torbay's Geopark status remained under-promoted.
- The Geopark revalidation process was outlined, including submission deadlines, evaluation visits and decision-making timescales.

Members raised the following questions:

- How frequently would the re-established Geopark Board meet and what themes would it focus on?
- How was specialist geological expertise being provided in the absence of a dedicated geologist?
- Would the lack of a geologist impact future UNESCO revalidation?
- How would the Community Interest Company improve awareness and interpretation of the Geopark for residents and visitors?
- What future funding streams were anticipated once current grant funding ends?
- What was the timetable and process for the next UNESCO Geopark revalidation?
- How would schools and young people be supported to engage with Geopark learning?
- How will partner organisations' roles be clarified and strengthened?

The following responses were received:

- The Geopark CIC Board was expected to meet four times a year, with themed meetings covering tourism, community engagement and education etc.
- Geological expertise was currently provided through partnership working with academic institutions e.g. Plymouth University, and this has been sufficient to date.
- It was confirmed that existing expertise and co-ordination arrangements were considered adequate for revalidation purposes.
- The CIC model was intended to provide clearer governance, improved communication, stronger branding and a more visitor-focused approach.
- Long-term funding will require a mixed model, including grants, partnerships and alternative funding sources; it was acknowledged that while continuing Council funding was vital, remaining the sole funder was not sustainable.
- Revalidation documentation must be submitted in January 2027, followed by evaluator visits in mid-2027 and a final UNESCO decision in 2028.
- Educational engagement will focus on toolkits, digital resources, school partnerships and improved website content.
- Core partnerships will be refreshed with clearer terms of reference and expectations around delivery and leadership roles.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the Board welcomed the direction of travel for review of the Terra Firma – English Riviera Geopark Review and the proposed creation of Community Interest Company (CIC) and requested that the Board receives an update on the progress of the Review in the Autumn; and
2. that the Cabinet be recommended to review the signs for UNESCO English Riviera Geopark to ensure that they are up to date and fit for purpose and report back to the Board on any progress to implement this.

76. Annual Review of the Place Leadership Boards

The Board received the annual review of the Torbay Place Leadership Board, the Torquay Place Leadership Board and progress on the emerging Paignton Place Leadership Board as presented by the Deputy Leader of the Council (on behalf of the Leader of the Council) – Councillor Chris Lewis and the Chair of the Torbay and Torquay Place Leadership Boards – Jim Parker. Key points included:

- Governance and delivery arrangements have continued to mature and strengthen over the past year.
- Torbay Place Leadership Board has focused on presenting a clearer regeneration and investment narrative, while Torquay Place Leadership Board has moved into delivery with six local community projects being recently allocated funding.
- The Paignton Place Leadership Board was in its early stages, with strong community interest following an open recruitment process.
- The Torbay Story was highlighted as a valuable tool that now needs refreshing to be more people-focused and locally resonant.
- Opportunities and risks were identified around capacity, assurance workload and managing community expectations over funding.

Members raised the following questions:

- Will the Paignton Place Leadership Board remain limited to the current two defined areas, or was there scope for this to widen in future?
- How were the geographic boundaries for the Paignton Board determined, and was there flexibility to amend them?
- What skills, experience and representation were being sought for membership of the Paignton Place Leadership Board?
- How will the Independent Chair of the Paignton Place Leadership Board be appointed, and what criteria will be used?
- How will the Board manage community expectations given the scale of funding and the wide range of potential community needs?
- Given early challenges experienced by the Torquay Place Leadership Board, what lessons have been learned and applied to new Paignton Boards?
- How visible and well-understood was the Torbay Place Leadership Board and the “Torbay Story” across Torbay?
- How will the next phase of the Torbay Story better reflect people, communities and lived experience rather than solely investment messaging?
- What steps were being taken to improve digital and social media presence for the Place Leadership Boards?
- How will communities be engaged meaningfully, particularly those that feel disconnected from decision-making processes?
- What is the relationship between the Place Leadership Boards, Government funding conditions and political representation?
- How will longer-term, systemic issues be balanced against community pressure to address short-term practical concerns?
- How frequently was membership of the Torbay Place Leadership Board refreshed, and how was transparency maintained?

The following responses were received:

- The areas covered by the Paignton Place Leadership Board have been defined by Government based on deprivation data. While there was limited flexibility, boundaries covered for the funding can be reviewed where there is a demonstrable community benefit, subject to Government agreement.
- The boundaries were based on a national statistical formula and include parts of neighbouring areas where deprivation indicators apply. The Board will have scope to consider how it presents and describes the area as part of its work.
- Membership was intended to include a broad range of skills relevant to delivery, including community leadership, regeneration, education, skills and economic development. An emphasis was being placed on people who may not have previously held formal leadership roles.
- The Independent Chair will be selected through an open application process, with candidates assessed against agreed criteria. The appointment will be confirmed by mid-July in line with Government deadlines.
- It was acknowledged that £20m over 10 years creates high expectations. Clear communication will be needed to explain funding constraints, delivery timescales and the balance between capital and revenue spend.
- Early challenges in Torquay highlighted the importance of community representation, clarity of purpose and strong governance. These lessons have informed the development of the Paignton Board, including earlier and deeper community engagement. Information on the Torquay Place Leadership Board can be found at [Committee details - Torquay Place Leadership Board](#).
- Awareness of the Torbay Place Leadership Board ([Committee details - Torbay Place Leadership Board](#)) and Torbay Story remains limited ([Torbay Story - Home](#)). While inward investment messaging was effective at a national level, local understanding needs strengthening.
- A new people-focused phase of work is planned, centred on local stories, lived experiences and community pride. This will aim to make the Torbay Story more accessible, relatable and relevant to residents.
- Digital and social media presence was currently limited. Plans include improving online visibility, encouraging sharing of content, and making better use of real stories and imagery rather than corporate messaging.
- Engagement will rely on listening exercises, grassroots outreach and working with trusted community organisations. The Boards intend to ensure that engagement is continuous and not limited to formal consultation points.
- The Boards are independent but operate within national programme rules, including limits on political representation for the Paignton Board, which includes no more than one Member of Parliament (MP) and one Ward Councillor.
- It was recognised that communities often prioritise immediate local issues such as facilities and amenities, while the programme also requires focus on long-term economic growth, skills and systemic change. Managing this tension will be a key leadership challenge.
- Membership of the Torbay Place Leadership Board was refreshed in 2025 alongside new Terms of Reference. Transparency is supported through published information and clearer communication of roles and responsibilities. It was acknowledged that information on the Torbay Place Leadership Board

was not easy to find through web searches and this should be explored to make the Torbay and other Boards more accessible.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the Overview and Scrutiny Board note the progress made by the Torbay Place Leadership Board, Torquay Place Leadership Board and the emerging Paignton Place Leadership Board, including the steps taken to strengthen governance, transparency and delivery assurance;
2. that the Overview and Scrutiny Board note the key issues and risks set out in the Supporting Information (including capacity, assurance workload and managing community expectations) and endorses the continued use of a proportionate Delivery Assurance approach to support Board decision-making;
3. that a new people-focused phase of work around the Torbay Story (“Our Story”) is endorsed to increase understanding and use across the Bay;
4. that given the independence of the Boards, and the critical (and sometimes legal) role that Torbay Council plays in supporting them, the Overview and Scrutiny Board request an interim update if there are material changes to Government guidance, the funding profile (how much funding is available in each year), or Board arrangements. Otherwise, Overview and Scrutiny will receive the next annual review report in line with the established cycle; and
5. that the Overview and Scrutiny Board receive an interim update on the Torquay and Paignton Place Leadership Boards in October 2026.

(Note: during consideration of the item in Minute 76, Councillor Law declared a non-pecuniary interest as member of Torquay Place Board.)

77. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Update

The Board considered an update on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) improvement activity following inspection and ongoing partnership work as presented by the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services – Councillor Bye, Director of Children’s Services – Nancy Meehan, Assistant Director for Women, Children and Young People, Integrated Care Board (ICB) - Sadie Hall and Independent Chair of the SEND Local Area Improvement Partnership Board (SLAIP) – Alison Hurley. Key discussion points included:

- Significant structural, governance and service improvements have been made since the inspection.
- Progress has been achieved in local provision, workforce capacity, quality assurance and partnership working.
- Timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans, health waiting times and parental confidence remain ongoing challenges.
- SEND Reform and wider system changes present both pressure and opportunity.

Members asked the following questions:

- What progress has been made since the most recent SEND inspection, and what were the key areas of improvement?
- What were the biggest challenges currently facing the SEND partnership?
- How was the partnership preparing for future monitoring activity and inspection, and what were the expected timescales?
- How will impact be evidenced, particularly where improvements may not yet be felt by families?
- What pressures were arising from the SEND Reform Plan, and how was the partnership managing these alongside existing improvement activity?
- How were delays in Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) being addressed, and what improvements were being made to quality and timeliness?
- What progress has been made in reducing health waiting times, particularly for autism and ADHD assessments?
- What support was available for children and families while they are waiting for assessment or diagnosis?
- How were parental confidence and trust being rebuilt following historic issues within the system?
- What was being done to reduce reliance on tribunals and resolve disagreements earlier?
- How are the voices of children, young people and families being incorporated into governance and decision-making?
- What mental health and wellbeing support is available for parents and carers of children with SEND?
- How are schools being supported to improve inclusion, particularly in mainstream settings?
- How was transition from Children's Services to Adult Services being managed and improved?
- What was the potential impact of wider system changes, including workforce challenges and structural reforms, on SEND improvement activity?

The following responses were received:

- Since the inspection, there has been significant progress in governance, leadership and service delivery. SEND services have been restructured, provision has been expanded locally, quality assurance has improved and partnership working has strengthened across education and health.
- Key challenges include the pace of change, high demand for EHCPs, workforce pressures (particularly in health services), parental confidence, and the need to evidence impact consistently across the system.
- The partnership is subject to regular monitoring activity, including deep dives and stocktakes. Further monitoring is expected imminently, with a full visit scheduled for January 2027. Written feedback from the most recent activity was still awaited.
- While activity levels were high, demonstrating impact, particularly lived experience for families, was more complex and would take time. The focus is

- now shifting toward evidencing outcomes, quality and user experience, not just processes.
- The SEND Reform Plan introduces additional pressure due to tight timescales and overlapping improvement requirements. Draft plans must be produced while continuing to deliver the existing Priority Impact Plan, placing strain on capacity.
 - Clearer processes have been introduced to improve EHCP timeliness and quality, including enhanced audit arrangements and feedback loops. While volumes remain high, improvements are being embedded and monitored through performance reporting.
 - Health partners have made progress in reducing waiting times, including improvements in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) access so that children are no longer waiting more than 18 weeks. Autism and ADHD assessment delays remain a challenge, but improvements were expected.
 - “Support while waiting” arrangements are in place, including school-based support, community provision and interim interventions. Work is ongoing to ensure families are consistently informed about what help is available.
 - Rebuilding trust is recognised as one of the most significant challenges. Action includes improved communication, greater transparency, regular engagement with families, publication of information, and visible changes in practice.
 - Mediation services are being used more proactively to support earlier resolution of disagreements and reduce escalation to tribunal for EHCPs. A written response would be provided on the number of cases resolved without formal tribunal proceedings.
 - Children, young people and families are represented through formal forums, including a SEND Youth Forum and parent networks. New approaches are being developed to engage less-heard voices through co-production and community-based engagement.
 - Dedicated mental health provision for parents is limited; however, peer support through parent and carer forums is available. Parents can also access adult mental health services where needs are significant. Their lived experience is recognised as valid and influential.
 - Schools are being supported through inclusion grants, strategic collaboration, and renewed focus on inclusive practice. An education conference has helped rebuild shared understanding across the local education system.
 - Transition to Adult Services is being strengthened through updated guidance, closer collaboration between Children’s and Adult Services, and embedding transition planning earlier, particularly from ages 11–14.
 - Workforce capacity, health system restructuring and concurrent national reforms present risks but also opportunities. New ways of working, including integrated neighbourhood teams and consistent local offers, are being developed to support sustainability.

The Board noted that the Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board was arranging a visit to Mayfield School and it was agreed that the main Overview and Scrutiny Board Members should also be invited to this visit.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the Overview and Scrutiny Board note the update on Local Area SEND improvement activity, including governance and monitoring arrangements;
2. that a SEND Improvement Task and Finish Group be established to:
 - a. review the implementation of the Priority Impact Plan focussing on one priority area per meeting, including a consistent set of measures of impact (timeliness, quality, experience and outcomes);
 - b. seek assurance on Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) quality and timeliness improvement by requesting quarterly reporting of: audit outcomes (including social care and health advice quality), learning actions taken, and feedback from families and settings about whether plans are usable and outcome-focused;
 - c. request a deep dive update on Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support and inclusion, including what is changing for children without EHCPs and how the partnership is addressing persistent challenges such as attendance, suspensions and exclusions;
 - d. request assurance on health waiting times and the 'support while waiting' offer, including how families are informed, what interim provision is available, and how equity of access is monitored;
 - e. request assurance on preparation for adulthood: transitions governance, pathways into employment/training, and how gaps in referral routes and tracking are being closed; and
 - f. request evidence of strengthened co-production and improved communication with families (including what has changed as a result of feedback as well as the voice of the young people, their families and carers) and how this is being measured; and
3. that the Overview and Scrutiny Board request a follow-up update once the actions and feedback from the 23 February 2026 monitoring/deep dive are formally confirmed and incorporated into the Partnership's action tracking and performance reporting.

(Note: Councillor Fellows left the meeting, prior to consideration of the item in Minute 77.)

Chair

Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Meeting **Date:** 3 June 2026

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Review of Council Tax Premiums for Long Term Empty and Second Homes

When does the decision need to be implemented?

N/A

Cabinet Member Contact Details: [Councillor Alan Tyerman](#), Alan.Tyerman@torbay.gov.uk

Director Contact Details: Malcolm Coe, Director of Finance, malcolm.coe@torbay.gov.uk

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Board has asked for a report reviewing the Policy for Council Tax Premiums for Long Term Empty and Second Homes, to include a copy of the current policy,
- 1.2. Key lines of enquiry for the report should include:
 - 1.2.1. how our scheme compares to others;
 - 1.2.2. how many people have been impacted since the Policy has been in operation; and
 - 1.2.3. what other possible changes could be made to deal with unintended consequences and the cost of such changes for the Board to make consider making recommendations for further discretion to the Policy.

2. Review of Policy

- 2.1. The implementation of Council Tax premiums is not a Policy, but a determination of Full Council in accordance with Section 11B (Long Term Empty) and Section 11C (Second Homes) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended).
- 2.2. The legislation enabling Councils to make local determinations regarding Council Tax Premiums was introduced by the Local Government Finance Act 2012 with some subsequent legislative changes to the maximum amounts that Councils could charge coming into force since then.

So far as relevant to Torbay Council, the following is a list of the determinations that have been made in accordance with the relevant legislation over time:

Effective Date	Determination
1 st April 2013	<p>Class A (undergoing repair) and Class C (6 months empty) exemptions revoked by Parliament, with option to create local discounts.</p> <p>Local determination to provide a one-month empty discount, followed by full charge.</p> <p>Local determination to charge 100% premium on Long Term Empty dwellings after 2 years.</p>
1 st April 2019	Local determination to remove one-month empty discount and charge full Council Tax from date became empty.
1 st April 2020	Local determination to charge 200% premium on Long Term Empty dwellings after 5 years.
1 st April 2021	Local determination to charge 300% premium on Long Term Empty dwellings after 10 years.
1 st April 2024	Local determination to adopt a 100% premium for unoccupied and substantially unfurnished dwellings (Long Term Empty dwellings) after 1 year.
1 st April 2025	Local determination to adopt a 100% premium for unoccupied furnished dwellings (Second Homes)

2.3. Since 1st April 2025, Torbay Council has therefore determined to charge the maximum permissible amount of premiums for both Long Term Empty dwellings and Second Homes.

3. How Torbay Council’s determinations compare to other billing authorities nationally

3.1. Since the determinations are individual to each billing authority, national data by billing authority determinations is somewhat limited. However individual billing authorities do report certain property level detail to government, and these are published in the taxbase data ([2025 Local Authority Drop Down.xlsx](#)). An extrapolation from this data has been attempted so far as possible, bearing in mind the original purpose of the data and a lack of ability to report by many authorities.

Long Term Empty Premiums (LTE)

3.2. Out of 296 billing authorities, 291 (98%) charge LTE premiums. The 5 that did not charge premiums in 2025-26 were all Shire Districts:

Name	Type	Region
Amber Valley	Shire District	East Midlands
Bolsover	Shire District	East Midlands
Castle Point	Shire District	East
Gravesham	Shire District	South East
Ribble Valley	Shire District	North West

3.3. From an examination of the above Councils' websites, it appears that Bolsover and Castle Point are implementing Premiums from 1st April 2026. The other Councils appear to be currently not charging a premium, but are keeping it under review.

3.4. Due to different IT systems, some billing authorities were limited in what they could report. Of the billing authorities that were able to report for each category, the following levels were charged:

1 – 2 years

Level of Premium	Number of BAs	Percentage of BAs
50%	0	0%
100%	196	100%
Variable	0	0%

2 – 5 years

Level of Premium	Number of BAs	Percentage of BAs
10%	0	0%
25%	0	0%
50%	6	2%
100%	285	98%
Variable	0	0%

5 – 10 years

Level of Premium	Number of BAs	Percentage of BAs
50%	5	2%
100%	31	10%
150%	0	0%
200%	272	88%
Variable	0	0%

Over 10 years

Level of Premium	Number of BAs	Percentage of BAs
100%	26	8%
150%	0	0%
200%	23	7%
250%	0	0%
300%	267	85%
Variable	0	0%

- 3.5. In terms of Devon billing authorities, all charged the maximum premium, but South Hams and West Devon included some additional exceptions (as detailed below), which delayed the imposition or excluded certain dwellings entirely.

Second Homes

- 3.6. Out of 296 billing authorities, 211 declared that they charged a Council Tax Premium on second homes. Of those that charged all applied the maximum charge.
- 3.7. In terms of Devon billing authorities, all 9 charged the premium, although South Hams and West Devon included some additional exceptions (as detailed below), which delayed the imposition or excluded certain dwellings entirely.
- 3.8. The detail for Devon authorities regarding the number and proportion of dwellings subject to the Second Home premium is as follows:

Band	Torbay		East Devon		Exeter		Mid Devon		North Devon		Plymouth		South Hams		Teignbridge		West Devon	
A	226	0.33%	217	0.29%	97	0.16%	17	0.04%	350	0.71%	386	0.31%	219	0.46%	154	0.24%	77	0.28%
B	251	0.36%	349	0.46%	81	0.13%	27	0.07%	278	0.56%	185	0.15%	329	0.69%	171	0.26%	111	0.40%
C	310	0.45%	517	0.69%	90	0.15%	33	0.09%	351	0.71%	134	0.11%	488	1.02%	159	0.24%	104	0.38%
D	252	0.37%	470	0.62%	66	0.11%	18	0.05%	313	0.63%	87	0.07%	610	1.27%	173	0.26%	62	0.23%
E	169	0.25%	297	0.39%	27	0.04%	17	0.04%	181	0.37%	48	0.04%	682	1.42%	85	0.13%	47	0.17%
F	72	0.10%	154	0.20%	16	0.03%	14	0.04%	114	0.23%	13	0.01%	466	0.97%	37	0.06%	36	0.13%
G	32	0.05%	137	0.18%	14	0.02%	9	0.02%	58	0.12%	8	0.01%	533	1.11%	25	0.04%	21	0.08%
H	6	0.01%	8	0.01%	1	0.00%	2	0.01%	6	0.01%	1	0.00%	112	0.23%	6	0.01%	5	0.02%
Total 2nd Homes	1,318	1.91%	2,149	2.85%	392	0.64%	137	0.35%	1,651	3.34%	862	0.70%	3,439	7.17%	810	1.24%	463	1.68%
Total properties	68,868		75,355		61,390		38,735		49,497		123,424		47,938		65,502		27,543	

4. Premium Exceptions

4.1. There are a number of statutory exceptions to the premiums as follows:

Exception Type	Applies to	Time Limit
Dwelling which is or would be someone's sole or main residence if they were not residing in job-related armed forces accommodation	Long-term empty homes and second homes	Unlimited
Annexes forming part of, or being treated as part of, the main dwelling	Long-term empty homes and second homes	Unlimited
Dwellings being actively marketed for sale	Long-term empty homes and second homes	12 months
Dwellings being actively marketed for let	Long-term empty homes and second homes	12 months
Unoccupied dwellings which fell within exempt Class F and where probate has recently been granted	Long-term empty homes and second homes	Unlimited up to probate 12 months from probate
Job-related dwellings	Second homes only	Unlimited
Occupied caravan pitches and boat moorings.	Second homes only	Unlimited
Seasonal homes where year-round, permanent occupation is prohibited, specified for use as holiday accommodation or planning condition preventing occupancy for more than 28 days continuously	Second homes only	Unlimited
Empty dwellings requiring or undergoing major repairs or structural alterations	Long-term empty homes only	12 months

4.2. In addition to the statutory exceptions, Councils were able to create any additional exceptions that it determined were appropriate. These would necessarily be based on the property circumstances, rather than the individual concerned.

4.3. Whilst it is not possible to provide information nationally in relation to additional exceptions, The schemes for other Devon authorities have been examined and two authorities, South Hams and West Devon have additional exceptions as follows:

Description	Applies to
Properties with an agricultural planning restriction	Second homes and empty properties

Properties for sale with an age related restriction (additional 6 months)	Second homes and empty properties
Properties that can only be accessed through an existing business premise	Second homes and empty properties
Properties used as overnight staff accommodation for a retail/ hospitality/ leisure business	Second homes only
Properties used to better provide personal care to a close relative	Second homes only
Property owned by a charity and used as accommodation for charitable purposes	Second homes only
Property which is required as part of contract of employment	Second homes only

- 4.4. Torbay Council did not create any additional property based exceptions, but relied upon the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy provided for under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to enable discretionary discount to be applied based upon the individual personal circumstances of the liable persons.
- 4.5. After receiving communication from customers regarding a premium to which they are subject, we have received only a couple of applications for a discretionary discount. None have been granted. This is because in both cases, their circumstances have not been considered exceptional.
- 4.6. Other than the ‘age related exception’ (please see 5.11 below), the Council has not recorded any cases where the other exceptions would have been triggered had they existed in Torbay.

5. Number of dwellings affected in Torbay

- 5.1. At Annual Billing for 2025/26, there were a total of 2,192 premiums charged on individual accounts. 1,562 of these related to second homes and 630 related to long term empty dwellings.
- 5.2. The number of second homes subject to the premium has reduced to 1,281 dwellings, with long term empty properties remaining fairly similar in number.
- 5.3. The reduction in second homes has mainly been due to re-categorisation. In simple terms, when the charge for a second home was the same as an occupied home, customers had failed to notify the Council that the dwelling had become occupied due to the perception that it made no difference. Once the premium was charged, customers immediately notified us that it was now occupied and it was re-categorised. This has resulted in a much more accurate taxbase.
- 5.4. The number of properties currently recorded as vacant where a premium is not due as a result of the statutory exceptions is:

Prescribed Class C - empty unfurnished less than one year	1288
Prescribed Class G - actively marketed for sale	86
Prescribed Class H – actively marketed for rent	4
Prescribed Class I - less than 12 months since probate granted	143

5.5. In addition, dwellings that have been vacant 12 months and now subject to a premium are detailed as follows

100% premium after prescribed class expires	663
200% L5 premium (empty more than five years)	60
300% L10 premium (empty more then ten years)	18

5.6. Since 1 April 2025, we are able to identify 21 properties have become subject to a premium due to remaining vacant for 12 months after probate that are still part of the estate of the deceased person (i.e. where the property has not been either sold or transferred to a beneficiary).

5.7. 2 properties had been undergoing major repairs or structural alteration that had taken longer than 12 months and they remain vacant.

5.8. The Council applies premiums based on the circumstances of the dwelling at the time, not the liable persons and so it has not been possible to extract very much meaningful data regarding the historical circumstances of each case. However, anecdotal experience of dealing with customers has indicated the following:

5.8.1. We have not identified any significant avoidance activity. The most well-known avoidance activity is to request the Valuation Office Agency to delete the dwelling from the Council Tax List and for it to become a commercial property subject to Business Rates. However, from April 2023, in order for this to occur, properties must be available to let for at least 140 days and actually let for at least 70 days in the previous 12 months to qualify for business rates. The Valuation Office Agency is requiring significant evidence of lettings before it considers a property non-domestic. In the last year, Torbay has identified 16 dwellings that would have been subject to the Council Tax premium becoming subject to business rates instead and based on the above, these are assumed to be genuinely operating as businesses.

5.8.2. Levels of non-payment of Council Tax for both long term empty properties and furnished, unoccupied properties (Second Homes) has been low.

5.8.3. There have been a comparatively small number of cases where owners that have inherited properties and have already 'used up' the 12-month exception to the premium. In all cases, the reason given is either that joint beneficiaries cannot agree on what to do with the property, or that they claim they are unable to sell it due to lack of interest. This generally means that the asking price is too high for the market.

- 5.9. It should be noted that all dwellings are exempt entirely from Council Tax up to 6 months after probate has been granted. It is only where a property forming part of the estate has either not been sold or transferred to a beneficiary does it incur a charge 6 months after probate. A statutory premium does not apply until 12 months have elapsed since probate was granted and the exemption (no charge) applicable in these cases is completely open ended up to probate being granted and 6 months afterwards.
- 5.10. In the vast majority of cases experienced within the service, it has purely been a matter of beneficiaries choosing to delay the sale, either through an unrealistic asking price, or choosing to undertake work on a property to increase its value and in doing so, delaying its sale beyond the 12-month exception period.
- 5.11. Whilst contact regarding premiums has been relatively low, one situation has been seen on odd occasions. This is where there are age restriction covenants (retirement properties). Due to the nature of Torbay and the prevalence of such properties, these are not generally considered 'exceptional circumstances' and can be rectified by using specialist estate agents and reducing the asking price. However, Officers offer considerable forbearance on these cases, utilising undertakings from solicitors to pay from the proceeds of sale, this mitigates the impact of the premiums on the owners. In general, these are normally inherited properties and either the beneficiary or the Executor is undertaking the sale.

6. Potential changes and Financial Implications

- 6.1. On an annual basis, it is open to the Council to consider changes to its current determination. This could include additional or extended exceptions for unusual or unforeseen situations.
- 6.2. Due to the impact on budgets, it is likely that this would require a motion to be made as part of the budget setting, with the determination being made by Full Council.
- 6.3. In terms of the costs (by way of reduced revenue) of increasing the exceptions to premiums, this would depend upon the exceptions proposed and would be dependent upon liable persons notifying the Council that these particular circumstances existed. It is therefore not possible to estimate the cost of this without further information regarding the proposals.
- 6.4. A further consideration will be the additional administrative cost of addition exceptions and the requirement to obtain proof or evidence and eligibility. There is also likely to be a greater risk of challenge to additional local determinations which will cause additional Valuation Tribunal costs. Without being able to estimate the number of cases, it is not possible to estimate these additional administrative costs.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1. Torbay Council's determination is in line with almost all other billing authorities in implementing premiums. Data is not easily obtainable in relation to whether other billing authorities have additional exceptions beyond the statutory ones. At the time of making the determinations, the Council stated that it was imposing premiums with a view to:

7.1.1. Encourage empty and underutilised dwellings to be brought back into active housing to help address housing supply issues

7.1.2. To raise additional revenue

- 7.2. It appears that the determinations have achieved this as the total number of properties subject to the premium has reduced and the revenue raised through additional Council Tax is in the region of about £2.8 million.
- 7.3. It is not possible to state whether there have been any unintended consequences from the implementation of Council Tax premiums because the Council determined to apply it without exception. Individual cases that Officers have dealt with in relation to more unusual situations are very low in number.
- 7.4. If the Council was to amend its determination, any of the additional exceptions applied by South Hams and West Devon Councils might be considered, but it is not possible to give an accurate forecast regarding the financial impact of these because the Council does not hold information to identify how many of these exist in Torbay. This would therefore create a significant unknown financial risk.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1. That the report is noted.
- 8.2. That the Council maintains the current determinations for premiums
- 8.3. That the Council continues to use the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy provided for under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to enable discretionary discount to be applied based upon the individual personal circumstances of the liable persons, rather than creating additional exceptions.

9. Background Documents

Document 1: Case Study indicative of a common situation

Document 2: Impact Assessment of Premiums (equality and economic)

Document 1 - Case Study indicative of a common situation

This is a recent case that has similar circumstances to many others subject to the premium, whether the Council Taxpayer decided to make an application for a discretionary discount, or not.

In this case, a brother and sister (who lived out of area in two separate households) had inherited a dwelling in 2022. The dwelling was unoccupied and unfurnished. Initially, the dwelling had been exempt from Council Tax whilst they were waiting for probate to be granted (and for 6 months afterwards). After the exemption and the further 6 month exception had expired, it would have been subject to the premium. However, it was rented to a tenant and the tenant was then liable for the Council Tax as resident. Therefore, no premium was incurred.

After the tenant vacated, the owners decided to leave the dwelling unoccupied and to place it on the market for sale in 2023/2024. It remained on the market for sale for over a year and so became subject to a premium when they first started on the 1st April 2025.

One of the owners was aggrieved by this and asked for discretion to be applied, however it was explained that when Council made the determination to charge premiums, it had not determined to create any exceptions to the premiums beyond those provided for in law. It was explained that no Officer discretion existed in relation to this. The premium was therefore correctly charged.

The owners were offered the option to delay payment by agreeing to providing an undertaking from their solicitor to pay out of the proceeds of sale, but this was declined by one of the owners. This owner was encouraged to apply for a discretionary discount on the basis of exceptional hardship but refused to provide any financial information to demonstrate exceptional hardship. However, the application for a discretionary discount was made on the basis that the individual felt it was unfair because they were trying to sell the property. No information was provided to enable the Council to consider the circumstances of the owners as required by the policy.

In considering the application, and because of its nature, the value of the dwelling was examined. At the time it was inherited (January 2021), it was valued at £220,000. This was compared to its current value using both the Bank of England inflation calculator which gave the following information:

What would goods and services costing

£ 220000

in

2021

cost in

December 2025

Calculate

Your results

£275,895.13

What cost £220,000.00 in 2021 would cost £275,895.13 in December 2025.

Change in value: **25.4%**

Average annual inflation: **4.71%**

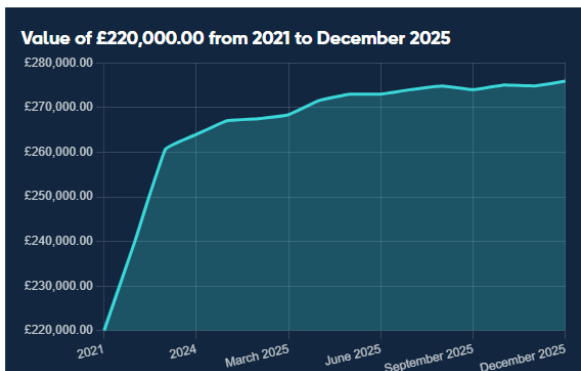
Shortcuts

Swap years

10 years ago

50 years ago

100 years ago



Understanding your results

This means that between 2021 and December 2025, prices have increased by 25.4% overall.

In other words, you would need £275,895.13 in December 2025 to have the same purchasing power as £220,000.00 in 2021.

What could this buy back then?

And the Nationwide Building Society house price calculator, which gave the following:

When was it last valued?

Year

Month

2021

January, February, March (Q1)

When would you like to compare the value to?

Year

Month

2025

October, November, December (Q4)

Recalculate

This is the difference in valuation for a property in the **South West** region.

From Q1, 2021

£220,000

To Q4, 2025

£257,802

Percentage change in price:

17.18 %

It is therefore likely that the value of the property is in the region of £258,000 to £275,000. However, it is on the market for £300,000, which indicates that it is not priced competitively and is a likely reason why it has not sold.

On the basis that the owners appear to be marketing the property for sale at a price above market value, the circumstances did not appear to be sufficiently exceptional and the application for a discretionary reduction was refused.

Document 2 - Impact Assessment of Premiums (equality and economic)

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age Page 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. 55% of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older. 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in popular areas, and as a result long-term residents can find themselves priced out of the local housing market. This may particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.</p>	<p>The implementation of Council Tax Premiums is underpinned by the Council's Discretionary Discount Policy Council Tax Reductions - Torbay Council for individual cases of financial hardship under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.</p>	Revenues & Benefits Service
Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care. 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in popular areas, and as a result long-term</p>	<p>The implementation of Council Tax Premiums is underpinned by the Council's Discretionary Discount Policy Council Tax Reductions - Torbay</p>	Revenues & Benefits Service

		<p>residents can find themselves priced out of the local housing market. This may particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.</p>	<p>Council for individual cases of financial hardship under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.</p>	
<p>Care experienced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay. 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in popular areas, and as a result long-term residents can find themselves priced out of the local housing market. This may particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.</p>	<p>The implementation of Council Tax Premiums is underpinned by the Council's Discretionary Discount Policy Council Tax Reductions - Torbay Council for individual cases of financial hardship under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits Service</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2021 Census, 23.9% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness. 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in popular areas, and as a result long-term residents can find themselves priced out</p>	<p>The implementation of Council Tax Premiums is underpinned by the Council's Discretionary Discount Policy Council Tax Reductions - Torbay Council for individual</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits Service</p>

		of the local housing market. This may particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.	cases of financial hardship under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	
Gender reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth. 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in popular areas, and as a result long-term residents can find themselves priced out of the local housing market. This may particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.</p>	The implementation of Council Tax Premiums is underpinned by the Council's Discretionary Discount Policy Council Tax Reductions - Torbay Council for individual cases of financial hardship under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	Revenues & Benefits Service
Marriage and civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership. 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in popular areas, and as a result long-term residents can find themselves priced out</p>	The implementation of Council Tax Premiums is underpinned by the Council's Discretionary Discount Policy Council Tax Reductions - Torbay Council for individual	Revenues & Benefits Service

		of the local housing market. This may particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.	cases of financial hardship under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	
Pregnancy and maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3). For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0). 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in popular areas, and as a result long-term residents can find themselves priced out of the local housing market. This may particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.</p>	The implementation of Council Tax Premiums is underpinned by the Council's Discretionary Discount Policy Council Tax Reductions - Torbay Council for individual cases of financial hardship under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	Revenues & Benefits Service
Race	<p>In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in popular areas, and as a result long-term residents can find themselves priced out of the local housing market. This may</p>	The implementation of Council Tax Premiums is underpinned by the Council's Discretionary Discount Policy Council Tax Reductions - Torbay Council for individual cases of financial	Revenues & Benefits Service

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups • 96.1% as White • 0.4% described their ethnicity another way. • Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England. 	<p>particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.</p>	<p>hardship under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.</p>	
<p>Religion and belief</p> <p>Page 34</p>	<p>The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddhist • 0.2% are Hindu • 0.6% are Muslim • Less than 0.1% are Sikh • 0.1% are Jewish • 0.7% have another religion • 43.2% have no religion • 6.3% did not answer 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in popular areas, and as a result long-term residents can find themselves priced out of the local housing market. This may particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.</p>	<p>The implementation of Council Tax Premiums is underpinned by the Council's Discretionary Discount Policy Council Tax Reductions - Torbay Council for individual cases of financial hardship under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits Service</p>
<p>Sex</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male. 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in</p>	<p>The implementation of Council Tax Premiums is underpinned by the Council's Discretionary Discount Policy Council</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits Service</p>

		popular areas, and as a result long-term residents can find themselves priced out of the local housing market. This may particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.	Tax Reductions - Torbay Council for individual cases of financial hardship under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	
Sexual orientation	<p>In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89% as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian • 1.1% as Bisexual • 0.1% as Pansexual • 0.1% described their sexuality another way • 7.4% of people didn't answer the question 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in popular areas, and as a result long-term residents can find themselves priced out of the local housing market. This may particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.</p>	The implementation of Council Tax Premiums is underpinned by the Council's Discretionary Discount Policy Council Tax Reductions - Torbay Council for individual cases of financial hardship under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	Revenues & Benefits Service
Armed Forces Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. • In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously 	<p>No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group.</p> <p>The legislation applicable to Premiums provides an exception to the discount for dwellings which is or would be</p>		Revenues & Benefits Service

	served in the UK armed forces.	someone's sole or main residence if they were not residing in job-related armed forces accommodation		
Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025. 	No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group		
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between males who live in Torbay's least and most deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females. 	No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group		
Human Rights impacts		No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group		
Child Friendly		No specific impact has been identified in relation to this group		
Local Economies and Tourism		There is no evidence that Council Tax Premiums will adversely affect the local economy and tourism to any material extent. 72% of visitors are day visitors (3.8m) with 89% being repeat customers Markets for growth - Torbay Council .	In addition to not becoming applicable for the first 12 months, Long Term Empty Premium legislation includes exceptions to the premium for specific circumstances, including dwellings being marketed for sale or rent	

			<p>(12 month limit). Data suggests that whilst Premiums may cause an over supply in the market, they are still selling within 2 or 3 months Zoopla reveals the fastest moving UK markets as over half of homes in England and Wales sell within two months of listing - Zoopla. This means that the Premium will be avoided if marketed promptly at a market rate.</p>	
<p>Local Community</p>		<p>There is no evidence that Council Tax Premiums will adversely affect the local community.</p> <p>Second Home ownership is acknowledged to drive up house prices in popular areas, and as a result long-term residents can find themselves priced out of the local housing market. This may particularly affect those living in coastal areas such as Torbay. The implementation of Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty dwellings and second homes should help to address this issue, or create additional Council Tax funding to support local housing supply.</p>		

Local Services		There is no evidence that Council Tax Premiums will adversely affect local services to any material extent. 72% of visitors are day visitors (3.8m) with 89% being repeat customers Markets for growth - Torbay Council .		
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