

Monday, 7 September 2026

CABINET

A meeting of **Cabinet** will be held on

Tuesday, 15 September 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 David Thomas (Chair)

Councillor Billings

Councillor Jacqueline Thomas

Councillor Bye

Councillor Tranter

Councillor Chris Lewis

Councillor Tyerman

A Healthy, Happy and Prosperous Torbay

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Governance Support, Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

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

CABINET AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
To receive apologies for absence.
2. **Minutes** (Pages 5 - 10)
To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 18 August 2026.
3. **Disclosure of Interests**
 - (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 the Chair decides are urgent.
5. **Matters for Consideration**
6. **Developing Residential Children's Homes for Torbay** (Pages 11 - 30)
To consider a report that seeks agreement to proceed with a procurement to select Ofsted registered and suitably experienced children's home providers.
7. **Adult Social Care Local Account Summary 2025/26** (Pages 31 - 86)
To consider a report that provides an overview of the performance, achievements, challenges and future priorities of Adult Social Care in Torbay.
8. **Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment for Complaint Handling** (Pages 87 - 144)
To consider a report on the above.

9. **Leasing of Commercial Business units at Unit D, Westfield Business Park, Long Road, Paignton** (Pages 145 - 158)
To consider a report that seeks authorisation to let the four new business units at Unit D, Westfield Park at a market rent and on commercial lease terms as and when suitable tenants are identified.
10. **Appointment of Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel** (Pages 159 - 174)
To consider a report on the appointment of a Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel and Designated Representative.
11. **SWISCo Dashboard - Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board** (Pages 175 - 180)
To consider the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Live Streaming and Hybrid Arrangements

To encourage more people to engage in our public meetings the Council is live streaming our Cabinet meetings on our YouTube channel in addition to recording the meetings and publishing the recording on our website. To watch the meeting live please visit <https://www.youtube.com/user/torbaycouncil>.

We are also using hybrid meeting arrangements to enable officers and Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet to either attend the meeting in person or to attend the meeting remotely via Zoom. Anyone attending the meeting remotely must use their raise hand function when they wish to speak and to declare any interests at the appropriate time. If anyone attending the meeting remotely loses connection the meeting will continue and they will have the option to follow the meeting via the YouTube live stream.

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Minutes of the Cabinet

18 August 2026

-: Present :-

Councillor David Thomas (Chair)

Councillors Billings, Bye, Chris Lewis, Jacqueline Thomas, Tranter and Tyerman

(Also in attendance: Councillors Douglas-Dunbar (virtual), Law (virtual), Barbara Lewis (virtual), Long and Stevens (virtual))

22. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 21 July 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

23. Disclosure of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

24. Matters for Consideration

The Cabinet considered the following matters, full details of which (including the Cabinet's decisions) are set out in the Record of Decisions appended to these Minutes.

25. Budget Monitoring - Revenue and Capital Outturn 2026/27 Quarter 1

The Cabinet noted the Budget Monitoring Revenue and Capital Outturn 2026/27 Quarter 1 report, which presented the Council's forecast revenue and capital position as at 30 June 2026.

The Cabinet also noted that revisions to the Capital Investment Plan could be approved by the Director of Finance in accordance with paragraph 5.15 of the Financial Regulations and Contract Procedures and therefore a recommendation to Council was not required.

26. Review of Council Tax Premiums for Long Term Empty and Second Homes - Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

27. Revised Memorial Bench Policy - Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

Record of Decisions

Review of Council Tax Premiums for Long Term Empty and Second Homes – Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 18 August 2026

Decision

That the Cabinet's response to the Review of Council Tax Premiums for Long Term Empty and Second Homes - Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board be approved as published.

Reason for the Decision

The Cabinet was required to respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 1 September 2026 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The Cabinet received the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board on the Review of Council Tax Premiums for Long Term Empty and Second Homes. In accordance with section D7 of Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny as set out in the Constitution, the Cabinet was required to respond to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Board within two months. Subsequently the Cabinet prepared a response to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Board which was proposed by Councillor Tyerman and seconded by Councillor Chris Lewis and agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

None

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

21 August 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Record of Decisions

Revised Memorial Bench Policy – Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 18 August 2026

Decision

That the Cabinet's response to the Revised Memorial Bench Policy - Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board be approved as published.

Reason for the Decision

The Cabinet was required to respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 1 September 2026 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The Cabinet received the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board on the revised Memorial Bench Policy. In accordance with section D7 of Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny as set out in the Constitution, the Cabinet was required to respond to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Board within two months. Subsequently the Cabinet prepared a response to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Board which was proposed by Councillor Billings and seconded by Councillor Bye and agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

None

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

21 August 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Report title: Developing Residential Children's Homes for Torbay

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 15 September 2026

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor Nick Bye, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Email: nick.bye@torbay.gov.uk

Lead Director: Nancy Meehan, Director of Children's Services

Email: nancy.meehan@torbay.gov.uk

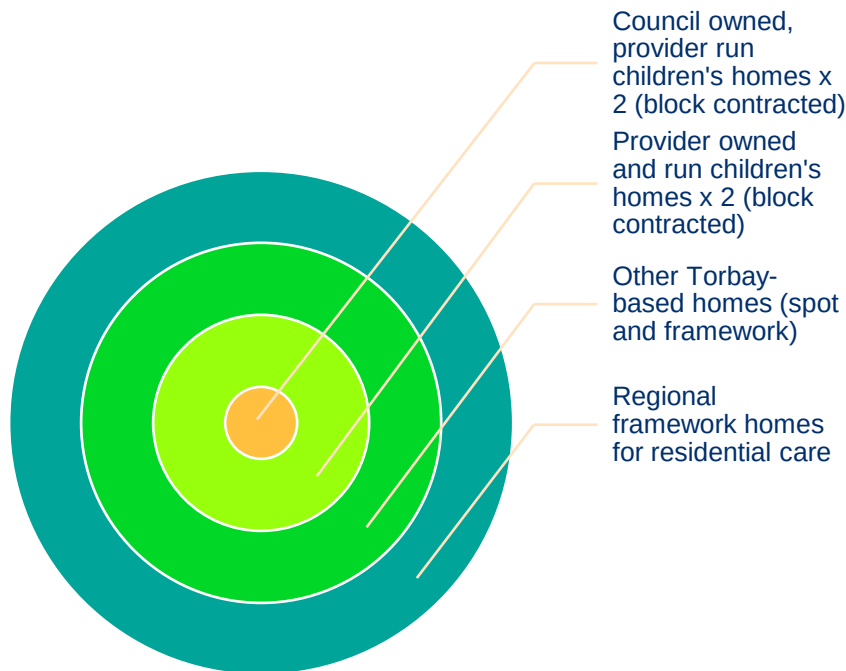
Wards affected: All

1. Summary of Report:

- 1.1 Torbay Council is highly aspirational for our children and young people in care. We are passionate about looking after them well and giving them a broad range of opportunities to support them throughout their childhoods, to set the foundation for their lives as adults. We want to make sure that being in care is not a disadvantage, and that they have the same opportunities as their peers.
- 1.2 Fundamental to this is having a choice of suitable homes for our children and young people, across fostering, 16+ and residential care, offering high-quality places where they can be nurtured by carers and staff. Equally fundamental is for our children and young people to be able to remain living in or near to Torbay as much as possible, to retain links with families and friends as appropriate, be educated in local schools and colleges and receive therapeutic support from local teams. Currently too many of our children and young people are placed out of area or at distance from Torbay and we want to do more to avoid this.
- 1.3 Where possible we want our children and young people to grow up in a family home, but we are ambitious for the use of residential care for our most complex children and young people. For those that need it we want to make sure we have local residential homes, and work in close partnership with Ofsted registered providers to design new homes and wrap around our children together. Our residential homes need to look and feel as close to family homes as possible, to avoid institutional models of care and help children to remain living in

communities. Our practitioners stand ready to work with residential children's home partners, to enable us to keep our children in Torbay, and seek to return those who have been placed out of area but are ready to come home to be cared for locally.

- 1.4 Torbay has opportunities to work with our external partners to create new children's homes. We have been selected by the Department for Education for capital funding to invest in local homes for our children. This is an exciting opportunity to create something different for our children and young people, building in practical terms on our aspiration for high-quality local care. With a track record of being graded Good for Children's Social Care by Ofsted and with committed practitioners and local partners, we believe we can offer a positive approach to working with residential children's home providers to design new homes for our children.
- 1.5 We want to work with partners around the commissioning of two new approaches to residential care in Torbay:
 - Council-owned building(s), run by Ofsted registered residential care providers – 2 homes purchased from Department for Education and Council capital funding to provide 2 placements in each home (4 beds in total);
 - Provider owned and run children's homes – 2 homes, providing 2 placements in each home (4 beds in total)
- 1.6 We are seeking to work with providers who are passionate about getting it right for our children and young people, caring for them with compassion, supporting them through difficult times and helping them to develop the skills they will need for fulfilling their life chances.
- 1.7 This approach is in the context of seeking to strengthen our overall approach to the availability of high-quality residential care. The diagram below shows the two proposed local services at the heart of our future provision and as our first choice, with us also using existing local homes and other placements as needed.



2. Recommendations and Proposed Decision:

2.1 That the Cabinet agree to proceed with a procurement to select Ofsted registered and suitably experienced children's home providers:

- Lot 1 – a provider to work with us to deliver two 2-bedded children's homes. The buildings would be purchased by the Council and leased to the provider, who would register and operate the home. The provider would partner with us to select the most suitable properties and design the service to meet our needs.
- Lot 2 – A provider or provider(s) to deliver two 2-bedded children's homes, with the buildings sourced and the home operated by the provider.

For both Lots we will seek to involve children and young people in the procurement process and design of the homes following the procurement, to make sure we consider their views.

2.2 Both Lots would be block contracted for a period of 3+2 years to enable homes to be secured for Torbay children and to give the commissioned providers the opportunity to create high quality, stable local services, working in partnership with our social workers and support services.

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Proposed Decision:

- 3.1 This approach is recommended as it gives us two different models to encourage providers to come and work with us in Torbay; for those who would prefer not to have to invest in a building but can provide high-quality care, and an alternative for those who would prefer to provide both the building and care. Having local homes which are secured for Torbay children will enable us to keep our children closer, reduce the associated costs and impact of social workers and families having to travel to visit, and support improved planning for transitions to adulthood.
- 3.2 A block contract provides security to our commissioned providers to be able to recruit the right staff to support our children and invest in Torbay over a period of several years. The length of the contract enables us to work in partnership over a period of time, ensuring that the adults and services which wrap around our children are innovative and flexible, adapting to each child's needs as an individual.
- 3.3 Block contracts also usually give the commissioned provider financial security through not having to fund fixed and variable costs during periods where beds aren't being used, meaning that the weekly costs of placements are more reasonable than open market rates. We would work closely with the providers to make sure that we are planning into placements in a timely way and anticipating children moving on well in advance.
- 3.4 An initial, pre-procurement Expression of Interest has been carried out, to understand if children's home providers would be interested in bidding for Lots 1 and 2 – seven providers expressed an interest in one or more of the Lots. We are therefore confident that there is a market for this procurement opportunity.

4. Background and Context:

- 4.1 The Torbay Corporate Parenting Strategy and Sufficiency Strategy set out the Council's approach to ensuring that there is a sufficient range of safe, stable and high-quality living arrangements and support, so that children and young people can grow and thrive in homes that meet their individual needs and promote permanence, belonging and positive life chances. To do this we need to work in partnership with high-quality providers to shape a mixed local market that can meet diverse and complex needs, increasing the availability of placements close to home.
- 4.2 Torbay Council does not currently have any in-house residential provision and, as a result, we purchase all our residential placements from third parties. In the financial year 2025/26, the spend for residential placements, excluding secure and parent and child placements, was £9.28m with the spend for placements in the 'unregistered' sector £5.05m. We are currently paying above market average weekly fees on residential placements, due to a

lack of available beds. Of these residential placements 95% were outside of Torbay (33% in Devon including Plymouth), none in the wider Southwest, 52% in the rest of England and 10% in Wales).

- 4.3 In 2025/26 30 individual young people had periods within 'unregistered' provision, the number of occurrences was 58, i.e. some young people either had more than one 'unregistered' stay or more likely moved address whilst retaining their support staff. These arrangements are more likely to be closer to Torbay, but we want to urgently cease using these types of provisions for our children.
- 4.4 At the end of March 2026 there were 21 children and young people with varying needs in the care of Torbay who were placed in residential care. In addition, there were 9 young people placed in 'unregistered' children's homes as a result of lack of capacity for suitable homes within the market, either locally to Torbay or further away.
- 4.5 The individual needs of our children and young people vary widely as does their ability to live close to Torbay. We know that some of our children need to be placed away from Torbay for their safety, for example as a result of exploitation. Of the 21 children and young people currently in residential care only 1 placement is in Torbay. We want to be able to ensure that residential care is only used for those children who need it, and also to make sure that all our children in care have the opportunity to live with a family if possible. We recognise that for some of our children with the most complex needs and trauma, this is not always possible.
- 4.6 There are currently three children's homes providers operating in Torbay, offering a total of 10 beds. These are in small homes, a model which tends to meet the needs of children needing residential care. While every attempt continues to be made to access these beds for our children, they are currently being used by other local authorities.
- 4.7 We know that placing children out of area can break their connection with their hometown. It makes visiting harder for family and friends and means that social workers are less able to 'drop in' and see the child. Monitoring the quality of care is harder when the placement is further away, as we become much more reliant on what the provider is telling us rather than always seeing it for ourselves. Planning for transition to adulthood is harder, with young people often having to contemplate a significant move and conversations and visits needing more planning.
- 4.8 It is anticipated that the revenue spend required to run the two homes under Lot 1 would be in the region of £6.345m over 5 years, based on achieving market prices in line with national averages. This would represent cost avoidance of approximately £3.639m over a 5-year period. It is anticipated that the spend on the two homes in Lot 2 would be in the region of £3.90m per home (£7.8m), again leading to cost avoidance by holding to average market rates. The difference between the anticipated costs relates to the need for the care provider to provide a building for the Lot 2 homes. It is anticipated that we will spend less on our contracted residential beds, due to the benefits of a block contract and also save on

travel time and costs for families and professionals, being able to keep children at school in Torbay and accessing local commissioned health services.

- 4.9 The tables below show the sufficiency and financial challenges the Council has faced over the past 3 years.

Residential Placements	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Total number of placements made (some young people had more than one placement during the year)	37	24	35
Number of placements ended (some young people had more than one placement during the year)	19	9	14
Number of young people in placement at end of financial year	18	15	21
Placement cost £m	£7.13m	£7.13m	£9.28m

Unregistered' Placements	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Total number of placements made (please note that some young people had more than one placement or address during the year)	30	22	58
Number of young people	20	12	30
Number of young people in placement at any one time	Approx 6	Approx 6	Approx 9
Placement cost £m	£2.56m	£3.20m	£5.05m
Total Placements cost	£9.69m	£10.32m	£14.33m

- 4.10 In addition to the actions proposed above, we will continue to work as part of the Southwest Regional Commissioning Co-operative to jointly explore options for the commissioning of residential placements. This will support being able to access homes for children who cannot be placed in Torbay. We will also continue to monitor the development of other framework opportunities nationally which drive forward the growth of sustainable and affordable residential care.

5. Alternative Options Considered:

- 5.1 The following alternative options were considered.

Option 1: Doing nothing.

This would perpetuate our challenges in being able to access local beds for our children and young people. It would mean that that we are reactive to the provider market instead of exercising our duty to be proactive in shaping the market to meet the needs of our children.

Option 2: Develop our own Children's Homes.

This would enable us to have complete control over the development and operation of the homes. We recognise that since the closure of Broadhaven Children's Home several years ago the Council has no organisational memory or skills to successfully run an internal provision such as these. We recognise that our external children's home providers offer expertise in this area, including in the registration and operation of homes.

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

- 6.1 The Children and Young People's Corporate Parenting Plan sets out Torbay Council's objectives and priorities for all services that directly affect children and young people across the communities which make up Torbay. Its overriding objective and common purpose are **to ensure that all of our cared for and care experienced children and young people are safe, happy and healthy in order that they can reach their full potential.**
- 6.2 The development and delivery of local children's homes designed to meet the needs of Torbay's children who require residential care meets the key priorities identified in the Strategy ensuring that the Council continues to;
- act in their best interests and promote their physical and mental health and wellbeing;
 - actively encourage our children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
 - demonstrably seek to fully understand and take account of their views, wishes and feelings by working in accordance with the Council's restorative principles;
 - in collaboration with the children and young people, help them gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by us and our partners to meet their need;
 - promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes for them;
 - ensure that they are safe and have stability in their home lives, relationships, education and work;
 - prepare them for a successful transition to young adulthood and secure independent living.

7. Consultation and Engagement:

- 7.1 Young people will be involved as experts by experience as part of the procurement process and subsequent mobilisation of local homes with providers. We will also draw on the known views of our care experienced children and young people as part of the consultation which was undertaken for the development of the Corporate Parenting Strategy:

*"Unless our homes are good enough for you to live in, they are not good enough for us"-
Care experienced young person.*

“What has happened to us makes education, training and work hard for us. Be patient and help others to be patient with us too” Cared for young person.

“Don’t dump us into independence and expect us to survive. We need lots of help even if we say we don’t. Be there for us” Cared for young person.

“All we ask for is somewhere decent to live so we can move on in life” Care experienced young person.

“I want my say in decisions”. Cared for young person.

“Being a care leaver faces you up to not having a family around you like most of your mates. It is hard and lonely sometimes.” Care experienced young person.

“Don’t just talk to us. Hear what we have to say and understand what it means” Cared for young person, specific consultation session.

8. Implications:

Financial Implications:

- 8.1 Placements for children and young people in care are funded from the revenue budget. This proposal aims to contain and preferably reduce the cost of residential care, by using local block contracted homes at or below the average market weekly rate. It will also reduce the cost of social workers and other professionals travelling to out of area placements for visits and review.

Close contract management will be required to manage placements and voids appropriately in order to minimise adverse budgetary pressures.

Legal Implications:

- 8.2 There are no known legal implications however a key performance measure for Local Authorities is the number and percentage of children looked after placed more than 20 miles from their home address. At present 95 % of all children and young people placed in registered residential provision live outside of the Council’s boundaries and 52% live outside of the wider Southwest. This project would aim to improve this metric in ensuring our children can be placed much closer to home.
- 8.3 In addition, we have committed to ending the use of ‘unregistered’ homes and this project would be a very specific step towards this, with the potential to continue to develop more local homes.

Corporate Parenting/Children and Young People:

- 8.4 This project will have a direct positive impact on care experienced children and young people, enabling more to live in safe, regulated provision closer to their family, friendship, education and health links. This aims to support their emotional health and well-being and educational attainment and is in line with the Council’s Corporate Parenting Strategy and Sufficiency Strategy.

Associated Risks, Risk Tolerance Level and Mitigations:

A summary of key risks associated with the recommendations in this report are:

1. Failure to award contract – mitigated through premarket engagement. The expression of interest process has signalled that providers are interested in this opportunity.
2. Failure to award a contract – the procurement will be monitored closely by senior officers and any risks flagged early through governance.

The risks of not approving the recommendations include impact on children in not having the opportunity to be placed in Ofsted registered local homes, and the financial challenges associated with out of area placements.

Full risks are set out below:

Risk	Risk score before mitigations (likelihood x impact)	Mitigations	Risk Score after mitigations (likelihood x impact)	Risk tolerance
Failure to award a contract – no appetite in the market	Likelihood (2) x Impact (4) = 8	Premarket engagement and taking information gathered forward into the specification and procurement – the Expression of Interest process has indicated a good level of interest in this opportunity	Likelihood (2) x Impact (3) = 6	Acceptable
Failure to award a contract – pricing of responses, affordability of proposals	Likelihood (3) x Impact (3) = 9	Premarket engagement and taking information gathered forward into the specification and procurement	Likelihood (2) x Impact (3) = 6	Acceptable

Failure to award a contract - market capacity to respond to multiple procurements	Likelihood (2) x Impact (3) = 6	Premarket engagement and taking information gathered forward into the specification and procurement timelines. Not aware of any other current residential procurements in neighbouring local authorities.	Likelihood (2) x Impact (2) = 4	Acceptable
Failure to award contract due to unachievable timescales	Likelihood (3) x Impact (3) = 9	Ensuring providers have sufficient time to respond to the procurement	Likelihood (2) x Impact (3) = 6	Acceptable

Contributions to tackling climate change or achieving carbon neutrality:

Developing local children's homes to meet the needs of Torbay's children and young people who require residential care contributes to tackling climate change and achieving carbon neutrality in the following ways;

- a) Currently 95% of our children and young people in residential care are placed outside of the Council's boundaries. By developing local children's homes this will reduce travel for them, their families and our professional staff carrying out their statutory duties.
- b) Contribute towards meeting the 'Greener Way For Our Bay' Torbay Climate Partnership's framework and action plan by ensuring the homes specification includes key requirements, e.g.;
 - People living and working in homes and buildings that are energy efficient.
 - Helping green businesses and creating new jobs with the environment at their heart.
 - Ensuring the community is at the heart of local action.
 - Monitoring progress and set up initiatives that celebrate success.
 - Helping everyone understand why change is needed and how sustainable choices will make a difference.
 - Working with nature and the local community to prepare for a changing climate.

Social Value Considerations:

The procurement of children's homes to be situated in Torbay will contribute to Social Value in the following ways;

- Potential employment opportunities and workforce development in the children's homes
- Potential construction and renovation opportunities for local firms in making buildings suitable for use
- Potential homes for vulnerable children and young people situated closer to family connections, local education and health provision
- Social value will be included in method questions within the procurement and will therefore form part of the evaluation

Procurement Implications:

This proposal involves spend with external suppliers and therefore a procurement process must be undertaken. The intended route to market is an above threshold open tender in line with the Procurement Act 2023. Local suppliers and SMEs will be enabled to bid for the opportunities; there has been consideration to Lots and formal pre-market engagement will be undertaken to warm the market to the opportunities. Social value will be included in the procurement process.

Other Implications:

None known

9. Equalities Impact Assessment:

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 22	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.	The development of this Children's Home is expected to positively impact Torbay's children looked after aged 11–17. All local authorities have a statutory duty to provide care and accommodation for children looked after as part of the sufficiency duty. It will enable more children to continue to remain living in Torbay where they can maintain relationships with their families/friends/local communities, continue their education and access healthcare provision and other trusted support services locally.	Not Applicable	
Carers	At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay.	There is no differential impact.	Not Applicable	

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
	5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care.			
Care experienced	As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	The development of this Children's Home is expected to positively impact Torbay's children looked after aged 11–17, including young people with disabilities.	Not Applicable	
Disability	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.	The development of this Children's Home is expected to positively impact Torbay's children looked after aged 11–17, including young people with disabilities.	Not Applicable	
Gender reassignment	In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same	There is no differential impact.	Not Applicable	

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
	as their sex registered at birth.			
Marriage and civil partnership	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.	There is no differential impact.	Not Applicable	
Pregnancy and maternity	- 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).	This Children's Home is not focused on provision for older children looked after who are pregnant or who are parents. Therefore, no impact is expected in relation to pregnancy and maternity.	Not Applicable	

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
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: • 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh • 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African • 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.	No impact is expected in relation to race.	Not Applicable	
Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay	There is no differential impact.	Not Applicable	

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
Page 26	identify their religion and/or belief as the following; • 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			
	Sex • 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.	This Children's Home will not be a single sex home. Where it is deemed that a young person would benefit from being in a single sex Children's Home, this would be considered at the point of matching. Inclusion will be considered throughout the development of the Children's Home	Not Applicable	

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
		through to the provision once it opens. For example, the service provider will ensure there are no stereotypes when it comes to the delivery of activities within the home. In addition, facilities will be unisex and non-gender specific.		
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows; • 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	No adverse impact is expected in relation to sexual orientation.	Not Applicable	
Armed Forces Community	• In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that	There is no differential impact.	Not Applicable	

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
	they had previously served in the UK armed forces. In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.			
<i>Additional considerations:</i>				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	Positive impact	Not Applicable	
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	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.	Positive impact	Not Applicable	
Human Rights impacts		Positive impact	Not Applicable	

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
Page 29 Child Friendly		Positive impact. The proposal supports Torbay's ambition to be a Child Friendly place by helping children who need residential care to live in safe, stable and nurturing homes closer to their local communities, schools, health services and important relationships wherever this is in their best interests. Developing local homes also strengthens children's ability to maintain a sense of belonging and connection with Torbay, and reduces the disruption caused by living at distance. Children and young people will be involved as experts by experience in the procurement and mobilisation of the homes, so that their views, wishes and feelings help shape the design and delivery of provision.	Not Applicable	

10. Cumulative Council Impact:

The proposal aims to support our corporate parenting due and help contain or reduce our spend on residential care.

11. Cumulative Community Impact:

None

12. Monitoring and Evaluation:

The services put in place as a result of this proposal will be monitored in accordance with the Council's contract management processes. Performance will be measured against agreed key performance indicators and feedback from the children and young people placed within the provision.

Appendices:

None

Background Documents:

Appendix 1: Torbay Corporate Parenting Strategy - [Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025/28 - Torbay Council](#)

Officer Contact Details:

Name: Emma Crowther

Title: Divisional Director of Adult Social Care Commissioning

Email address: emma.crowther@torbay.gov.uk

Report title: Adult Social Care Local Account Summary 2025/26

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 15th September 2026

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor Hayley Tranter, Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities

Email: Hayley.tranter@torbay.gov.uk

Lead Director: Anna Coles – Director Adults and Community Services

Email: Anna.coles@torbay.gov.uk

Wards affected: All Wards

1. Summary of Report:

- 1.1 The Adult Social Care Local Account Summary 2025/26 provides an overview of the performance, achievements, challenges and future priorities of Adult Social Care in Torbay during 2025/26. It demonstrates how Adult Social Care is supporting people to live healthy, independent and fulfilling lives and reflects feedback from people with lived experience, carers, communities, staff and partner organisations.
- 1.2 The report highlights significant achievements during the year, including Torbay's first Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment resulting in an overall rating of Good, improved satisfaction with Adult Social Care services, strengthened support for unpaid carers, expansion of reablement services and increased opportunities for co-production and community engagement. It also identifies key areas for improvement and priorities for the coming year.

2. Recommendations and Proposed Decision:

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the contents of the Adult Social Care Local Account Summary 2025/26.

- 2.2 That Cabinet approves publication of the Adult Social Care Local Account Summary 2025/26 as the Council's annual account of Adult Social Care performance and improvement activity.

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Proposed Decision:

- 3.1 The Care Act 2014 promotes transparency and accountability in Adult Social Care and encourages local authorities to publish information about performance, outcomes and improvement activity.
- 3.2 Publication of the Local Account enables residents, carers, partners and stakeholders to understand how Adult Social Care services are performing, the impact they are having on local people and the priorities for future improvement

4. Background and Context:

- 4.1 The Local Account Summary has been developed using performance information, quality assurance activity, feedback from people with lived experience, carers, staff and partners, and learning from service delivery throughout 2025/26.
- 4.2 The report describes how Adult Social Care has responded to increasing demand, rising complexity of need and financial pressures whilst supporting people to remain independent and connected to their communities. It also reflects the outcome of Torbay's first CQC assessment and preparations for the return of Adult Social Care functions to Torbay Council in April 2027 following the termination of the Section 75 arrangements.

5. Alternative Options Considered:

- 5.1 Not publishing the Local Account Summary.
- This option was not recommended as publication supports transparency, accountability and engagement with residents, people who draw on support, carers, partners and stakeholders. It provides an opportunity to communicate performance, achievements, challenges and priorities for improvement.

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

- 6.1 The Local Account supports the Council's ambition for thriving communities where people can prosper by demonstrating how Adult Social Care promotes independence, wellbeing, prevention and community resilience.
- 6.2 The report evidences the Council's commitment to supporting vulnerable adults, reducing inequalities, improving health and wellbeing outcomes and developing sustainable services that are shaped through co-production and community engagement.

7. Consultation and Engagement:

- 7.1 The report has been informed by extensive engagement with people who draw on care and support, unpaid carers, staff, providers, Healthwatch, community organisations and partner agencies. Feedback has been gathered through surveys, partnership boards, complaints, compliments, co-production activities and quality assurance processes.

8. Implications:

Financial Implications:

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from publication of the Local Account Summary.

Legal Implications:

- 8.2 While publication of a Local Account is not a statutory duty, it is recognised good practice within Adult Social Care and supports the Council's Care Act 2014 responsibilities regarding transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.

Corporate Parenting/Children and Young People:

- 8.3 No adverse impacts on children and young people have been identified.

Associated Risks, Risk Tolerance Level and Mitigations:

A summary of key risks associated with the recommendations in this report are:

1. [Risk description] – mitigated through [control].
2. [Risk description] – monitored through [governance route].

The risks of not approving the recommendations include [briefly stated]. Overall risk exposure is assessed as acceptable within the Council's risk tolerance appetite.

Full risks are set out below:

Risk	Risk score before mitigations (likelihood x impact)	Mitigations	Risk Score after mitigations (likelihood x impact)	Risk tolerance
Reputational risk from lack of transparency	Medium	Publication of Local Account	Low	Acceptable
Stakeholder misunderstanding of performance or future plans	Medium	Clear public reporting and engagement	Low	Acceptable
Service transition risk linked to April 2027 transfer	High	Programme management and governance arrangements	Medium	Acceptable

Contributions to tackling climate change or achieving carbon neutrality:

8.4 The report has no direct climate change implications.

Social Value Considerations:

8.5 The report highlights the significant contribution of community organisations, voluntary sector partners, carers and local providers in supporting residents, reducing inequalities and strengthening community resilience.

Procurement Implications:

8.6 There are no procurement implications arising directly from publication of the report.

Other Implications:

8.7 None identified.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment:

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	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.	The Local Account highlights the experiences and outcomes of adults across all age groups, including older people, working-age adults and young people transitioning to adulthood. No adverse impacts have been identified as publication of the report does not change services or access to support.	Report produced in accessible formats and highlights actions to improve outcomes for people of all ages.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.
Carers	- 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.	The report includes specific information regarding unpaid carers and recognises their contribution and support needs. No adverse impacts identified.	Continued engagement with carers and publication of information relating to services and support available.	Adult Social Care and Torbay Carers. Ongoing.
Care experienced	As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young	The report recognises support for care experienced young people transitioning to adulthood. No adverse impacts identified.	Continued partnership working to support positive preparation for adulthood outcomes.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.

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
	people aged 18-24 in Torbay.			
Disability	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.	The report includes information regarding people with disabilities, learning disabilities, autism, sensory impairments and mental health needs. Accessible information remains important. No adverse impacts identified.	Provision of accessible formats and continued co-production with people with lived experience.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.
Gender reassignment	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.	No adverse impacts identified. The report applies equally to all residents regardless of gender identity.	Ensure information and services remain inclusive and accessible.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.
Marriage and civil partnership	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.	No adverse impacts identified.	None required beyond existing equality duties.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.

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
Pregnancy and maternity	- 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).	No adverse impacts identified. The report does not affect access to services based on pregnancy or maternity status.	Continue to ensure support remains accessible where relevant.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	The report acknowledges inequalities experienced by some ethnic minority communities. No adverse impacts identified from publication of the report.	Continue engagement with diverse communities and monitor equity of experience and outcomes.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.

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
Page 39	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.			
Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following; 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	No adverse impacts identified.	Continue to recognise and respect individuals' beliefs and cultural needs within service delivery.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.

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
	0.7% have another religion 43.2% have no religion 6.3% did not answer			
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female. 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.			
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows; 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	No adverse impacts identified.	Continue to monitor outcomes and experiences across population groups.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.

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
Armed Forces Community	- 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 served in the UK armed forces.	No adverse impacts identified. The report applies equally to members of the Armed Forces community.	Continue signposting and support in line with the Armed Forces Covenant.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.
Additional considerations:				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	The report identifies deprivation and health inequalities within Torbay. Publication of the report has no direct socio-economic impact but promotes transparency regarding inequalities and service responses.	Continued focus on prevention, early intervention and reducing inequalities through Adult Social Care priorities.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	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	Positive impact through publication of information relating to prevention, independence, wellbeing and community support. No adverse impacts identified.	Ongoing partnership working with health and community organisations.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.

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
	deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females.			
Human Rights impacts		Positive impact. The report demonstrates Adult Social Care's commitment to promoting independence, safeguarding, advocacy, choice, control and compliance with the Care Act 2014 and Human Rights Act principles. No adverse impacts identified.	Continued focus on person-centred practice, advocacy and safeguarding.	Adult Social Care. Ongoing.
Child Friendly (Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) considerations): <i>Summarise the CRIA considerations for this proposal, including which groups of children and young people may be affected (e.g., care experienced children/young people, care leavers, children with SEND), how their rights and best interests have been considered, and any engagement undertaken with</i>		Whilst the Local Account primarily relates to Adult Social Care services, it includes reference to young people transitioning from children's to adult services and support for care experienced young adults. The report does not introduce any policy or service changes and therefore no adverse impacts on children and young people have been identified. The report highlights ongoing work to improve transitions to adulthood, support independence, education,		

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
<i>children/young people and/or their representatives. Set out any mitigations to address identified adverse impacts and how these will be monitored.</i>		employment and community inclusion for young people with additional support needs, including those with learning disabilities, autism and care experience. As this report is retrospective and informational in nature, no specific mitigation actions are required. Children's rights and best interests continue to be considered through existing statutory assessment, planning and transition processes. Monitoring will be undertaken through existing Adult Social Care and Children's Services governance arrangements.		

10. Cumulative Council Impact:

- 10.1 The Local Account demonstrates how Adult Social Care contributes to improved health, wellbeing, independence and safety across Torbay.
- 10.2 The report supports organisational transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.

11. Cumulative Community Impact:

- 11.1 The report provides assurance to residents, carers and stakeholders regarding the quality and effectiveness of Adult Social Care services.
- 11.2 It highlights the positive impact of partnership working, community support and preventative services in improving outcomes for local people.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- 12.1 Adult Social Care performance is routinely monitored through established governance, quality assurance and performance management arrangements.
- 12.2 Progress against improvement priorities identified within the Local Account and CQC improvement plan will continue to be monitored and reported through Adult Social Care governance arrangements.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Torbay Local Account Summary 2025/2026

Officer Contact Details:

Name: [Michelle Penna](#)

Title: [Commissioning Officer – Quality and Assurance](#)

Email address: michelle.penna@torbay.gov.uk

TORBAY COUNCIL



Torbay and South Devon
NHS Foundation Trust

Torbay Adult Social Care

Local Account Summary 2025-2026



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Forewords

Cllr Hayley Tranter, Torbay Council's Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities



Welcome to this year's annual report, which I hope you will enjoy reading.

Adult social care supports people to remain independent, connected to their communities and able to live the lives they choose.

This report intends to reflect both the achievements of the past year and the work still needed to meet future challenges.

Torbay has one of the oldest populations in the South West, and demand for support continues to grow.

At the same time, we must address the inequalities that impact the health and wellbeing of many local people. Against this backdrop, our staff, carers, providers, volunteers and partners continue to make a positive difference every day and you can read some good examples of this from professionals in the report.

We celebrate our CQC Good rating but also recognise there's more work to be done – whether that's through supporting carers, expanding housing options, strengthening our workforce or responding to growing mental health needs.

By working collaboratively, we will continue to improve services and deliver the support people need to live well, remain independent and achieve the outcomes that matter most to them.

Anna Coles – Director of Adults and Community Services, Torbay Council Torbay Council



I am pleased to introduce this Adult Social Care Annual Report for 2025/26.

This year's report highlights the work we've carried out with partners, residents, carers and communities to support people to live healthy, independent and fulfilling lives.

It also reflects a year of improvement, learning and preparation for the future.

Torbay's population continues to grow – this brings increased demand for care and support.

More people are living longer with complex health needs, while inequalities continue to affect health and wellbeing across our communities.

These challenges reinforce the importance of prevention, early intervention and helping people to stay independent for as long as possible.

Despite these pressures, there is much to celebrate. During the year we achieved a Good rating in our first Care Quality Commission assessment.

We've also improved satisfaction with adult social care services, expanded reablement and community-based support, increased our focus on housing, strengthened support for unpaid carers and developed stronger relationships with our local care providers. We have continued to place lived experience at the centre of service development through co-production and engagement.

As we prepare for the transfer of adult social care functions to Torbay Council in April 2027, joint working will remain fundamental to our success and ensure a smooth and seamless transition. The changes in the delivery of Adult Social Care in Torbay will provide an opportunity to work with our communities to redesign how we better meet the needs of our residents over the years to come, ensuring individuals are supported to thrive and prosper in Torbay.

I would like to thank our staff, partners, carers and residents for their continued commitment and contribution throughout the year.

Joe Teape Chief Executive, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust



We're pleased to present Torbay's adult social care Local Account for 2025/26. This report reflects the dedication, compassion and professionalism of the people who deliver, support and shape adult social care across Torbay. We're incredibly proud of our colleagues and the difference they make every day. Working alongside carers, providers, community organisations and partner agencies, they help people to live as independently as possible, stay connected to their communities and achieve the outcomes that matter most to them.

During the past year, our teams have continued to support people through increasing demand, growing complexity of need and ongoing challenges across the wider health and care system. Throughout this, their commitment to providing high-quality, person-centred care has remained unwavering and we'd like to thank them for everything they do.

This has also been an important year for adult social care in Torbay. Following the formal decision by the Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust Board to serve notice on the Section 75 agreement, we're now working closely with Torbay Council to support the transfer of adult social care services from 01 April 2027.

We recognise the complexity of this programme and the change it represents. There is a shared commitment across our organisation, Torbay Council and our partners to ensure a smooth transition for colleagues, providers and the people who rely on our services. Maintaining joined-up working across health and social care, while continuing to ensure the safe delivery of adult social care, will remain a priority throughout this process and beyond.

This report highlights our achievements, challenges and learning from the past year, and the continued commitment of everyone involved in supporting people across Torbay.

Local account summary introduction:

Welcome to Torbay's Adult Social Care Local Account Summary for 2025/26. This report explains how Adult Social Care is supporting people in Torbay to live healthy, independent and fulfilling lives. It highlights the difference that services, carers, community organisations and partner agencies make every day, while being honest about the challenges we face and where we need to improve.

The report brings together information about the experiences and outcomes of people who draw on care and support, unpaid carers, local communities and our workforce. It reflects our commitment to being open and transparent about our performance and how we are working to ensure people receive the right support, at the right time, in the right way.

This report is informed by performance information, feedback from people with lived experience, carers, partners and staff, and learning from our quality assurance and improvement activity. Together, these insights help us understand what is working well and where we need to focus our efforts.

thriving communities where people can prosper

Our vision is for thriving communities where people can prosper. We want every resident to have a place to call home, be connected to their community, and be supported to achieve the outcomes that matter most to them through high-quality care and support.

During 2025/26, Adult Social Care continued to support people against a backdrop of rising demand, increasing complexity of need and ongoing financial pressures. Despite these challenges, we made significant progress in strengthening prevention and early intervention, expanding reablement and technology-enabled care, and improving access to support.

A significant milestone during the year was our first assessment under the Care Quality Commission's new assurance framework. Following the assessment in September 2025, Torbay received an overall rating of Good, recognising the commitment of our workforce, partners and communities to supporting people to achieve the outcomes that matter most to them. The final report was published in December 2025. The full report can be read here: [Torbay Council: local authority assessment - Care Quality Commission](#)

Inspected and rated

Good



Following a decision made at the end of March 2026 by Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust to end the current Section 75 agreement, preparation is underway for the return of Adult Social Care functions from Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust to Torbay Council in April 2027. The Section 75 agreement is the legal partnership arrangement between Torbay

Council, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust and NHS Devon Integrated Care Board (ICB) that has enabled the integration of health and social care services across Torbay. Through shared governance, delegated responsibilities and pooled resources, the arrangement has supported the delivery of joined-up care and improved outcomes for local people. While this represents a significant organisational change, our focus remains unchanged: delivery of our statutory duties in supporting people to remain independent, connected to their communities and in control of their lives for as long as possible.

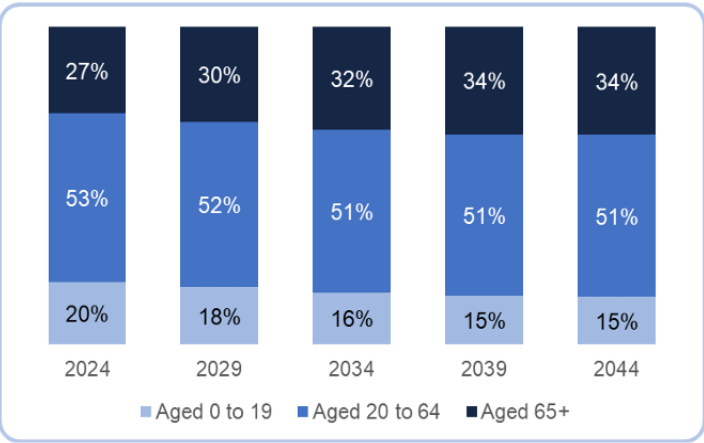
Throughout this report, you will find examples of the difference Adult Social Care is making across Torbay, the experiences of people who draw on support and care, and the priorities that will guide our improvement journey in the year ahead.

Our community

At a glance

- Around 140,000 people live in Torbay.
- More than one in four residents are aged 65 and over.
- The population aged over 65 is expected to continue growing.
- Health inequalities continue to affect some communities more than others.

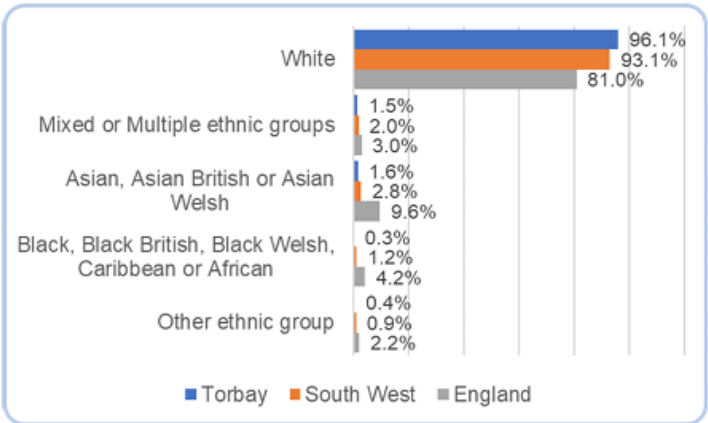
Torbay is home to around 140,000 residents and has one of the oldest population profiles in the South West. More than a quarter of people living in Torbay are aged 65 and over, and this proportion is expected to continue growing over the coming decades. This creates increasing demand for health, social care and community support services, making it more important than ever that people can access the right support at the right time.



Life expectancy in Torbay is around 79 years for men and 83 years for women. However, significant inequalities remain, with people living in the most deprived communities experiencing shorter lives and poorer health outcomes. Many people also spend a

significant number of later years living with ill health, highlighting the importance of early intervention, prevention and support.

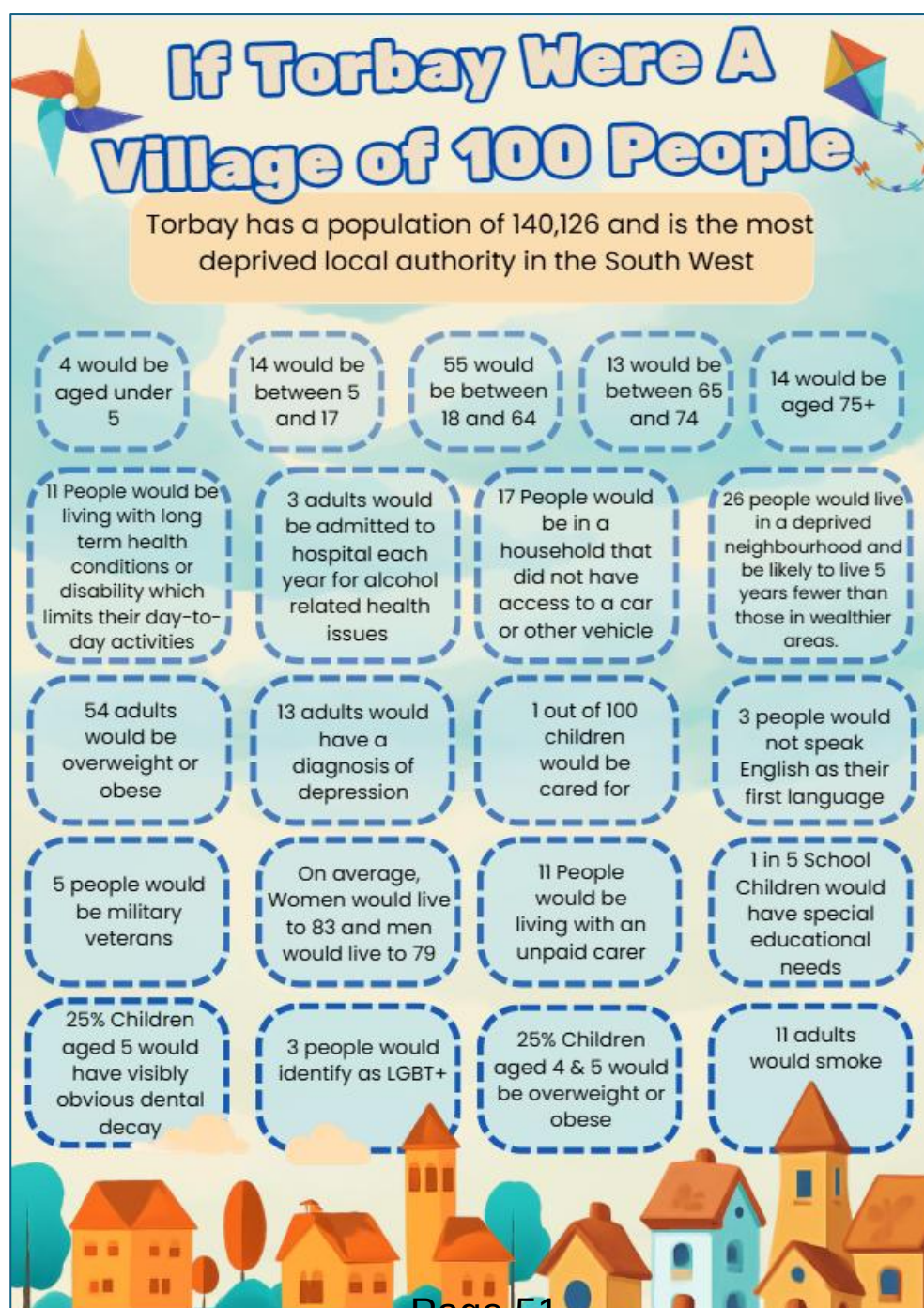
Torbay's population is becoming increasingly diverse, particularly amongst younger age groups. At the same time, population growth, an ageing population and increasing levels of complex health need are placing greater demand on health and social care services.

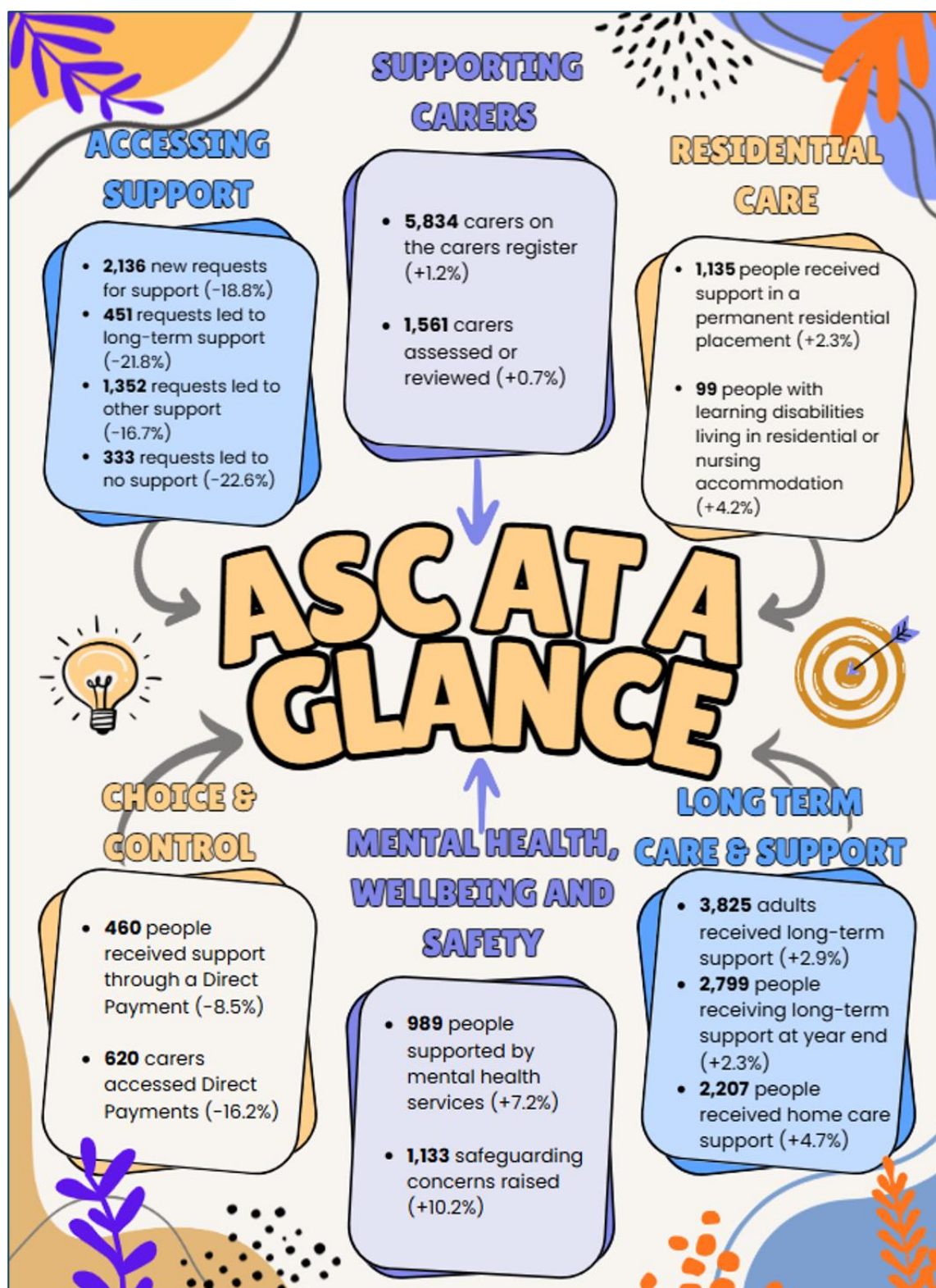


These challenges shape how Adult Social Care plans and delivers support. Our priority is to help people remain independent, connected and well for as long as possible. This includes supporting unpaid carers, reducing loneliness and isolation, promoting wellbeing and ensuring people can access the right information, advice and support when they need it

What does this mean for you?

As more people live longer and develop complex health and care needs, demand for support is increasing. We are working to help people stay healthy, independent and connected to their communities for as long as possible by investing in prevention, supporting unpaid carers, strengthening community services and improving access to information, advice and support. We also continue to work with partners to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes for people across Torbay.





During 2025/26, more than 2,100 people contacted Adult Social Care for advice, information or support. While the number of people making initial contact reduced compared with the previous year, the proportion of people receiving ongoing long-term support remained consistent.

Demand for mental health support continued to grow, with more people receiving support from our mental health social care services. The number of unpaid carers identified and connected to support also increased during the year.

We have continued to improve how we understand and monitor the quality of Adult Social Care services. By using performance information, feedback and learning from people who draw on support, carers, staff and partner organisations, we are better able to identify what is working well and where improvements are needed.

Adult Social Care services continue to be delivered through close partnership working between Torbay Council, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust, community organisations, independent providers and local residents. While Adult Social Care services will return to Torbay Council in April 2027, working together with partners will remain essential to improving outcomes for people in Torbay.

What does this mean for you?

We are working to make it easier for people to access support and ensuring services respond to changing levels of demand. By working closely with health services, community organisations and local providers, we aim to help people get the right support at the right time and improve outcomes for residents, carers and families.

Performance summary

We are proud of the progress made across Adult Social Care during 2025/26, particularly in supporting people to remain independent, strengthening partnerships and improving outcomes. However, we also recognise there are areas where we need to improve. The summary below highlights both our achievements and our priorities for the year ahead.

What we are proud of

- Good CQC assessment outcome.
- Increased satisfaction with Adult Social Care services (71.7%).
- Strong outcomes for unpaid carers, with more carers identified and supported.
- Significant increase in people with learning disabilities living in their own home or with family (84.6%).
- Expansion of reablement and community-based support.
- Strong engagement with Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Boards.
- Increased opportunities for co-production and lived experience involvement.
- Publication of the Autism Strategy and continued delivery of The Big Plan for people with learning disabilities

Where we need to improve

- Support for carers, including increasing carer satisfaction and access to Direct Payments.
- Expanding housing and accommodation options for people with care and support needs.
- Improving workforce recruitment and retention.
- Increasing awareness and uptake of Direct Payments generally.
- Responding to growing demand for mental health support.
- Improving access to information and advice about available services.
- Continuing to reduce reliance on residential care
- Improve safeguarding outcomes

Our priorities

Everything we do is guided by four priorities which reflect what people have told us matters most. Throughout this report you will see examples of how we are delivering these priorities today and how we will continue to improve services in the future.

1. Focused on outcomes and wellbeing

"My care and support focuses on promoting my wellbeing in all its facets and the outcomes that matter most to me."

How we are delivering this:

- Supporting people to remain independent through reablement, recovery and community support.
- Promoting wellbeing through strengths-based practice and preventative services.
- Protecting people's rights through safeguarding, advocacy and person-centred support.

How we will move this forward

- Improve how we measure and demonstrate outcomes for people.
- Expand reablement, technology-enabled care and community-based support.
- Increase involvement of people with lived experience in shaping services.

What does this mean for you?

You can expect support that focuses on your strengths, promotes your wellbeing and helps you remain as independent as possible. We will work in partnership with you, your family, carers and communities to provide the right support at the right time, ensuring your voice is heard and the outcomes that matter to you are achieved.

2. Personalised, co-created and flexible

"I have a say in shaping my care and support and it adapts as my needs change."

How we are delivering this

- Listening to people through co-production and lived experience activities.
- Supporting partnership boards and advocacy services.
- Improving access to information in a range of formats.

How we will move this forward

- Increase awareness and use of Direct Payments.
- Launch a new Personal Assistant recruitment platform.
- Further strengthen co-production and personalised support planning.

What does this mean for you?

You will be supported to have a stronger voice in the decisions that affect your life. Through co-production, advocacy, accessible information and personalised support options, we will help you

make informed choices, exercise greater choice and control, and design support that works best for you.

3. Proactive and preventative

"I can access support early to help me stay healthy, independent and connected to my community."

How we are delivering this

- Investing in prevention, reablement and community support.
- Supporting unpaid carers before their needs escalate.
- Expanding the use of technology to support independent living.

How we will move this forward

- Develop a Universal Front Door for information, advice and support.
- Increase access to preventative and community-based services.
- Strengthen support for unpaid carers and earlier intervention.

What does this mean for you?

You will be supported to stay independent and well for longer through earlier access to information, advice and practical support. By investing in prevention, community services, technology-enabled care and support for carers, we will help you get the right support at the right time, reducing the need for crisis intervention and enabling you to achieve the outcomes that matter most to you.

4. Integrated and coordinated

"The care and support I receive is joined up around my needs and those of my carers."

How we are delivering this

- Working closely with health, housing and community partners.
- Supporting people through Home First and hospital discharge pathways.
- Improving transitions between children's and adult services.

How we will move this forward

- Develop more joined-up pathways across health, housing and social care.
- Expand housing, supported living and extra care options.
- Ensure Adult Social Care services continue to be joined up and accessible as functions return to Torbay Council in April 2027

What does this mean for you?

You will benefit from more coordinated and accessible support, with health, housing, social care and community services working together around your needs. We will improve support during important life transitions, provide a wider range of housing and care options, and ensure services

remain joined up as Adult Social Care functions return to Torbay Council in April 2027, helping you achieve the outcomes that matter most to you.

What matters to people

At a Glance

- Feedback is gathered through Torbay Voices, surveys and partnership boards.
- People with lived experience help shape services and priorities.
- Carers highlighted the importance of communication and involvement in decision-making.

Everything starts with listening to people and acting on what they tell us.

Throughout the year, unpaid carers, people with learning disabilities and autism, care home residents, families and people who draw on care and support helped shape services and priorities. Through Torbay Voices, the Amplifying People's Voices project, partnership boards, surveys and co-production activities, people shared their experiences and influenced how services are designed and improved.

Feedback from carers highlighted the importance of clear communication, being involved in decisions and understanding how services work together. Listening to this feedback has contributed to improved outcomes for carers, including increased satisfaction with Adult Social Care services and improvements in quality of life.

Performance Measures Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) Carers Survey 2024/25 Version 5.5b Outturns 2016/17 to 2024/5 with National Quartile

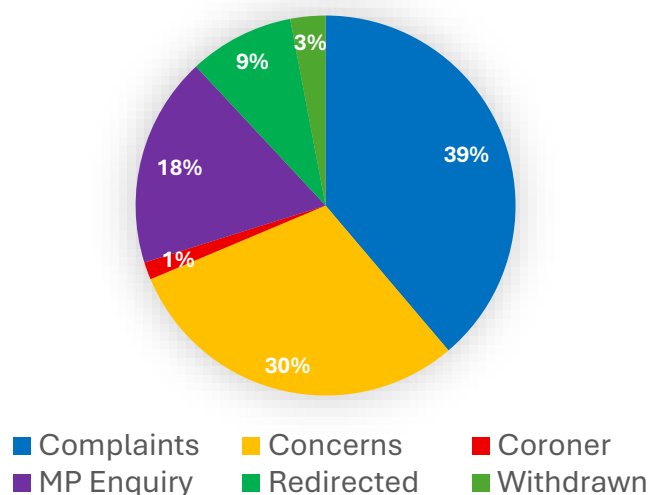
Domain & KPI	Frame work / Source	2016/17 Outturn	2018/19 Outturn	2021/22 Outturn	2023/ 24 outturn	2025/ 26 outturn	2016/17 Quartile	2018/19 Quartile	2021/22 Quartile	2023/ 24	AWAIT
ASC 1D: Carer-reported quality of life	ASCOF	7.8	7.5	7.4	7.2	7.8	Q2	Q2	Q1	Q2	
	SACE Survey										
ASC 1I part 2: Proportion of carers who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like	ASCOF	34.4%	32.4%	34.4%	29.8%	36.8%	Q2	Q2	Q1	Q2	
	SACE Survey										
ASC 3B: Overall satisfaction of carers with social services	ASCOF	37.9%	41.2%	45.9%	35.9%	43.2%	Q3	Q2	Q1	Q3	
	SACE Survey										
ASC 3C: The proportion of carers who report that they have been included or consulted in discussions about the person they care for	ASCOF	71.7%	70.4%	71.3%	65.5%	70.0%	Q2	Q2	Q1	Q3	
	SACE Survey										
ASC 3D part 2: The proportion of carers who find it easy to find information about services	ASCOF	73.6%	72.2%	61.4%	64.7%	72.1%	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q1	
	SACE Survey										

We also strengthened the voice of people with lived experience through our Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Boards, helping ensure services promote independence, choice, control and access to information in ways that meet people's needs.

Listening also means learning when things do not go as expected. During 2025/26, Adult Social Care received 67 complaints, concerns and enquiries. We use this feedback to improve services, support staff development and strengthen the quality of care and support we provide.

By listening, learning and working alongside people, we continue to ensure services reflect what matters most to the communities we serve.

**Torbay Adult Social Care - Complaints
2025-2026**



What does this mean for you?

Your voice matters. Feedback from people who use services, carers and families helps shape services, influence future priorities and improve the support available across Torbay.

Working with people: supporting independence

People tell us that they want to remain connected to their families, communities and interests while accessing the support they need. We promote community resources, technology, reablement and preventative support before long-term services are considered. Our approach is based on strengths, independence and choice.

Supporting independence remains at the heart of Adult Social Care. During the year, we have continued to strengthen prevention, improve access to information, advice and guidance, and develop services to ensure people receive the right support at the right time. Through our continued focus on improvement, we are strengthening quality, consistency and outcomes across our services

Front door and access to services

At a glance

- The way people access services was reviewed and improved, helping people get support more quickly and easily.
- Access to community support was strengthened, helping people find local services that promote independence and wellbeing.
- Work has begun on creating a Universal Front Door, a single point of access designed to make it easier for people to find the right information, advice and support.

People have told us they want clear information and to be directed to the right support first time. During 2025/26, we improved how people access Adult Social Care by reviewing referral processes, working closely with partners and strengthening links with community and voluntary sector organisations. These changes have helped more people access support earlier and reduced the need for formal assessments where alternative support is available.

We introduced a new Front Door model that has reduced unnecessary hand-offs between teams, improved continuity and helped resolve concerns more quickly. We also improved access to information, advice and support through the Torbay Communities Helpline and strengthened our focus on helping people build on their own strengths, relationships and community connections.

We are continuing this work through the development of a Universal Front Door, which will provide a simpler and more consistent way for people to access advice, information, support and care. This includes improving access across telephone, digital and community services, making information easier to find and reducing barriers to support.

Future work will focus on improving accessibility, enhancing digital services and making it easier for people to find the right support when they need it.

What does this mean for you?

We want it to be easier to find help, advice and information without being passed between multiple services. Our aim is to provide quicker access to support, reduce unnecessary delays and help people get the right support at the right time.

Transforming adult social care

At a glance

- Continued to improve access to information, advice and support, helping people get the help they need more easily.
- Focused on prevention and early intervention, helping people stay independent and maintain their wellbeing for longer.
- Began planning for the return of Adult Social Care services to Torbay Council in April 2027, ensuring services remain safe, effective and focused on people's needs during the transition.

People tell us that more could be done to improve their outcomes and make services easier to access. During 2025/26, Adult Social Care continued to strengthen support across Torbay by improving access to services, promoting prevention and early intervention, and helping more people remain independent, well and connected to their communities. We have also continued to develop our transformation programme to improve outcomes and ensure services can meet future demand.

Following a decision by Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust to end the current Section 75 agreement, preparations are underway for Adult Social Care services to return to Torbay Council in April 2027. This work is being delivered jointly to ensure continuity of support for people who draw on care and support, carers, staff and partners throughout the transition

What does this mean for you?

We are working to make Adult Social Care easier to access, more responsive to people's needs and sustainable for the future. As services transition back to Torbay Council, our priority is to ensure people continue to receive high-quality, joined-up support without disruption.

Specialist services supporting independence

At a glance

- 916 people were supported by Mental Health Social Care Teams.
- Specialist service teams helped people remain independent at home and in their communities.
- People with lived experience continued to shape services through Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Boards.
- Young people were supported to prepare for adulthood, education, employment and independent living.

Adult Social Care provides support through a range of specialist teams, working alongside people, families and partners to promote wellbeing, independence and choice.

During 2025/26, our Mental Health Social Care Teams supported 916 people with serious and enduring mental health needs, while Older People's Mental Health Services helped people living with dementia and other mental health conditions remain independent and supported carers in their role. Demand for mental health support continued to grow throughout the year.

Our Sensory Services Team provided rehabilitation, equipment, advice and practical support to help people with sight and hearing loss remain independent and connected to their communities. We also continued to strengthen transitions into adulthood, helping young people prepare for independent living, education, employment and community participation.

People with lived experience continued to play an important role in shaping services through our Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Boards, helping influence areas such as accessibility, housing, community inclusion and reasonable adjustments.

Our Arranging Support Team and Emergency Duty Service continued to work alongside families, providers and professionals to ensure people could access support when they needed it, including during periods of crisis and outside normal office hours.

As demand and complexity continue to increase, we remain focused on delivering coordinated, person-centred support that helps people achieve the outcomes that matter most to them.

Listening and learning from people's experiences

People's experiences help us understand what is working well and where we need to improve. Throughout the year, people who draw on care and support, carers, families and partner organisations shared feedback about their experiences of Adult Social Care services. This feedback helps us improve services, strengthen professional practice and ensure support remains focused on the outcomes that matter most to local people.

The infographic below provides an overview of the feedback received during 2025/26. All feedback helps us learn and improve the support we provide.

Making a Difference: Feedback from People We Support



"Thank you for the support, advice and guidance you have provided. This has been invaluable... The equipment recommendations were especially helpful and are already having a positive impact on my quality of life."

- Sensory Team

"Thank you so very much for your kindness and care over the past 24 hours... We felt really listened to for the first time in I don't know how many years... We've felt well informed and cared about throughout this horrible process...."

- Emergency Duty Team

"I really look forward to coming to this group. I can speak freely, get useful advice and meet understanding people."

- Carers Service

"The representative felt fully listened to and included and he had nothing but praise for the social worker involved... 'Start to finish, really good'."

- Safeguarding Team

"We really appreciate the lengths that were went to for the transition to go smoothly... the feedback from the home has been nothing but amazing. It's lovely when things go well, and we want to recognise the work that supported this."

- Older Peoples Mental Health

"Within the OPMHT the CHES team play a vital role... there is always someone we can contact for any support or advice... Dave Pike and the team have supported us for many years... Brilliant team of professionals."

- CHES Team

"Cavan took the time to understand John's wishes during a complex accommodation move and never rushed decisions. As a Mental Health Specialist Occupational Therapist, I recognised the exceptional, meticulous, tenacious and person-centred support he provided throughout."

- Adults Mental Health Team

"My father and I have been somewhat taken aback by the kindness that has been shown by Emma and her team... We cannot thank you enough and a comfort knowing that you are there, should we need help or advice in the future."

- Sensory Team

"The safeguarded person... felt supported, listened to and fully included... the social worker was amazing."

- Safeguarding Team

We also continue to learn from people with lived experience. Autism Ambassador Heidi shares her experience of autism in Torbay, her involvement in local support and advocacy, and how she is helping to improve understanding of autism across health and social care through her role as an Oliver McGowan Trainer. Heidi's story highlights the importance of listening to people's experiences and ensuring services are shaped by the people who use them.

Watch: [Autism Ambassadors: Heidi's Story](#)

Feedback received during the year consistently highlighted the importance of compassionate, person-centred support and the positive difference it can make to people's lives. People told us they value support that helps them remain independent, stay connected to their communities and have a voice in decisions about their care and support. We will continue to use feedback from people, families and carers to shape and improve Adult Social Care services across Torbay.

What does this mean for you?

People receive support that is tailored to their individual needs, helps them maintain their independence and enables them to stay connected to their communities. Specialist services provide support at different stages of life and during times of increased need, while feedback from people, families and carers helps shape services and improve how support is delivered. This means people have a stronger voice in decisions that affect them and benefit from services that are informed by lived experience and focused on the outcomes that matter most.

Supporting unpaid carers

At a glance

- 5,834 carers were registered with Torbay Carers.
- More than 1,800 carers received support, advice or wellbeing interventions.
- AI tool "Bridgit" was launched to provide online support for carers.
- Replacement care options expanded during the year, helping unpaid carers take a break from their caring responsibilities while maintaining continuity of support.

Unpaid carers play a vital role in helping people remain independent, connected to their communities and able to live well at home. During 2025/26, 5,834 carers were registered with Torbay Carers and 1,861 carers received support, assessments, reviews or wellbeing interventions. Feedback from the National Carers Survey also showed improving experiences and outcomes for carers.

Throughout the year, we continued to strengthen the information, advice and support available to carers. This included the launch of Bridgit, a new digital platform providing information and planning tools, alongside continued support through Signposts for Carers, the Torbay Carers Passport and Carer Support Workers based within community and health services.

Carers told us that timely information, emotional support and opportunities for a break from caring were particularly important. In response, we expanded replacement care services, including volunteer-led sitting services, enhanced support for people with more complex needs and emergency care-at-home provision to help prevent carers reaching crisis point.

Feedback from carers highlights the difference this support can make:

- "I can speak freely, get useful advice and meet understanding people."
- "It was relaxing and pleasant to be able to talk to others who understand where I'm coming from."
- "He felt very comfortable in your company as you listened and supported him with kindness."

Supporting carers in Torbay

The videos below highlight some of the support available to unpaid carers across Torbay and the difference it can make to people's lives.

Torbay carers passport

Find out how the Carers Passport provides practical support, emergency planning and access to a range of benefits for carers.



Brian - Carers
Passport.mp4

Signposts for Carers newsletter

Learn how carers can access information, advice and updates about services, events and support available locally.



Peter - Signposting
Newsletter.mp4

The impact of carer support workers

Hear how Carer Support Workers help people access advice, emotional support and practical assistance throughout their caring journey.



Peter - Impact of
CSW.mp4

Carer support workers and counselling

Discover how counselling and wellbeing support are helping carers look after their own health and wellbeing while continuing in their caring role.



Carol - CSW and
Counselling.mov

While positive progress has been made, we recognise that carers continue to face significant pressures. We will continue to improve access to information, strengthen replacement care services and work with partners to identify carers earlier and provide support before they reach crisis point.

What does this mean for you?

If you care for a family member, friend or neighbour, you do not have to do it alone. We are working to make it easier for carers to access information, advice, emotional support and breaks from caring, helping them maintain their own health and wellbeing while continuing to support others

Choice and control

At a glance

- Direct Payment information and guidance were improved.
- Direct Payment Champions were introduced.
- A new Personal Assistant recruitment platform is being developed.

People tell us they want more choice and control over how their care and support needs are met. Direct Payments are an important way of helping people decide how their support is arranged and delivered.

During 2025/26, we strengthened our Direct Payment offer by improving information, guidance and support. Direct Payment Champions were introduced across Adult Social Care teams to increase awareness, share good practice and help people better understand the options available to them. Updated guidance and improved online information, including Easy Read resources, have also made Direct Payments easier to access and understand.

We also developed plans for a new Personal Assistant recruitment platform, helping people find and connect with suitably trained Personal Assistants. In addition, a new Direct Payment Support Service was commissioned to provide practical help for people managing their Direct Payments and making the most of self-directed support.

We will continue to use feedback and learning from these developments to strengthen self-directed support and increase opportunities for people to exercise greater choice and control over their care and support.

What does this mean for you?

You should have greater choice and control over how your care and support needs are met. We are working to make it easier for people to understand Direct Payments, access practical support and make decisions about the care that best meets their individual needs.

Providing support: community support and voluntary sector partnerships

At a glance

- Community Hub and Helpline continued supporting local residents.
- Strong partnerships with voluntary and community organisations were maintained.
- Support was provided for housing, finances, wellbeing and social isolation

Community organisations play an important role in helping people access information, advice and support before their needs become more complex. During 2025/26, we continued to strengthen our partnerships with Torbay's voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector, helping more people access support within their local communities.

A key part of this offer is the Community Hub and Community Helpline, based at Paignton Library. The service provides information, advice, signposting and face-to-face support for people experiencing challenges such as financial hardship, housing concerns, poor mental health, long-

term health conditions and digital exclusion. Many issues can be resolved through early advice and intervention, helping people access the right support sooner.

Working alongside local partners, the Community Hub connects people to a range of services, including social prescribing, carers support, counselling, recovery services, diabetes screening and falls prevention programmes. This support helps people remain independent, reduce social isolation and improve their wellbeing, while reducing pressure on health and care services.

As demand continues to grow, community-based support remains an important part of our approach to prevention and early intervention. We will continue to work with community partners to strengthen local support networks and ensure help is available as close to home as possible.

What does this mean for you?

Community support can help people get advice, information and practical help before problems become crises. By working closely with local organisations, we are helping people access support earlier, remain independent and stay connected to their communities.

Reablement: promoting independence

At a glance

- Reablement services expanded during the year.
- More people were supported to regain skills and confidence after illness or injury.
- Community-based reablement capacity increased

People told us they wanted support to regain their skills, confidence and independence following illness, injury or a period of declining health. Reablement services work alongside people to help them achieve their goals and do as much as possible for themselves, reducing or delaying the need for ongoing care and support.

Building on the success of an initial pilot, we expanded our reablement offer during 2025/26 by working with local care providers to develop a new Community Reablement service. This has increased choice and helped make reablement support available to more people across Torbay.

Early evidence suggests that more people are being supported to remain independent, recover more quickly and make greater use of community-based support. Reablement continues to play an important role in helping people stay active, confident and connected to their communities.

What does this mean for you?

Reablement provides short-term support to help people regain confidence, skills and independence after illness or injury. By expanding these services across Torbay, more people can access support to remain independent and recover well at home.

Technology enabled care (TEC)

At a glance

- More than 1,600 people received technology-enabled support.
- New technology and digital systems were introduced.
- Services continued during a significant provider transition.

Technology Enabled Care helps people to remain safe, independent and connected while living in their own homes. During 2025/26, the service underwent a significant transition following the liquidation of the previous provider. Working with national partners, a new provider was appointed, ensuring continuity of support for the 1,632 people who relied on the service.

Throughout the year, work focused on stabilising the service, introducing new digital technology and improving the way people access support. This included a new ordering system, a dedicated Alarm Receiving Centre and improvements to referral processes. These developments helped maintain confidence in the service and supported plans to move towards a fully digital service by the end of 2026.

Community engagement and impact

During 2025/26, Technology Enabled Care Services increased engagement with residents, carers and professionals through community events, carers' groups, workshops and rehabilitation services. These activities provided opportunities for people to learn about the range of technology available to support independence, safety and wellbeing.

The team worked with local partners to showcase how technology can help reduce risks, support recovery and provide reassurance for individuals and their families. Demonstrations were delivered at community events, carers' groups and rehabilitation settings, helping to increase awareness of Technology Enabled Care and the support available across Torbay.

Feedback from residents, carers and professionals was positive, with many highlighting the practical benefits of seeing technology in action and understanding how it could support people to remain independent at home. This engagement has helped build confidence in technology-enabled support and created further opportunities to promote the service across local communities.

Mr W – Improving Safety and Confidence at Home

Mr W relied on his telecare service for reassurance and emergency support but was experiencing difficulties communicating with the monitoring centre from parts of his home. Following an assessment, the team installed upgraded telecare equipment in a more suitable location, ensuring reliable communication throughout the property. This improved confidence in the service and enabled Mr W to continue living safely and independently at home, knowing support could be reached when needed.

Supporting a Person at Risk of Wandering

An 82-year-old resident was found wandering outside their property in the early hours of the morning, creating concern for family members and increasing the risk of harm. Following

assessment, Technology Enabled Care specialists recommended a combination of reminder technology and a GPS device with geofencing capability. This provided reassurance to family members, reduced the risk of future incidents and helped the person remain safely at home, avoiding the need for more intensive support.

Technology continues to play an important role in helping people remain independent, supporting recovery, reducing risks and enabling people to stay safely at home for longer.

What does this mean for you?

Technology such as alarms, sensors, GPS devices and reminder systems can help people remain safe, independent and confident in their own homes. We are continuing to expand and improve these services so that more people can access personalised support that helps them live independently for longer.

Housing and independence

At a glance

- Planning permission was approved for a 92-apartment Extra Care Housing Scheme in Paignton.
- New supported living opportunities became available, expanding local housing and support options.
- A Specialist Housing Needs Assessment was completed to identify future housing and support needs in Torbay.

Having the right home is one of the most important factors in maintaining independence. Our approach focuses on creating housing options that help people remain part of their communities, reduce reliance on residential care and provide greater choice and control over where and how they live.

During 2025/26, we continued to work with housing, health and care partners to improve the range of support available to adults across Torbay. This included expanding supported living, extra care housing and community-based support to help people remain independent and live well at home for longer.

Significant progress was made in developing new housing options. Planning permission was secured for a new 92-apartment Extra Care Housing Scheme in Paignton, while new specialist accommodation opened for adults with learning disabilities and further supported housing developments progressed during the year. These developments will provide more opportunities for people to live independently while receiving the support they need.

A key milestone was the publication of the Specialist Housing Needs Assessment, helping us better understand current and future demand for specialist housing across Torbay. This will inform future investment and support our ambition to increase housing choice and independence for local people. The full Assessment report can be found here: [Torbay Housing Needs Assessment 2025 - 2030 - Torbay Council](#)

What does this mean for you?

Having the right home can help people stay independent, maintain community connections and live well for longer. We are working to increase housing choices across Torbay so that more people can access the support they need in the place they call home

Hospital discharge and home first

At a glance

- Hospital discharge pathways were reviewed and improved.
- Reablement services supported recovery at home.
- Community-based support continued to expand.

People generally recover better at home, surrounded by family, friends and familiar surroundings. Our Home First approach focuses on supporting people to leave hospital as soon as they no longer need acute care, with the right support in place to maximise independence and recovery.

During 2025/26, we reviewed hospital discharge pathways to better understand the causes of discharge delays and identify opportunities to improve outcomes. We continued to strengthen our integrated health and social care approach, ensuring people receive timely, strengths-based assessments and access to the right support at the right time.

Where appropriate, people are supported through reablement services to regain skills, confidence and independence before longer-term care is considered. When reablement is not sufficient to meet a person's needs, social care teams work closely with individuals, families and carers to assess longer-term support options and ensure care arrangements are proportionate and least restrictive.

A key focus has been ensuring there is sufficient community-based support available to help people return home safely, including home care, reablement, technology-enabled care and support from families, carers and voluntary sector partners. Through multidisciplinary working, we have strengthened decision-making, promoted independence and reduced reliance on more intensive forms of care wherever possible.

We have also taken steps to strengthen practice by reinforcing Home First principles, improving the use of Technology Enabled Care and enhancing approaches to mental capacity assessments.

While progress has been made, challenges remain. Rising demand, increasing complexity of need and pressures within the care market continue to affect the pace at which people can return home. Supporting a sustainable community care market and expanding reablement capacity will remain key priorities in the year ahead.

Jack sears rehabilitation unit

Jack Sears Rehabilitation Unit is a 29-bed rehabilitation service in Paignton that helps people recover following illness, injury or a decline in their health. The service supports people to regain confidence, rebuild everyday skills and maximise their independence so they can return home safely wherever possible.

People may be admitted from hospital or directly from the community, often following falls, fractures, infections or a loss of mobility. A multidisciplinary team works alongside each person to set rehabilitation goals and support their recovery journey.

Since opening in June 2024, the unit has supported 434 people. Most admissions have come directly from hospital, and nearly three-quarters of people have been able to return to their own home following rehabilitation. The average length of stay is 25 days.

The service continues to evolve, with increased therapy input, regular exercise groups and plans to introduce cognitive activity groups to further support recovery and independence.



Patient stories

Every rehabilitation journey is different. The stories below demonstrate how personalised rehabilitation and support can help people regain confidence, rebuild independence and return to living well at home.

MR M'S STORY

JACK SEARS



MY ADMISSION

1.

I was referred to Jack Sears Rehabilitation Unit from my own home after a fall left me unable to stand up from the sofa without assistance. I needed support from two carers to help me move around safely. When the Intermediate Care Therapy Team visited me, they suggested that a short stay at Jack Sears could help me regain my strength and independence. The aim was to help me recover safely at home and reduce the risk of needing to go into hospital if I fell again.

MY REHAB JOURNEY

2.

During my three-week stay at Jack Sears, I worked closely with the therapy team every day. This included attending exercise groups and using the gym facilities, where I practised walking with support from the parallel bars. Over time, I became stronger and more confident in my mobility. The regular therapy sessions, encouragement from staff and support from my family all helped me make progress towards my goals. While I was at Jack Sears, my family also made some changes at home, creating more space and making the environment safer for me when I returned.

RETURNING HOME

3.

By the time I was ready to leave Jack Sears, my mobility had improved significantly, and I felt much more confident. I was able to return home with support from one carer three times a day. The support did not end when I left the unit. Community teams continued to visit me for two weeks after my discharge to help me maintain the progress I had made and continue my rehabilitation plan. An Occupational Therapist also arranged for a level-access shower to be installed, helping me remain safe and independent at home.

THE DIFFERENCE IT MADE

4.

"My stay in Jack Sears was excellent in all areas. I felt confident and ready to return home, and I am very grateful for all the help and support I received."



MISS T'S STORY

JACK SEARS

MY ADMISSION

1.

I was admitted to hospital after experiencing a seizure at home, during which I unfortunately broke my arm. Living alone, I felt very anxious about returning home because of the seizure and the difficulties I was experiencing with my injured arm.

I was referred to Jack Sears Rehabilitation Unit to help me regain my confidence, improve my independence and prepare for a safe return home.

MY REHAB JOURNEY

2.

When I arrived at Jack Sears, the therapy team took time to understand what was important to me and what I wanted to achieve. My goals were to walk independently again using a stick and to be able to get in and out of bed without assistance, which had become challenging because of my broken arm.

The team worked closely with me throughout my stay. They liaised with my GP to review my pain medication, which helped me manage my injury more comfortably. They also recognised that I was struggling to eat and made sure I had soft foods that I enjoyed and could manage easily.

Following the seizure, I had lost confidence and was worried about it happening again. To help me feel safer at home, the Occupational Therapist arranged for a falls sensor that would alert someone if I needed help. A key safe was also installed to ensure emergency services could access my property if required. Knowing these measures were in place helped me feel reassured and more confident about returning home.

RETURNING HOME

3.

When I was ready to leave Jack Sears, I returned home with a care package to support me while my arm continued to heal. The therapy team accompanied me home to help me settle back into my environment and show me how to use the equipment that had been provided.

I continue to receive support from a physiotherapist, and my arm is healing well. Most importantly, my confidence has grown and I feel safe and supported living at home again.

THE DIFFERENCE IT MADE

4.

"The support I received helped me regain my confidence and feel safe returning home. Knowing that help was available if I needed it gave me reassurance and allowed me to focus on my recovery."

What people told us

Jack Sears Rehabilitation Centre celebrated its first anniversary in June 2025. In the video below, former patient Sabine Bueker and her daughter Gesche Bueker share their experience of the service and the difference rehabilitation made to Sabine's recovery journey.

Watch: [Jack Sears Anniversary](#)

The infographic below highlights feedback from people who have used the service and their families. Their experiences help us understand what is working well and where we can continue to improve.

Jack Sears – Patient Feedback

"thanks to all my helpers, you're heroes"

"A huge thank you to absolutely everyone at Jack Sears House for your kindness, support and help in getting Viv back on his feet. You made the whole family feel welcome and went the extra mile to make V's stay and recovery such a positive experience"

"You are all friendly, smiley, wonderful bunch of people and we were happy to be part of your family for the short while"

"I felt I must write and say a very sincere thank you for the care given to me during my recent stay with you. I entered Jack Sears feeling very lost and upset but left having recovered a lot of strength after two weeks. I had no idea what I would be offered and after a period of settling in I made many friends, and I am sure you contributed to my new sense of wellbeing"

"Thank you all so much for looking after me with such loving care during my stay with you, always with a smile on your faces which meant a lot to me. You all deserve a medal"

"I thank each and every one of you for all the love, care and attention you gave me. I will always remember you all. I have told all my friends how wonderful you are"

"It is like a 7-star hotel here and I have been treated like royalty"
"I'm going to miss you all; it's been like my own home to me"

"Staff marvelous, privacy and dignity always excellent, shows lots of respect, couldn't have gone to a better place, never been in such a loving and happy atmosphere, meals are super, so lucky to have come here"

"Such an amazing place and anybody who comes here are very lucky"

"This place is better than a 5-star hotel"

"A big thank you for looking after T so well! You were all so friendly, kind, thoughtful and caring. You worked so hard at getting T back on his feet again and well enough to come home, which we are so grateful for. Thank you each one of you for all you have done"

"I would like to thank you for the amazing care that you have given my mum. You are a wonderful skillful and caring team and my mums progress during her time with you has been amazing. With huge respect and gratitude."

"The carers and people that work here are the loveliest you will find"

"Thank you so much for how well you looked after D for us. You've been nothing short of inspiring. Knowing he was being looked after in such a caring and professional manner made the whole ordeal much more bearable"

"To all you amazing people! Thank you all so much for your kindness and loving care. I will miss all of you so much"

"I literally don't have a single bad thing to say and that's not like me".

"My stay was wonderful; I couldn't have asked for more and I will always remember each and every one of you"

"I could live here; you have the most amazing staff"

"This place is an amazing place; I've never been anywhere quite like it and I've been to a lot of places. Everyone here is lovely"

Feedback consistently highlights the positive impact of rehabilitation, the kindness of staff and the support people receive to help them regain confidence and return home.

What does this mean for you?

Most people recover better at home. If you experience illness, injury, or a loss of independence, rehabilitation can help you regain confidence, rebuild everyday skills, and return home safely. Our

aim is to support people to leave hospital as soon as it is safe to do so and receive the care and rehabilitation, they need to remain independent and live well in their own communities. Through services such as the Jack Sears Rehabilitation Unit, we help people regain confidence, restore independence, and achieve the best possible recovery closer to home.

Keeping people safe

At a glance

- More than 1,100 concerns were raised about potential abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Risks were reduced or removed in almost 88% of safeguarding enquiries.
- 97% of people achieved all or some of the safeguarding outcomes that mattered to them.

Supporting people to stay safe

Everyone has the right to feel safe and be treated with dignity and respect. Safeguarding is about protecting adults who may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation while supporting them to remain independent and in control of their lives.

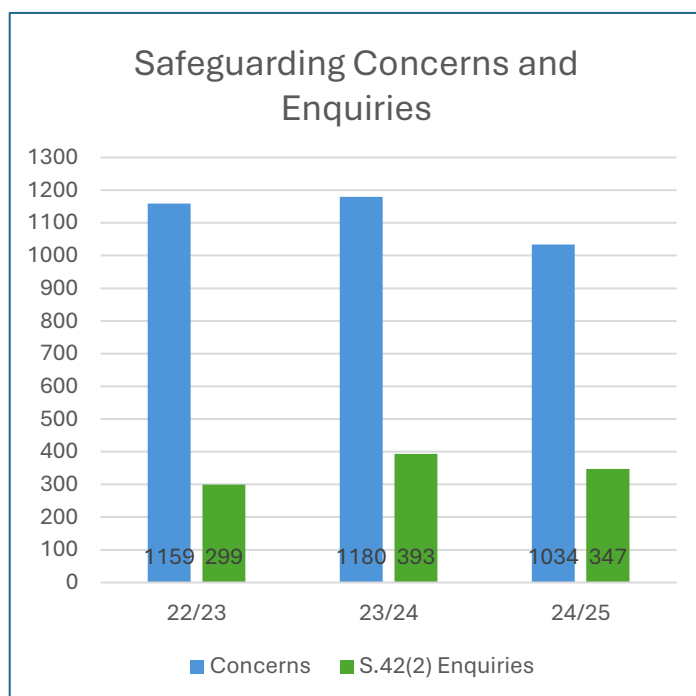
Our approach is guided by the Care Act 2014 and the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal [Making Safeguarding Personal | Local Government Association](#), ensuring people are listened to, involved in decisions and supported to achieve the outcomes that matter to them.

During the year, we worked closely with health services, the police, care providers and community organisations to identify risks, respond to concerns and help people stay safe.

We received 1,137 safeguarding concerns during 2025/26. A safeguarding concern is raised when someone believes an adult may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Where concerns suggest a person has care and support needs and may be experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, we may carry out a Section 42 enquiry. This is a formal safeguarding enquiry under the Care Act 2014, designed to understand what has happened, assess risks and agree what action is needed to help keep the person safe.

The chart shows safeguarding activity over the last three years. While the number of concerns raised has varied, the number of Section 42 enquiries has increased significantly compared with previous years. This suggests that concerns are being identified and assessed more effectively, ensuring people receive the right level of safeguarding support when they need it.



During 2025/26, 504 Section 42 enquiries were started and 513 completed, the highest number recorded in recent years.

Making a difference

Safeguarding is about more than responding to concerns. It is about helping people stay safe, maintain their independence and have greater control over decisions affecting their lives. During the year, people were supported to identify what mattered most to them, take part in safeguarding decisions and access the help they needed. Independent advocacy services also helped ensure people's wishes and views were heard, particularly when they faced complex decisions about their care and support.

Helping people have their voice heard

Some people need extra support to understand their rights, make decisions or express their wishes. Independent advocacy plays an important role in ensuring that people's views remain at the centre of decision-making.

During the year:

- More than 2,000 referrals were made to advocacy services.
- Demand increased by 20% across the year.
- All referrals were responded to within agreed timescales.

Advocates supported people through safeguarding processes, care planning and important decisions about their health and wellbeing, helping to protect their rights and interests.

They also supported people who were subject to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). DoLS are legal protections for people who lack the mental capacity to make certain decisions about their care and are receiving care in a hospital or care home where restrictions are in place to keep them safe. These safeguards help ensure that any restrictions are necessary, proportionate and in the person's best interests, while protecting their rights and access to independent support.

Demand for advocacy and support relating to mental capacity and DoLS continued to grow throughout the year, reflecting increasing awareness of people's rights and the importance of ensuring vulnerable adults have a voice in decisions affecting their lives.

Learning and improving

We continue to learn from people's experiences and from safeguarding reviews when things have gone wrong. During the year we strengthened our approach to supporting people experiencing self-neglect, improved partnership working and invested in staff training to help professionals respond effectively to complex situations.

Looking ahead

Over the next year we will continue to:

- Improve how we support people experiencing complex risks and self-neglect.
- Strengthen protection for people who may struggle to make important decisions.
- Increase public awareness of safeguarding.

- Listen to the experiences of people who use services and their carers.
- Work closely with partners to keep people safe and well.

Our ambition is that every adult in Torbay can live safely, independently and with dignity, supported by services that put their rights, wishes and wellbeing at the heart of everything they do.

What does this mean for you?

If concerns are raised about your wellbeing, we will work with you, and those important to you, to understand what matters most and take action to reduce risks where needed.

We want people to be listened to, involved in decisions about their lives, and supported to achieve the outcomes that are important to them. If you need additional support to understand your rights or express your views, independent advocacy can help ensure your voice is heard.

By working closely with health services, care providers, community organisations and families, we aim to help people stay safe, maintain their independence and remain in control of decisions about their care and support.

Learning and improvement

At a glance

- 63 quality assurance audits were completed to review the quality of Adult Social Care practice and support.
- The audits identified areas for improvement in assessments and record keeping, helping to ensure people receive consistent, high-quality support.
- New improvement priorities have been developed from the audit findings to strengthen services and improve people's experiences.

We are committed to continuously improving the support we provide. We do this by reviewing our work, listening to feedback and learning from what works well and where we can do better.

During 2025/26, we carried out 63 case audits, compared with 51 the previous year. An audit is a detailed review of how we have supported a person, helping us check that decisions are being made appropriately, records are accurate and people are receiving the support they need.

These reviews looked at assessments, decision-making, safeguarding, record keeping and how professionals worked together. This helps us identify good practice and areas where improvements are needed.

The reviews found improvements in assessments and recording, helping practitioners better understand people's strengths, wishes and goals. We also introduced a new review programme for Direct Payments to strengthen oversight and support continuous improvement.

The audits also highlighted areas where we can do better, particularly in recognising and supporting unpaid carers, completing carers' assessments and recording risks consistently. These findings are helping to shape staff training and service improvement plans for the coming year.

Looking ahead

We will continue to strengthen the quality of our services by improving professional practice, enhancing supervision and training, involving people who use services in our reviews, and introducing a new care management system to improve the quality and consistency of records.

Learning from audits, feedback and people's experiences will continue to help us improve services and achieve better outcomes for local people.

What does this mean for you?

We regularly review how we work to make sure people receive high-quality support. We learn from feedback, look at what is working well and identify where improvements are needed. This helps us improve services, make better decisions and ensure support is focused on what matters most to the people who use it.

Leadership and workforce

At a glance

- Professional leadership roles were strengthened, helping ensure services are guided by best practice and professional expertise.
- Continued investment in staff training and development, supporting staff to provide high-quality care and support.
- New practice and supervision frameworks were developed, helping staff deliver consistent, person-centred support and continue developing their skills.
- Increased opportunities for staff engagement and learning, helping shape service improvements and share good practice across teams.

Our staff are at the heart of Adult Social Care. Every day, they demonstrate compassion, professionalism and commitment while supporting people with increasingly complex needs.

During 2025/26, we continued to invest in our workforce to ensure people receive high-quality care and support. This included strengthening professional leadership, expanding learning and development opportunities, and improving the support available to staff.

Key developments included:

- Re-establishing the Principal Social Worker role to provide professional leadership and help ensure high-quality social work practice.
- Appointing a new Education and Training Lead to strengthen staff learning and development.
- Expanding training and development opportunities for staff, helping them build the skills and knowledge needed to support people effectively.
- Developing new practice standards and supervision arrangements to provide clearer guidance, encourage reflective practice and support staff wellbeing.
- Creating more opportunities for staff to share feedback and shape service improvements, ensuring their experience helps inform how services develop.

Staff have continued to work through a period of significant organisational change while maintaining a strong focus on supporting local people. Their resilience, dedication and commitment have been central to delivering services throughout the year.

Looking ahead

During 2026/27, we will continue to invest in our workforce by introducing a new care management system, expanding learning and development opportunities, strengthening professional supervision and developing clear career pathways.

We will also continue to support staff through organisational change, ensuring they feel informed, valued and equipped to provide the best possible support to local people.

Our aim is to create an environment where staff can thrive, develop their skills and continue delivering high-quality care and support across Torbay.

What does this mean for you?

The quality of services depends on having skilled, knowledgeable and well-supported staff. By investing in training, professional development and staff wellbeing, we are helping to ensure that people receive consistent, high-quality support from professionals who have the skills, experience and confidence to help them achieve what matters most and live as independently as possible.

Quality, assurance and professional practice

Strong leadership and regular reviews help ensure people receive safe, effective and person-centred support.

During 2025/26, we continued to strengthen our approach to quality, learning and improvement across Adult Social Care. Through quality assurance activity, professional leadership and ongoing practice development, we have improved our understanding of what is working well and where further improvements are needed.

Throughout the year, we strengthened professional leadership across Adult Social Care. Social workers and occupational therapists worked alongside health services, housing providers, voluntary organisations and local communities to help people remain independent, achieve their goals and live well.

We also invested in professional development, quality assurance and practice improvement to ensure staff have the skills, support and guidance needed to provide consistent, high-quality care and support.

Learning from audits, feedback and professional oversight has helped identify both areas of good practice and opportunities for improvement. This learning is shaping future priorities and helping us continue to improve services and outcomes for local people.

Principal Social Worker update

Role of the Principal Social Worker

The Principal Social Worker provides professional leadership for social work practice across Adult Social Care. The role helps ensure people receive safe, effective and person-centred support by promoting high professional standards, supporting workforce development and championing good social work practice.

The Principal Social Worker plays an important role in helping staff learn and develop, promoting continuous improvement and ensuring people's strengths, wishes and goals remain at the heart of decision-making.

During 2025/26, Torbay Council strengthened its commitment to high-quality social work through the re-establishment of the Principal Social Worker role.

Key areas of focus included:

- Strengthening professional leadership and support for social workers.
- Increasing oversight of practice quality and professional standards.
- Supporting learning and development across the workforce.
- Working closely with the Principal Occupational Therapist and partners across health and care services to promote joined-up, person-centred support.
- Contributing to quality assurance and improvement activity to help identify good practice and opportunities for learning.

Looking ahead

During 2026/27, the Principal Social Worker will continue to support professional development, strengthen practice standards and promote a culture of learning and continuous improvement across Adult Social Care.

Working alongside the Principal Occupational Therapist and colleagues across the organisation, the focus will remain on ensuring people receive high-quality support that promotes independence, wellbeing and positive outcomes.

Principal Occupational Therapist update

Role of the Principal Occupational Therapist

The Principal Occupational Therapist provides professional leadership for occupational therapy practice across Adult Social Care. The role helps ensure people receive high-quality, person-centred support by promoting good practice, supporting workforce development and strengthening professional standards.

Occupational Therapists play a key role in helping people remain independent, safe and well in their own homes and communities. They work alongside people, families and partner organisations to identify practical solutions that help individuals carry out everyday activities, maintain their wellbeing and achieve the outcomes that matter most to them.

During 2025/26, the Occupational Therapy service continued to support the development of the future workforce through student placements and rotational opportunities for newly qualified Occupational Therapists.

Key areas of focus included:

- Supporting the development of future Occupational Therapists through student placements.
- Providing rotational opportunities for newly qualified Occupational Therapists to build skills and experience across different services.
- Promoting high-quality occupational therapy practice across Adult Social Care.
- Working collaboratively with social workers, health services, housing providers and community partners to support people's independence and wellbeing.

Looking ahead

During 2026/27, the Principal Occupational Therapist will continue to strengthen professional practice, support workforce development and promote high-quality occupational therapy services across Adult Social Care.

Working alongside the Principal Social Worker, a key focus will be the development of new Practice Standards, a Practice Framework and career development pathways to support staff progression and help ensure people receive consistent, person-centred support that promotes independence and wellbeing.

Adult social care practice

Adult Social Care in Torbay is guided by a vision of supporting people to live healthy, independent and fulfilling lives. Our practice is underpinned by key legislation, including the Care Act 2014, Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Mental Health Act 1983, promoting wellbeing, safeguarding, choice, control and the protection of people's rights. Our workforce works alongside people, families and communities using strengths-based approaches to promote independence, reduce risk and achieve positive outcomes.

Professional practice and standards

Maintaining high professional standards is essential to ensuring people receive safe, effective and person-centred support.

During 2025/26, we continued to strengthen how we review, support and improve practice across Adult Social Care. This included reviewing policies, procedures and guidance, strengthening quality assurance arrangements and identifying opportunities to improve services and outcomes for local people.

We are also developing new Practice Standards and a Practice Framework to provide staff with clear guidance, support learning and development, and promote consistent, high-quality practice across Adult Social Care.

While there are many areas of good practice, we recognise the need to continue learning and improving. As people's needs become more complex and services continue to evolve, our focus

remains on supporting staff, strengthening practice and ensuring people remain at the centre of everything we do.

What does this mean for you?

We want everyone who uses Adult Social Care services to receive safe, high-quality support that is tailored to their individual needs and goals. Strong professional leadership, regular reviews of practice and ongoing staff development help us ensure services are consistent, effective and focused on what matters most to the people who use them.

By learning from feedback, reviewing how we work and supporting our workforce to continually develop their skills, we can identify opportunities for improvement and make positive changes. This helps ensure people receive the right support at the right time, while protecting their rights, promoting independence and improving outcomes.

Our CQC assessment

At a glance

- Torbay Adult Social Care was rated Good by the Care Quality Commission.
- More than 200 people contributed to the assessment process.
- A detailed improvement plan has been developed following the assessment.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and social care services in England. It assesses how well local authorities meet their responsibilities under the Care Act 2014 and whether people are receiving high-quality support.

The CQC assessment is broken down into four themes with nine sub sections.

Theme 1: Working with people	Theme 2: Providing support	Theme 3: Ensuring safety	Theme 4: Leadership
• Assessing needs • Supporting people to live healthier lives • Equity in experiences and outcomes	• Care provision, integration and continuity • Partnerships and communities	• Safe systems, pathways and transitions • Safeguarding	• Governance, management and sustainability • Learning, improvement and innovation

During 2025, Torbay Adult Social Care underwent its first full CQC assessment. As part of the process, we submitted evidence about how services are delivered and inspectors met with a wide range of people, including people who use services, unpaid carers, staff, managers, councillors and partner organisations.

More than 200 people shared their views and experiences to help inspectors understand how Adult Social Care services are working in Torbay.

The assessment report was published in December 2025, with Torbay Adult Social Care receiving an overall rating of 'Good'. The full report can be read here: [Torbay Council: local authority assessment - Care Quality Commission](#)

The assessment recognised many areas of good practice and highlighted the commitment of staff and partners to supporting local people. It also identified opportunities for further improvement, helping us to better understand where we can strengthen services and improve outcomes.

Following the assessment, a detailed improvement plan was developed and agreed. Progress is being regularly reviewed to ensure improvements are delivered and services continue to develop.



What does this mean for you?

The CQC's independent assessment provides reassurance that Adult Social Care services in Torbay are performing well. It also helps us identify where we can improve, so that people continue to receive safe, effective and person-centred support that promotes independence, wellbeing and positive outcomes.

How we spend our money

At a glance

- Torbay Council contributed £68.2 million towards Adult Social Care services during 2025/26.
- Total spending on care and support services exceeded £110 million.
- More than 2,800 adults received support during the year.

Funding adult social care

Adult Social Care helps people stay safe, independent and connected to their communities. Services support people with a wide range of needs, including learning disabilities, mental health needs, dementia, sensory impairments, physical disabilities and frailty.

On 01 October 2015, an Integrated Care Organisation (ICO) was formed with the remit was to provide adult social care on behalf of the population of Torbay. From a financial perspective the council's role as a commissioning body is to provide a funding contribution to the overall running costs of the ICO.

During 2025/26, Torbay Council contributed £68.2 million towards Adult Social Care services. This funding included:

Funding Source	£m
Core Contract – Funding for day-to-day Adult Social Care services and support.	£59.050
Market Sustainability Funding – Funding to help local care providers remain sustainable.	£3.625
Social Care Grant – Government funding to support Adult Social Care services.	£3.425
Delayed Discharge Grant – Funding to help people leave hospital safely and return home sooner.	£2.065
Total Council Contribution	£68.165

This funding helps pay for experienced professionals such as social workers, occupational therapists and care staff, as well as the care and support services people rely on every day.

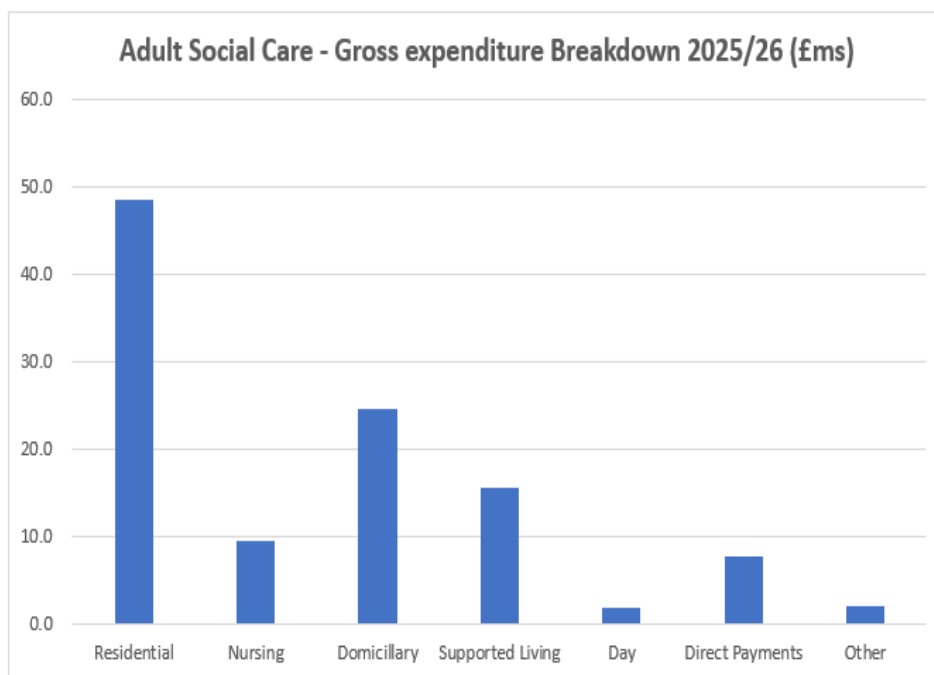
In addition to the net expenditure on the cost of care, the Trust incurs approximately £13.2million in operational and overhead costs to administer the adult social care process. Including these costs provides a more complete and transparent representation of the total resources required to deliver and support adult social care services.

How the money is spent

The largest proportion of Adult Social Care spending is used to purchase care and support from independent providers. This includes:

- **Residential care homes:** Accommodation and 24-hour support for people who can no longer live independently at home.
- **Nursing care:** Residential care that also includes support from qualified nursing staff.
- **Domiciliary care (home care):** Personal care and support provided in a person's own home to help with everyday activities.
- **Supported living:** Support that enables people, often those with learning disabilities or complex needs, to live as independently as possible in their own home.
- **Day services:** Community-based activities and support that help people maintain independence, wellbeing and social connections.
- **Direct Payments:** Funding paid directly to eligible individuals so they can arrange and manage their own care and support.
- **Other:** A range of specialist services and support that do not fall within the categories above.

The chart below shows how this funding was distributed across different types of care and support.



Most care is provided by organisations based within Torbay, although some specialist services are purchased outside the area when required.

During 2025/26:

- The net cost of care was £87.1 million.
- People contributed £22.9 million towards the cost of their care following financial assessments.
- Total gross expenditure on Adult Social Care services was £110.1 million.

The largest areas of spending were residential care; care provided in people's own homes and supported living services. These services help people remain safe; receive the support they need and maintain as much independence as possible.

Rising demand and increasing complexity

At some point during 2025/26, more than 2,800 adults received support from Adult Social Care services.

Demand continues to grow as more people require support and people's needs become increasingly complex. This means some individuals need more specialised care, longer-term support or a combination of services to help them live safely and independently.

The NHS also continued to experience significant pressures during the year. This increased demand for services that help people leave hospital safely, regain independence and avoid unnecessary admissions. Close partnership working between health and social care services has been essential in supporting people at the right time and in the right place.

At the same time, the cost of providing care has continued to increase. Care providers face rising employment and operational costs, making it more expensive to deliver services. National funding has helped support fee increases for residential, nursing and home care providers to ensure services remain sustainable and continue to meet local need.

Financial outlook for 2026/27 and beyond

The agreed funding contribution for Adult Social Care during 2026/27 is:

Funding Source	£m
Core Contract	£61.600
Other Agreed Funding	£9.115
Total Council Contribution	£70.715

Looking ahead, Adult Social Care services will return to Torbay Council from 1 April 2027. Planning is already underway with Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust to ensure a safe and smooth transition for people who use services, carers, staff and partners.

This transition provides an opportunity to build on the strengths of integrated working while strengthening local leadership, accountability and service development. Throughout this period, our focus remains on using resources effectively and ensuring people continue to receive high-quality care and support.

What does this mean for you?

The money invested in Adult Social Care helps fund the services and support that many people rely on every day, from care at home and supported living to residential care and hospital discharge support. We are committed to making the best use of public funding to ensure people receive the right support at the right time, helping them stay safe, independent and connected to their communities.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who contributes to Adult Social Care in Torbay, including people who draw on support, unpaid carers, staff, providers, volunteers, community groups and partner organisations.

Together, we are committed to building thriving communities where people can prosper, by supporting residents to live well, remain independent and achieve the outcomes that matter to them.

Statement from Healthwatch for Torbay ASC Quality Account 2026:

Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay welcomes the opportunity to comment on Torbay's Adult Social Care Local Account Summary for 2025/26.

We recognise the significant pressures facing Adult Social Care in Torbay, including rising demand, increasing complexity of need, workforce challenges and financial pressures. These pressures are particularly important in Torbay, where the population is ageing and health inequalities continue to affect people's ability to live healthy, independent lives.

It is positive to see Torbay's first Care Quality Commission assessment result in a Good rating under the new assurance framework. This reflects the commitment of staff, carers, community organisations and local partners. We also note the honest focus in the Local Account on areas needing further improvement, including support for carers, access to information and advice, Direct Payments, workforce recruitment and retention, housing options, mental health demand and safeguarding outcomes.

The end of the current Section 75 agreement is a significant change for Torbay. We note that Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust gave notice at the end of March 2026, with Adult Social Care functions due to return to Torbay Council in April 2027. We are reassured by the stated commitment to ensuring continuity of support for people who draw on care and support, carers, staff and partners during this transition. Healthwatch will continue to listen carefully to people's experiences during this period, with a particular focus on continuity, clarity, accountability and ensuring joined-up care is maintained. We would encourage regular communication with residents, carers and staff throughout the transition period, alongside clear opportunities for feedback and co-production.

A key area of recent Healthwatch work in Torbay has been our insight report into reasonable adjustments. This highlighted that people with learning disabilities, autism, neurodivergence, mental health conditions, sensory needs and complex needs can face barriers when services are not flexible, personalised or easy to navigate. It is encouraging to see the Local Account recognise the role of Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Boards, accessible information, advocacy, transitions support and reasonable adjustments in shaping services and priorities. Particular attention should

continue to be given to reducing inequalities experienced by people with disabilities, mental health needs, sensory impairments and those living in areas of deprivation.

The continued focus on unpaid carers is important. Carers regularly tell Healthwatch that clear communication, timely information, breaks from caring and meaningful involvement in decision-making are essential. It is positive to see the Local Account recognise these themes and set out further work to strengthen replacement care, digital support, carer identification and access to advice before carers reach crisis point.

The emphasis on prevention, reablement, Technology Enabled Care, Home First and community-based support is also strongly aligned with what people tell us matters. These approaches are important in helping people remain independent, avoid unnecessary hospital admission and return home safely after a period of illness or crisis. Healthwatch was pleased to be involved, alongside Engaging Communities South West and Paignton Community Hub, in the Falls and Frailty Prevention event referenced in the Local Account, which helped showcase practical support and technology that can reduce risk and support independence.

Safeguarding, advocacy and Mental Capacity Act practice remain important areas of focus. We support the continued commitment to Making Safeguarding Personal, strengthening MCA and DoLS practice, embedding learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews and improving engagement with people who use services and carers.

Healthwatch values its ongoing relationship with Torbay Council, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust and wider system partners. As Adult Social Care enters a period of significant change, we look forward to continuing to act as a constructive critical friend, ensuring that the voices of people who draw on care and support, unpaid carers and local communities remain central to future planning, service change and improvement.

We encourage a continued focus on co-production, clear communication and meaningful engagement to ensure that future developments are shaped by those who use services and that improvements translate into better outcomes and experiences for Torbay residents.

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Report title: Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment for Complaint Handling

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 15 September 2026

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor Alan Tyerman, Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance

Email: alan.tyerman@torbay.gov.uk

Lead Director: David Carter, Director of Regeneration

Email: david.carter@torbay.gov.uk

Wards affected: All wards

1. Summary of Report:

- 1.1 The proposal in this report is to ensure that we achieve best practice in complaint handling and ultimately provide a better service to tenants.
- 1.2 The reasons for the proposal and the need for the Members to provide comments is to demonstrate to the Housing Ombudsman that we are operating our Complaints Handling in line with their Code.

2. Recommendations and Proposed Decision:

- 2.1 That as the Governing Body, the Cabinet approve the Housing Complaints Policy at Appendix 2 to the submitted report; and
- 2.2 That Cabinet note the Self-Assessment Report 2026 as set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Proposed Decision:

- 3.1 To ensure that Torbay Council achieves best practice in complaint handling and providing a better service to tenants, through the approval of the Housing Complaints Policy. This enables Torbay Council to demonstrate to the Housing Ombudsman that the handling of complaints is in line with the relevant code.

4. Background and Context:

- 4.1 From 1st April 2024 the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code became statutory. Landlords are obliged by law to follow its requirements. There will be a legal duty placed on the Ombudsman to monitor compliance with the Code.
- 4.2 This report seeks approval and comments from Cabinet Members regarding complaint handling for their social housing stock in line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

5. Alternative Options Considered:

Not applicable

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

Not applicable

7. Consultation and Engagement:

Not applicable

8. Implications:

Financial Implications:

None

Legal Implications:

None

Corporate Parenting/Children and Young People:

None

Associated Risks, Risk Tolerance Level and Mitigations:

This is a requirement by the Housing Ombudsman, failure to comply will result in Torbay Council being investigated. In turn this could lead to a reduction in Homes England grant funding to assist

us in building much needed homes for local people together with providing a poor service to our tenants.

Contributions to tackling climate change or achieving carbon neutrality:

Not applicable

Social Value Considerations:

Not applicable

Procurement Implications:

Not applicable

Other Implications:

Not applicable

9. Equalities Impact Assessment:

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 90	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.	Younger people are more likely to have access to the internet and therefore engage with Council services via the internet. Older people (especially those over the age of 70) are more likely to face barriers to accessing the internet and thus may find it more difficult to access Council services online.	The complaints process will be accessible through a range of channels including telephone, online, email, written correspondence and representation by a third party. Staff will take a flexible approach to contact arrangements to meet tenants needs	Regeneration Adult Services Children's Services
Carers	- 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.	Carers may experience time pressures, stress and competing responsibilities which can make it more difficult to engage with formal complaints processes.	The complaints process will be accessible through a range of channels including telephone, online, email, written correspondence and representation by a third party. Staff will take a flexible approach to	Regeneration Ongoing

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
			contact arrangements where caring responsibilities affect a resident's ability to engage.	
Care experienced	As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	Individuals who are care experienced are more likely to have lower levels of education. They may experience a lack of confidence or barriers to accessing the complaints process. This can make it more difficult to engage with formal complaints processes.	The complaints process will be accessible through a range of channels including telephone, online, email, written correspondence and representation by a third party. Staff will take a flexible approach to contact arrangements to meet tenants needs.	Not Applicable
Disability	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	Some customers with disabilities including learning disabilities and/or difficulties, hearing or sight impairments or mental health issues face barriers in	The complaints process will be accessible through a range of channels including telephone, online, email, written correspondence	Regeneration Adult Services

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
Page 92	or mental health condition or illness.	accessing and understanding the Complaints Policy.	and representation by a third party. Staff will take a flexible approach to contact arrangements to meet tenants needs. Regularly monitor customers contact preferences and update the case management system to this effect. Ensure appointed Support Workers or appointed persons remain relevant/updated. We will ensure support is offered in a person centred way throughout their tenancy. Customers will be supported should they wish to raise a complaint. We will	Children's Services

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
Page 93			provide key information in easy read format. Ensure that Council staff are up to date with relevant mental health training. We will work with Support Workers or appointed persons on behalf of the complainant if applicable. This helps to ensure that the service is accessible to those with different needs. The service will make reasonable adjustments where required (such as letters in alternate formats or alternative methods of contact).	
Gender reassignment	In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same	Transgender residents may be less willing to raise concerns if they fear	The complaints process will be accessible through a range of channels including telephone, online, email,	Regeneration

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
	as their sex registered at birth.	discrimination, inappropriate language or breaches of confidentiality.	written correspondence and representation by a third party. Staff will take a flexible approach to contact arrangements to meet tenants needs	Ongoing
Marriage and civil partnership	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.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	
Pregnancy and maternity	- 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	Residents who are pregnant or caring for a newborn child may experience competing demands on their time and may find it more difficult to engage with a formal complaints process.	The complaints process will be accessible through a range of channels including telephone, online, email, written correspondence and representation by a third party. Staff will take a flexible approach to contact arrangements to meet tenants needs.	Regeneration Ongoing

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
	significantly below England (50.0).			
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: • 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh • 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African • 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.	Residents whose first language is not English may face barriers in understanding the Complaints Policy, complaint outcomes, timescales and escalation routes. Limited English proficiency could reduce confidence in using the complaints process or result in misunderstandings during investigations. There is a risk that these residents may be less likely to submit complaints or may experience poorer outcomes if appropriate communication support is not available. Some residents may be less willing to raise concerns if they fear discrimination, inappropriate language or breaches of confidentiality.	The complaints process will be accessible through a range of channels including telephone, online, email, written correspondence and representation by a third party. Staff will take a flexible approach to contact arrangements to meet tenants needs The Council will ensure any language barriers which could impact communication are noted on the case management software upon start of the tenancy. The housing management team should also ensure	Regeneration Ongoing

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
Page 96			relevant departments, are aware of any language barriers for the provision of invoicing/revenue collection. Global language interpretation and translation will be available where appropriate. Staff will be expected to treat all complainants with dignity and respect, maintain confidentiality and follow equality and inclusion policies throughout the complaint process.	
Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following; • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddhist	Some residents may have religious observances, festivals or practices which affect their availability to engage in elements of the complaints process. Residents may also have preferences regarding communication or meeting	The complaints process will be accessible through a range of channels including telephone, online, email, written correspondence and representation by a	Regeneration Ongoing

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
Page 97	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	arrangements linked to their faith or belief. Some residents may be less willing to raise concerns if they fear discrimination, inappropriate language or breaches of confidentiality.	third party. Staff will take a flexible approach to contact arrangements to meet tenants needs. Staff will be expected to treat all complainants with dignity and respect, maintain confidentiality and follow equality and inclusion policies throughout the complaint process.	
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female. 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Staff will be expected to treat all complainants with dignity and respect, maintain confidentiality and follow equality and inclusion policies throughout the complaint process	Regeneration Ongoing

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
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows; • 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	People from LGBT+ communities may be reluctant to engage with services if they have experienced discrimination previously.	Staff will be expected to treat all complainants with dignity and respect, maintain confidentiality and follow equality and inclusion policies throughout the complaint process.	Regeneration Ongoing
Armed Forces Community	• 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 served in the UK armed forces.	Veterans may experience physical or mental health conditions which affect how they access services and communicate with the Council.	The complaints process will be accessible through a range of channels including telephone, online, email, written correspondence and representation by a third party. Staff will take a flexible approach to contact arrangements to meet tenants needs.	Regeneration Armed Forces Lead Ongoing

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
			Staff will be expected to treat all complainants with dignity and respect, maintain confidentiality and follow equality and inclusion policies throughout the complaint process.	
<i>Additional considerations:</i>				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	Residents experiencing deprivation, financial hardship, digital exclusion or low literacy may face additional barriers in accessing online services and navigating formal complaints procedures.	The complaints process will be accessible through a range of channels including telephone, online, email, written correspondence and representation by a third party. Staff will take a flexible approach to contact arrangements to meet tenants needs.	Regeneration Ongoing

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
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	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.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	
Human Rights impacts		The complaints process supports the Council's obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 by ensuring tenants have access to a fair, transparent and accountable mechanism to raise concerns about housing services. Effective complaint handling can help safeguard rights relating to respect for private and family life, personal dignity, home and correspondence, and protection from discriminatory treatment. There is a risk that residents who face communication, language, literacy, financial or other vulnerabilities may be	The complaints process will be accessible through a range of channels including telephone, online, email, written correspondence and representation by a third party. Staff will take a flexible approach to contact arrangements to meet tenants needs.	Regeneration Ongoing

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
		disadvantaged if the process is not accessible.		
Child Friendly		There is no differential impact anticipated. A robust complaints process will complement the Council's approach to ensuring that children in Torbay have healthy and happy homes.	Not Applicable	Regeneration Children's services Ongoing

10. Cumulative Council Impact:

None

11. Cumulative Community Impact:

None

12. Monitoring and Evaluation:

Cabinet is responsible for ensuring this policy is kept up to date, implemented within the organisation and monitored and evaluated.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or when there is a change in circumstances, in work practices or the introduction of new legislation.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Complaints Policy

Appendix 2: Self-assessment 2026

Background Documents:

[Guidance on annual submissions | Housing Ombudsman Service](#)

Officer Contact Details:

Name: Sam Irving

Title: Head of Strategic Housing & Delivery

Email address: sam.irving@torbay.gov.uk

Complaints Policy (housing)

June 2026

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1. Version control

Date	Details	Updated by
December 2024	V1	Anita Merritt
June 2026	V2	Anita Merritt

2. Introduction

Torbay Council are committed to high standards of customer service. However, there may be occasions when we do not meet those high standards which we set for ourselves. We welcome feedback and we also take any form of complaint seriously. We will try wherever reasonably possible to resolve a complaint to the customer's satisfaction.

This policy explains how customers can make a complaint if they are not satisfied with our services and this applies to all customers of Torbay Council and to any managing agents or sub-

contractors working with or on behalf of Torbay Council. Details of this policy can be found here:
insert web address

We will accept a complaint raised within 12 months of the tenant being made aware of the issue, or the issue reoccurring.

If you need this document in an accessible format (such as large print, audio, or easy read) or in another language, please contact us and we will do our best to meet your needs.

3. Definition of a complaint

We define a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.

We will aim to recognise what a complaint is from talking to a customer without them having to use the word complaint. We will give customers the choice of making a complaint or not.

Details of our Complaint's Policy can be found on our website:

[Complaints policy - Torbay Council](#)

A complaint can be made in the following way:

- In person
- Letter to: Tor Hill House, Union Street, Torquay
- Online: insert details when website finalised
- Email: socialhousing@torbay.gov.uk
- Telephone: 01803 201201
- Email or phone the Housing Manager or Housing Officer

Complaints will be accepted via a third party eg friend, family, neighbour or MP. These will be logged accordingly and this Complaints Policy followed.

Our Complaint Policy can be found on our website: [Complaints policy - Torbay Council](#)

4. When we will not accept a complaint

We will accept a complaint unless there is a reason not to do so. The list below demonstrates what may not be considered a complaint but will be looked into on its own merits.

- A service request, this is a request from a tenant requiring action to put something right. For example, a tenant calls to report an issue with not having any hot water, our Repairs Policy will be followed including timescales to attend to the repair. A complaint however will be raised if the tenant is dissatisfied with our response to this repair request, even if the handling of the request is ongoing.
- A complaint that a contractor has turned up late to carry out a repair. We will contact the contractor immediately to find out the reason and feedback for a quick resolution. However, if the complaint is about the dissatisfaction of the repair itself then this will be logged and looked into under our Complaints Policy.

- Complaints about another neighbour will be passed on to the housing team to give advice on neighbour disputes.
- Issues regarding Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) will be dealt with under our ASB policy. We will manage complaints about how we are handling the ASB process under this Complaint's policy.
- Issues that occurred over 12 months ago but we will consider the circumstances around each complaint. However we will accept complaints raised within 12 months of the tenant being made aware of the issue, or the issue occurring.
- Disagreement against a decision where there is already an appeal process in place i.e. lettings decision.
- We will consider the complaints made about dissatisfaction in surveys and these will be signposted accordingly.
- If legal action has begun regarding an issue and an application has already been lodged at Court.
- An issue that is already being investigated by other agencies i.e Police investigation, serious case review.
- We will not consider a complaint when it is or has been investigated by the Housing Ombudsman.
- Any complaint that is already being dealt with under our Complaints Policy unless there are ongoing issues related to the complaint or an MP or Housing Ombudsman has asked us to review the complaint.

If an issue raised falls under the above categories we will explain why it is not considered under the complaints process and advise them if there is an alternative method or how to contact the Ombudsman.

5. Complaint's procedure

There is a two-stage complaint procedure in place which is dealt with within our Housing team.

We aim to deal with complaints quickly and where applicable offer an apology or resolution.

We will consider if the customer is vulnerable or at risk and follow other relevant policies to minimise any risks.

We will acknowledge complaints in a clear away setting out our understanding of the complaint and what the customer is seeking as an outcome. This will be in writing acknowledging the definition of the complaint and the outcome the tenant is seeking. It will also be clear which areas of the complaint it is, or is not, responsible for and will ask for clarification on areas where it is not clear.

A written answer to the complaint will be provided when known and not when the outstanding actions are due to be completed. Outstanding actions will still be tracked using Locata, our housing management database and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the tenant.

Any outstanding issues or if a complaint requires an extension will be clearly set out to the tenant. This will be no more than 10 working days if at stage one or 20 working days if at stage 2. It will not be without good reason, and the reason(s) will be clearly explained to the tenant in writing.

Where additional complaints are raised during an investigation these will be included in the stage 1 response if they are related and if a response has not been finalised. If the stage 1 response has been issued and the new issues are not related these will be logged as a new complaint.

Stage One

When a complaint is made it must be acknowledged and logged within 5 working days of receipt.

We will let you know who will be dealing with your complaint and how to contact them.

We will investigate the complaint and provide a written response within 10 working days from the date of the acknowledgement and will keep the complainant informed of the progress until resolution.

We will provide details of how to escalate to stage two if the customer is not satisfied with the response. This will then be dealt with by a senior member of staff.

If a complaint is made through a third party then the third party will receive an acknowledgement and a copy of the outcome letter.

Stage Two

If a customer is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint review at stage one, the customer can make a request for their complaint to be escalated to stage 2 (appeal panel), within 15 working days of receiving the stage one response.

When a complaint is made it must be acknowledged and logged within 5 working days of receipt.

We will investigate the complaint and provide a written response within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged and will keep the complainant informed of the progress until resolution.

We will let you know who will be dealing with your complaint and how to contact them.

Customers or those acting on their behalf will be allowed to speak to the complaint handler regarding any adverse findings from the outcome of stage one.

Stage two will be dealt with a senior member of staff that has had no previous involvement with the initial complaint therefore the review will be independent. We may involve board members as part of this review stage. This is the final stage of Torbay Council's complaints process for its social housing stock.

6. Taking your complaint further

If the complainant remains unhappy with Torbay Council's handling of their complaint once the complaints procedure has been exhausted they can refer their case directly to the Housing Ombudsman Service for an independent review.

Details of the Housing Ombudsman Service is available on their website: <http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk>

7. Learning from complaints

Complaints and feedback will be promoted to our customers and staff as an opportunity to learn and make improvements to our service.

When something changes as a result of a complaint, we will acknowledge this and set out the actions we have already taken, or intend to take, to put things right. This can include but is not limited to:

- Apologising
- Acknowledging where things where things have gone wrong and providing an explanation and or reasons
- Reconsidering or changing a decision
- Changing policies, procedure or practices

As a result of any fault being identified we will offer a remedy which will reflect the impact on the customer. This offer will set out what will happen, when and in agreement with the customer. This proposal will be followed through to completion.

The board will receive quarterly reports about the volumes of complaints received, at which stage they were resolved, and any trends or themes within the complaints.

All staff will receive training on this policy and this will be ongoing through regular performance reviews.

8. Monitoring and Performance

Cabinet is responsible for ensuring this policy is kept up to date, implemented within the organisation and monitored and evaluated.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or when there is a change in circumstances, in work practices or the introduction of new legislation.

9. Supporting policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

Equality Impact Assessment – Housing Complaints

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 109	18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old. 55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. 27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	Torbay Council should ensure that the methods of submitting complaints remain accessible by enabling customers to report by various methods face to face, in writing or via Torbay Council's website. This is particularly relevant to ensure we capture concerns or complaints from harder to reach demographic groups (which often includes younger people), who tend to reach for their device rather than a pen and paper when they are unhappy with a service. Torbay Council should clearly advise that complaints are received via email, in person, in writing and over the telephone, to ensure they capture the needs of our	Sometimes Torbay Council's complainant may be an older person, or someone with limited ability (due to health issues e.g., dementia). Torbay Council need to ensure that correct support is put in place and that referral mechanisms are available to the relevant agencies, and when we are aware of health issues or limited capability in a household,	Pride in Place Adult Services Children's Services

		older or more technology restricted demographic of customers.	that we have support in place even before a customer may need to complain.	
Carers	At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these provided 50 hours or more of care.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Disability	In the 2021 Census, 23.8% 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.	Some customers with learning difficulties, hearing or sight impairments or mental health issues may not understand how policies and procedures work. Torbay Council must ensure support is offered in all aspects of tenancy support, and all aspects of raising a formal complaint should the need arise. Torbay Council will work with Support Workers or appointed persons on behalf of the complainant if applicable. This ensures accessibility of the service as well as making any other reasonable adjustments where required (such as letters in alternate formats or specified methods of contact).	Regularly monitor customers contact preferences and update the case management system to this effect. Ensure appointed Support Workers or appointed persons remain relevant/updated. Ensure Torbay Council staff are up to date with relevant mental health training.	Pride in Place Adult Services Children's Services

Gender reassignment	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. This proportion is similar to the Southwest and is lower than England.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Marriage and civil partnership	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.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Pregnancy and maternity	Over the period 2010 to 2021, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 63.7 per 1,000) than England (60.2) and the South West (58.4). There has been a notable fall in the numbers of live births since the middle of the last decade across all geographical areas.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described	Although it is expected there would be little or no impact (Torbay Council would	Torbay Council will ensure any language	Pride in Place

	their ethnicity as white. This is a higher proportion than the South West and England. Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.	be aware of any language barriers upon the point of a tenancy being offered), it should be advised that assistance by way of an interpreter can be organised by prior arrangement.	barriers which could impact communication are noted on the case management software upon execution of the tenancy. Torbay Council will review complaints from persons who are not housing customers on a case by case basis. Torbay Council must ensure that provisions are in place before the landlord/tenant relationship is formally executed, and that this provision is ongoing. The housing management team should also ensure relevant departments, namely Revenues, are aware of any language	Communications Revenues
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			barriers for the provision of invoicing/revenue collection.	
Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, 3.4% of those in Torbay aged over 16 identified their sexuality as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or, used another term to describe their sexual orientation.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	
Armed Forces Community	In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. In Torbay, 5.9 per cent of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	

Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)		There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)		There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	
Human Rights impacts		There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	
Child Friendly	Torbay Council is a Child Friendly Council and all staff and Councillors are Corporate Parents and have a responsibility towards cared for and care experienced children and young people.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not Applicable	

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and it must be reviewed and approved by the landlord's governing body at least annually.

Once approved, landlords must publish the self-assessment as part of the annual complaints performance and service improvement report on their website. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.

Landlords are required to complete the self-assessment in full and support all statements with evidence, with additional commentary as necessary.

We recognise that there may be a small number of circumstances where landlords are unable to meet the requirements, for example, if they do not have a website. In these circumstances, we expect landlords to deliver the intentions of the Code in an alternative way, for example by publishing information in a public area so that it is easily accessible.

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’</i>	Yes	In Complaint’s policy available on our website	This is explained under Clause 3. Definition of a complaint
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word ‘complaint’ for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord’s complaints policy.	Yes	In Complaint’s policy available on our website	This is explained under Clause 3. Definition of a complaint
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be	Yes	In Complaint’s policy available on our website	The Complaint’s policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman. Under Clause 4. ‘When we will not accept a complaint’

	recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.			There is a clearer distinction between the landlord's use of service requests and complaints.
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman. Under Clause 4. 'When we will not accept a complaint' It is clearer that we will raise a complaint if the tenant expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request. It is also clearer that a complaint being raised will not stop efforts to address the service request.
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about	Yes	Complaints policy on website. Quick link on website to lodge a complaint.	We record a complaint in line with our complaints policy and feedback to our tenants within the relevant timescales.

	their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.			
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Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	This is at clause 4
2.2	A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include: - The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. - Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman. Under Clause 4. 'When we will not accept a complaint' Clarity around a complaint regarding ASB will be handled under the ASB Policy not the Complaint Policy. If a complaint is being or has been investigated by the Housing Ombudsman this will no longer be

	Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.			considered as a complaint by us.
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman. Under Clause 2. 'Introduction.' Details that we will accept a complaint raised within 12 months of the tenant being made aware of the issue, or the issue reoccurring.
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	This is at clause 4
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	This is at clause 4

	must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.			
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Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	Can report directly to Housing Manager and Housing Officer via In Person, letter, email or phone. Also link on website to complete a form.	This is at clause 3
3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	Staff training undertaken	Training undertaken, there is access for any staff member to log a complaint
3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.	Yes	TSM results are taken into account and a link to the results is on the website.	Staff training has been undertaken on recognising that complaints are not a bad thing and we can learn from them.

3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	Quick link to report a complaint is also on the website. The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman. Under Clause 2. 'Introduction.' We have included that this policy is available in an accessible format.
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman. Under Clause 3. 'Definition of a complaint.' We have included the website link to the Complaint's Policy.
3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	Clause 3 of our policy
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	Clause 6 of our policy

	Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.			
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Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	Housing Manager and Housing Officer	The Housing Manager has overall responsibility for complaint handling. However, where the complaint is regarding the Housing Manager then the responsibility will lie with the Estates Manager.
4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	Yes	Head of Strategic Housing & Delivery has access to all staff and records	Housing Manager and Head of Strategic Housing & Delivery have access to all staff and records
4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively	Yes	Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code eLearning undertaken.	All staff have had complaint's training.

Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	One complaint policy only
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman. Under Clause 5. 'Complaint's procedure.' We have amended the wording so it is clear there are only two stages in the complaint's process.
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman. Under Clause 5. 'Complaint's procedure.'

				We have amended the wording so it is clear there are only two stages in the complaint's process.
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	n/a		Our complaints are dealt with internally and not by a third party.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	n/a		Our complaints are dealt with internally only, with the exception of those excluded on reasonable grounds.
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as "the complaint definition". If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.	Yes	Letters	The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman. Under Clause 5. 'Complaint's procedure.' Additional detail has been added to include how we will acknowledge the complaint in writing setting out what our understanding

				of the complaint is. It will also set out if there are areas that are not a complaint or not responsible for and where necessary will ask for further details.
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	Letters	As 5.6 above
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.	Yes	Standard	In complaints standard
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman.

				Under Clause 5. 'Complaint's procedure.' Clear timeframes are set out within the policy. We have added details of what happens when the complaint response may fall outside of the timescales set out in the Code.
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes	Equality & Diversity Policy	In Clause 5 of our policy
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes	In Complaint's policy available on our website	Complaints will be escalated as requested.
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original	Yes	All logged on a central spreadsheet. All	Unfortunately, we do not have a suitable software

	complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.		correspondence saved electronically.	package to record complaints.
5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	Yes	Policy	Clause 5 sets out the timescales which we would deal with the complaint. Where possible we aim to contact a complainant within two working days to agree a suitable early resolution.
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.	Yes	Policy	We have a Violence, Aggression and Threatening Behaviour (VATB) policy in place which incorporates lone working. This is also logged on SHEAssure (Health and Safety software package) Also on Civica, flagged against the policy for other staff members and contractors to be safe.
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	Policy	We have a Violence, Aggression and Threatening Behaviour (VATB) policy in place which incorporates lone working.

				This is also logged on SHEAssure (Health and Safety software package) Also on Civica, flagged against the policy for other staff members and contractors to be safe.
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Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	Complaints policy	Clause 5 within the policy sets out the timescales.
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	Policy	Clause 5 details this
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Policy	Clause 5 details this
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident	Yes	Policy	The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman.

	of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.			Under Clause 5. 'Complaint's procedure.' Clear timeframes are set out within the policy. We have added details of what happens when the complaint response may fall outside of the timescales set out in the Code.
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Policy	Clause 6 details this.
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Complaint log	The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman. Under Clause 5. 'Complaint's procedure.' Details of how we will track the actions for a complaint have been included.
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions,	Yes	Letter	All held electronically against the complaint log number.

	referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.			
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	Within our complaints policy available on the website	Clause 5 details this.
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.	Yes	Letter	This is included within the body of the letter which is held electronically

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	Policy	Clause 5 details this
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	Policy	Set out at Clause 5 and will be logged onto the complaints log
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	Policy	Complaints will be escalated to stage two as requested. The designated person will discuss with the complainant the reasons they are unhappy with the response.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Policy	Clause 5 details who will deal with stage 2
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Policy	Clause 5 details this
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than	Yes	Policy	The Complaint's policy has been reviewed following guidance from the Housing Ombudsman.

	20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.			Under Clause 5. 'Complaint's procedure.' This sets out how we will respond and reiterates the timescales from which we will adhere to under The Code.
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Letter	Will be included in response letters
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Complaint log	See 6.6 above
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Letter	All held electronically against the complaint log number.
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint;	Yes	Letter	This will be included within the body of the letter.

	d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.			
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Policy	We have a 2 stage process, this is the final stage. Clause 6 of the policy outlines how a complainant can take the complaint further.

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include: • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons;	Yes	Letter and in Policy	This will be dependant on each case and will be documented within the response letter. Within the complaints policy at Clause 7

	• Taking action if there has been delay; • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; • Providing a financial remedy; • Changing policies, procedures or practices.			
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Policy	Within the complaints policy at Clause 7
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	Policy	Within the complaints policy at Clause 7
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Policy	Within the complaints policy at Clause 7

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include: a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.	Yes	HO – self-assessment Report to Cabinet	Report to Cabinet Monitoring Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) will monitor satisfaction rates

8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	HO Self-Assessment	Self-Assessment will be published on the website.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	n/a		Noted
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	n/a		Noted
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	n/a		Noted

Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	Policy	Clause 7 details learning from complaints
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	Policy	Report to Cabinet
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.	Yes	Report to Cabinet	Report to Cabinet
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	Housing Manager	Housing Manager is responsible for monitoring complaints and respective response times. Also responsible for reporting these to report to Cabinet

9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').	Yes	Director of Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing	
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	Yes	Director of Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing	Cabinet has responsibility for complaint's monitoring.
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and	Yes	Report to Cabinet	Report to Cabinet

	d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.			
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to: a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.	Yes	Policy	Detailed within in policy and training provided for all staff

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Report title: Leasing of Commercial Business units at Unit D, Westfield Business Park, Long Road, Paignton, TQ4 7AU

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 17 August 2026

Lead Cabinet Member: Cllr Chris Lewis, Place Development and Economic Growth

Email: chris.lewis@torbay.gov.uk

Lead Director: Malcolm Coe, Director of Finance

Email: malcolm.coe@torbay.gov.uk

Wards affected: Collaton St Mary

1. Summary of Report:

- 1.1 To seek authorisation to let the four new business units at Unit D, Westfield Park at a market rent and on commercial lease terms as and when suitable tenants are identified.
- 1.2 In the opinion of an RICS surveyor the market rent for each individual unit is in excess of £50,000 p.a. and so in accordance with the Officer Scheme of Delegation, entering into a lease for each unit is a Cabinet decision. It is proposed authority to agree terms for each unit is delegated to the Director of Finance to prevent delays to the letting process and consequently any delays to the income the Council will receive once a unit is let.

2. Recommendations and Proposed Decision:

- 2.1 That delegated authority be given to the Director of Finance to negotiate detailed terms, including the market rent, of the first lease granted at each unit at Unit D, Westfield Business Park, Long Road, Paignton.

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Proposed Decision:

- 3.1 The reasons for the proposal and need for the decision are that the market rent for each unit is in excess of £50,000 p.a. and therefore requires Cabinet approval in accordance with the Council's Officer Scheme of Delegation.
- 3.2 The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay by fully utilising the opportunity of leasing these four units to businesses that are in need of business premises. Benefits include:
- Increasing employment in the local area
 - Increasing investment in this district of Torbay
 - Managing these units on a commercial basis, minimising void periods and encouraging occupancy of businesses will meet the funding criteria

4. Background and Context:

- 4.1 Torbay Council Strategic Asset Management Plan sets out the Council's approach to the strategic management of its assets, how it will support service delivery, provide the Council with income and how it will fulfil its mission to support, enable and empower its residents, our communities and our partnerships, to promote growth and place shaping within Torbay.
- 4.2 Torbay Council purchased Unit D, Westfield Business Park in April 2026 and are investing a large capital sum in renovating the existing building to create two laboratories and two offices. The building will be specifically targeted at growing a Hi-Tech cluster within Torbay and will be leased to Hi-Tech companies only.
- 4.3 The acquisition of Unit D, Westfield Business Park, is part of a long term strategy to grow services within this sector in Torbay. Working in collaboration with South Devon College, companies from EPIC continue their growth within the Hi-Tech sector into these larger premises at Unit D.

5. Alternative Options Considered:

- 5.1 The Council has purchased this building to develop four new units to increase employment in the area. Previous decisions involving the asset have not provided authority to agree and grant terms for occupation by tenants. The units have been designed to meet the demand for business use for the Hi-Tech sector and are to be commercially leased. The benefit is also that the Council can best achieve employment aims, by retaining control of the units and selecting which businesses can use them. Therefore, a freehold disposal has been discounted.

- 5.2 The other option is not to let out these properties on a commercial basis. This will increase the Council's void costs and extend the period before the Council can gain any rental income. This is a significant disadvantage to the Council in terms of lost revenue and void costs and so has been discounted.

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

- 6.1 The decision to grant authority of agreeing lease arrangements to the Director of Finance will increase the efficiency of the process of agreeing commercially advantageous leases to the Council. By securing these leases, the Council's liability of ongoing management and cost of holding vacant assets will reduce, whilst also generating long term revenue streams.

7. Consultation and Engagement:

- 7.1 There has been no formal consultation or engagement regarding the authority to grant commercial leases for this unit.

8. Implications:

Financial Implications:

- 8.1 The Council's Asset Management Strategy states that the Council will 'always seek to maximise the full market receipt for their assets whether by way of freehold disposal or leasehold interest'. The expected lease value has been provided by a RICS accredited surveyor via analysis of comparable market rents achieved.

Legal Implications:

- 8.2 There are no legal implications anticipated with this instruction. A lease of any of the four units will need to be documented, along with agreements for lease. These leases will be dealt with by the Council's Legal Property Team where capacity allows, otherwise it will be outsourced.

Corporate Parenting/Children and Young People:

- 8.3 No impacts are anticipated with the authorisation power for lease engagement. The building is currently unoccupied and does not provide any service to children or young people

Associated Risks, Risk Tolerance Level and Mitigations:

A summary of key risks associated with the recommendations in this report are:

1. Financial Risk – mitigated through attaining revenue around market rents.
2. Missed Development Opportunity – monitored through legal practices.

The risks of not approving the recommendations include delaying the development process which will have cost implications to the overall project and delay revenue streams. Overall risk exposure is assessed as acceptable within the Council's risk tolerance appetite.

Full risks are set out below:

Risk	Risk score before mitigations (likelihood x impact)	Mitigations	Risk Score after mitigations (likelihood x impact)	Risk tolerance
Project Risk effecting delivery	9	Transferring authoritative powers to the Director of Finance will allow them to agree leases to meet project deadlines.	4	By preventing delays to the letting and development process we consequently reduce delays to the income the Council will receive once a unit is let.
Not enabling leases to be granted at market rent	9	The premises will remain vacant and held by the Council, with the Council incurring significant void costs.	1	Negotiations already on-going with 2 parties to occupy the space, before the asset has been formally brought to the market.

Contributions to tackling climate change or achieving carbon neutrality:

8.4 There are no significant changes to climate change as a result of this decision.

Social Value Considerations:

8.5 Development of the site will increase employment opportunities in Torbay.

Procurement Implications:

8.6 There are no significant implications as a result of this decision.

Other Implications:

8.7 There are no significant implications as a result of this decision.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment:

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 150	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.	Due to the job creation opportunities at these 4 units, it will have a positive impact on people aged 18-64	Not applicable	Not applicable
Carers	- 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.	No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable
Care experienced	As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable

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
Disability	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.	No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable
Gender reassignment	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.	No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable
Marriage and civil partnership	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.	No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable
Pregnancy and maternity	Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been	No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable

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
	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).			
	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups 96.1% as White 0.4% described their ethnicity another way.	No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable

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
	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.			
Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following; 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	No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable

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
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female. 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.	No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows; 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	No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable
Armed Forces Community	- 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	No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable

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
	previously served in the UK armed forces.			
<i>Additional considerations:</i>				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	Leasing these four units to businesses will have a positive impact providing employment in the local area.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	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 adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable
Human Rights impacts		No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable
Child Friendly (Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA))		No adverse impact	Not applicable	Not applicable

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
considerations): <i>Summarise the CRIA considerations for this proposal, including which groups of children and young people may be affected (e.g., care experienced children/young people, care leavers, children with SEND), how their rights and best interests have been considered, and any engagement undertaken with children/young people and/or their representatives. Set out any mitigations to address identified adverse impacts and how these will be monitored.</i>				

10. Cumulative Council Impact:

10.1 None

11. Cumulative Community Impact:

11.1 None

12. Monitoring and Evaluation:

12.1 Legal services will agree the terms of the leases ensuring the Council is protected. This decision only grants authority to enter into the first lease agreements.

Appendices:

None

Background Documents:

None

Officer Contact Details:

Name: Jon Veale

Title: Estates Manager

Email address: jonathan.veale@torbay.gov.uk

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Report title: Appointment of Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 15 September 2026

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor Jackie Thomas, Cabinet Member Tourism & Culture and Corporate Services

Email: jackie.thomas@torbay.gov.uk

Lead Director: Matthew Fairclough-Kay, Director of Corporate Services

Email: matthew.fairclough-kay@torbay.gov.uk

Wards affected: All Wards

1. Summary of Report:

- 1.1 Following the transfer of Torbay Economic Development Company (known as TDA) to Torbay Council, the Council has established Torbay Council Holding Company Limited to manage all the Council's companies and their subsidiaries. A Board has been established in accordance with the Local Operating Policy for Governance of Council Wholly Owned Companies. There is now a requirement for the Cabinet to appoint a Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel and Designated Representative as part of the governance arrangements. This also aligns to the Local Government Association guidance and the Local Partnerships Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCo) Guidance (2023) ensuring appropriate governance of Wholly Owned Companies (WOC) and clear separation of roles between the Board and the Shareholder Panel.

2. Recommendations and Proposed Decision:

- 2.1 That a Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel be established with Membership and Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report.

- 2.2 That the Chief Executive (Anne-Marie Bond) be appointed as the Council's Shareholder Designated Representative.

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Proposed Decision:

- 3.1 The Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel is required to set the objectives of the Board and ensures the performance of the company and safeguard the Council's investment.

4. Background and Context:

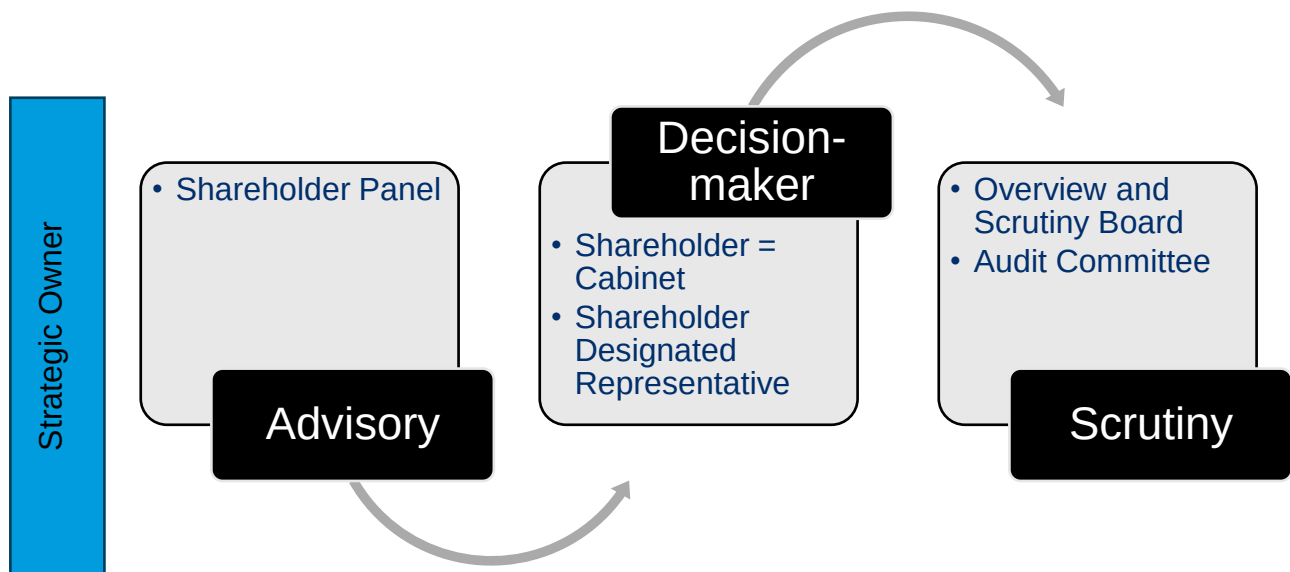
- 4.1 The Chief Executive took a decision on 20 July 2026 to establish Torbay Council Holding Company Limited, which has been registered with Companies House, with all Council owned companies, subsidiaries or component parts being transferred to the holding company. There were several existing Shareholder Panels which have been dissolved as part of this process and there is now a need for the Cabinet to establish a new Shareholder Panel to provide direction and oversight of the Company Board.
- 4.2 The Shareholder Panel will provide the necessary oversight from a Shareholder's perspective that the parameters, policies and boundaries that the Cabinet as the Shareholder has established for the company are being adhered to. The Panel provides a mechanism to communicate the Shareholders' views to the Wholly Owned Company (WOC); and a means to evaluate the effectiveness of the WOC Board and the delivery of the company performance against strategic objectives. The Panel will act as an advisory body to the Cabinet and Cabinet appointed Shareholder Designated Representative.
- 4.3 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board shall not be Members of the Cabinet's Shareholder Panel so that they are not conflicted when it comes to overall stewardship of WOCs if they were also to be involved in scrutiny of those companies.
- 4.4 The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board is responsible for scrutiny of the Cabinet's decisions in relation to WOCs and can make recommendations to the Cabinet on WOC related matters and in the manner that the Council's Constitution sets out the Council's scrutiny function. The role of the Board includes:
- challenging the fundamental purpose of entities, assessing whether the Council has a coherent strategy which articulates a common understanding of what the Council is

trying to achieve through its WOCs and how it is going about it;

- bringing to bear direct knowledge and understanding of the needs of local people and meaningful, independent democratic oversight;
- helping to design systems for scrutiny of WOCs which are accountable and transparent, and which intelligently involve local people (as well as involving scrutiny itself);
- considering the capability of the Council and WOCs to succeed in achieving their objectives;
- considering whether commercial ventures and investments are being established for the right reasons; and
- reviewing risks relating to commercial investments, tolerance for risk, ownership of risks and processes for managing risk.

4.5 The Council's Audit Committee shall ensure the integration of the various external auditors across all the Council's WOCs is achieved. The role of the Audit Committee includes:

- reviewing the annual financial statements of WOCs;
- providing an independent assessment of the effectiveness of the WOCs' systems of internal control;
- ensuring the assets and interests are accounted for from losses of all kind, including fraud, waste and efficiency; and
- Gains assurance that all audit recommendations are implemented promptly.



5. Alternative Options Considered:

- 5.1 To retain the existing SWISCo Shareholder Panel, due to the scale of the work covered by the Panel. This option was not recommended as it would add another meeting/Panel and may lose consistency of having a single Panel providing oversight of all the WOC and their subsidiaries.

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

- 6.1 The work of the Shareholder Panel, will ensure that we are meeting our mission and approach and making best use of our finances and assets. Most of the Companies covered by the Holding Company deliver services that support the themes of community and people and pride in place. Therefore, supporting the delivery of our Community and Corporate Plan.

7. Consultation and Engagement:

- 7.1 The Divisional Director of Place Strategy, Director of Pride in Place and Leader of the Council have been consulted and involved in the identification of the Membership and Terms of Reference of the Shareholder Panel.

8. Implications:

Financial Implications:

8.1 There are no financial implications of establishing the Shareholder Panel.

Legal Implications:

8.2 The Membership and Terms of Reference of the Shareholder Panel have been developed in accordance with the Local Operating Policy for Governance of Council Wholly Owned Companies, which ensures that the legal obligations of the Panel are met.

Corporate Parenting/Children and Young People:

8.3 There are no specific implications.

Associated Risks, Risk Tolerance Level and Mitigations:

Not applicable.

Contributions to tackling climate change or achieving carbon neutrality:

8.4 There are no specific implications.

Social Value Considerations:

8.5 There are no specific implications.

Procurement Implications:

8.6 There are no specific implications.

Other Implications:

8.7 None

9. Equalities Impact Assessment:

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 164	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.	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.
Carers	- 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.	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.
Care experienced	As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.

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
Disability	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.	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.
Gender reassignment	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.	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.
Marriage and civil partnership	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.	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.
Pregnancy and maternity	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	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.

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
Page 666 Face	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).			
	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups 96.1% as White 0.4% described their ethnicity another way.	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.

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
	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.			
Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following; 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	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female.	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.

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
	48.7% of Torbay's population are male.			
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows; 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	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.
Armed Forces Community	- 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 served in the UK armed forces.	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.

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
<i>Additional considerations:</i>				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	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.	There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.
Human Rights impacts		There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.
Child Friendly (Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) considerations): <i>Summarise the CRIA considerations for this proposal, including which</i>		There is no differential impact.	No adverse impact.	No adverse impact.

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
<i>groups of children and young people may be affected (e.g., care experienced children/young people, care leavers, children with SEND), how their rights and best interests have been considered, and any engagement undertaken with children/young people and/or their representatives. Set out any mitigations to address identified adverse impacts and how these will be monitored.</i>				

10. Cumulative Council Impact:

10.1 None

11. Cumulative Community Impact:

11.1 None

12. Monitoring and Evaluation:

12.1 The work of the Torbay Council Holding Company Limited will be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Board, including business plans and performance.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Membership and Terms of Reference of Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel

Background Documents:

Decision - Future of TDA Services - Transfer of subsidiary companies or component parts to Torbay Council Holding Company Limited

Local Partnerships Local-authority company review guidance 2023 edition.pdf

Officer Contact Details:

Name: [Teresa Buckley](#)

Title: [Democratic Services Team Leader](#)

Email address: teresa.buckley@torbay.gov.uk

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Membership and Terms of Reference of Torbay Council Holding Company Shareholder Panel

Membership:

- a) Leader of Torbay Council (Councillor David Thomas)
- b) Deputy Leader of Torbay Council (Councillor Chris Lewis)
- c) Cabinet Member with Portfolio for the Wholly Owned Company (WOC) – Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance (Councillor Tyerman)
- d) Chief Executive of Torbay Council (Shareholder Designated Representative)

The Chair and Designated Representative of the WOC will be invited as required along with the Company Secretary (if appointed) and Company Finance Director where appropriate e.g. to present reports.

The Section 151 Officer, the Monitoring Officer and the Director/Divisional Director responsible for commissioning services to the WOCs shall attend meetings of the Panel to provide advice when required. Additional advisors who do not need to be Members or Officers of the Council may be invited as required.

Purpose and role:

The role of the Shareholder Panel will be to provide the necessary oversight from a Shareholder's perspective that the parameters, policies and boundaries that the Cabinet as the Shareholder has established for the company are being adhered to. The Panel provides a mechanism to communicate the Shareholders' views to the WOC; and a means to evaluate the effectiveness of the WOC Board and the delivery of the company performance against strategic objectives. The Panel will act as an advisory body to the Cabinet and Cabinet appointed Shareholder Designated Representative.

The Shareholder Panel will not be involved in operational matters of WOC and operates at a strategic level on behalf of the Cabinet as Shareholder.

Decision-making remit:

None. The Panel meetings provide an opportunity for strategic oversight and to hold the WOC to account.

Terms of Reference:

1. Make recommendations to Cabinet or Shareholder Designated Representative on reserved matters and any other material issues relating to the WOC.
2. To keep under review the Council's requirements of the WOC's implementation and development of commercial approach.
3. Provide WOCs with clear strategic direction as set by the Cabinet in the annual business plan and provide a mechanism for effective communication for the Shareholder's views on the WOC.
4. On behalf of the Cabinet, to provide an articulation of what success looks like in terms of achieving social outcomes and return on investment in the company.

5. To work with the WOC's Board to review, challenge and recommend the strategic annual business plan to Cabinet.
6. To evaluate the effectiveness of the WOC Board and delivery by the WOC of the strategic objectives and the annual business plan.
7. To effectively engage with the WOC Chair and Chief Operating Officer to provide assurance on strategic performance of the WOC and make reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.
8. Receive reports from WOCs in an agreed format setting out company information including strategic direction, financial performance, activity and performance indicators, achievements.
9. To review annually whether the WOC continues to provide the most effective vehicle to deliver the outcomes the Council requires and whether there are viable alternative models which might offer a more effective means of delivering the Council's priorities.
10. Ensure that the risks taken by each WOC are managed appropriately and are at a suitable level for the Council to bear as Shareholder.
11. To review and monitor (as appropriate) Shareholder/ Management Agreements and Articles of Associations, where there are areas of concern and make recommendations to the Cabinet.

Operation:

- Will meet as regularly as required to ensure proper exercise of its functions but not less than quarterly.
- Chaired by the Leader of the Council and the Deputy Leader of the Council in his absence.
- Private meetings to allow informal and open discussion, with internal and external guests invited when required.
- Supported by Governance Support Team with actions recorded for audit purposes.

SWISCo Dashboard – Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

Report to Cabinet on 15 September 2026

Background

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 8 July 2026 to consider the submitted SWISCo Annual Report 2025/26, together with responses to key lines of enquiry which were circulated prior to the meeting. The Cabinet Member for Pride in Place, Transport and Parking, Councillor Billings highlighted continued progress in service delivery and operational performance.
2. Members welcomed improvements achieved since SWISCo's establishment, particularly investment in parks and public spaces, whilst raising concerns regarding recycling collections, grass cutting, communication with residents, staffing pressures and highway maintenance.
3. Members asked questions in respect of the following:
 - What proportion of Torbay's total footpath and bridleway network is maintained by SWISCo? (Details on the full rights of way would be provided in writing.)
 - What were the current recycling rates and what challenges were affecting performance? (A breakdown of recycling figures would be provided in writing.)
 - How can residents access better information about grass cutting and maintenance schedules?
 - Can reporting systems provide acknowledgements and completion updates for residents and Councillors reporting on behalf of residents?
 - How does SWISCo manage access issues caused by parked vehicles?
 - How are staff recruited and supported?
 - How are weeds, potholes and road maintenance being managed in residential areas?
 - How can communication around missed collections be improved?
4. The following responses were received:
 - Performance had been affected by sickness absence, waste transfer station repair work and operational pressures.
 - Collection services had improved and had largely returned to schedule. Every day the Team must reprioritise what can be delivered based on

available staff and vehicles, which sometimes meant that green waste collections have to be delayed to enable missed food waste to be collected. The increased volume of cardboard was also having an impact as it was filling up the lorries quickly requiring them to be emptied more regularly.

- A more visible online dashboard was being developed to improve public information. The Council was required by the Department for Transport to publish an annual Local Highways Maintenance Transparency report, with the latest report showing the Council rated green – see [Local Highways Maintenance Transparency Report 2025/2026 - Torbay Council](#).
 - When new Traffic Regulation Orders were implemented parking restrictions were put in place restricting access to the roads, where vehicles cause obstructions, the Team will go back as soon as possible to complete the work.
 - SWISCo continue to recruit directly with vacancies being advertised on both the SWISCo and Council websites, supplemented by agency staff where necessary. As an employer of choice there were informal arrangements in place to help employees get to work early, where public transport was not available.
 - Weed treatment and highway repairs were progressing through planned and reactive programmes.
 - Missed collection information was published online and residents were encouraged to report issues through established channels, if their bins had not been collected within 48 hours of their normal collection day (with bins expected to be left out for this period – see [My bin hasn't been collected - Torbay Council](#)).
5. Members requested future reports to include greater analysis of recycling figures, including separate reporting of green waste.
6. The background papers can be found at [Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Board on Wednesday, 8 July 2026, 5.30 pm](#).
7. The Board formed the following recommendations to the Cabinet. On being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried unanimously.
- 8. Recommendations**
- 8.1 That the Cabinet be recommended to request SWISCo to implement a public dashboard similar to that published for the SWISCo Shareholder Panel, with an ambition to look forward as well as looking back, and for reporting feedback to acknowledge submission and provide feedback that the work has been completed.
-

For information only:

1. that the Overview and Scrutiny Board express their thanks and gratitude to the SWISCo staff for all their hard work and note the content of the SWISCo Annual Report 2025/2026 demonstrating SWISCo's continued role as a key delivery partner for place-based services across Torbay

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TORBAY COUNCIL

Cabinet Response to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Board – SWISCo Dashboard

Recommendation 1:

That the Cabinet be recommended to request SWISCo to implement a public dashboard similar to that published for the SWISCo Shareholder Panel, with an ambition to look forward as well as looking back, and for reporting feedback to acknowledge submission and provide feedback that the work has been completed.

Response:

Cabinet has supported SWISCo's sustained progress through its term and worked to ensure that it protects and enhances the experience of Torbay's built and natural environment for the benefit of our residents and visitors.

The Cabinet Member for Pride in Place is committed to strengthening the way residents, Members and the Council can understand the performance of SWISCo services. As part of this, the Cabinet Member will work with officers to further develop and refine the existing performance reporting, so it also provides a clear and effective public-facing performance dashboard for SWISCo services.

The dashboard will be designed to provide accessible, meaningful and regular information building on the performance information already reported through SWISCo's governance arrangements. The dashboard will have a clearer public focus, helping residents understand how services are performing across areas such as waste and recycling, highways, street scene, grounds maintenance, parks and environmental services.

Alongside this, the Cabinet Member will review, with officers and SWISCo, the customer service approach for SWISCo-delivered services. This will include looking at how residents are updated on progress and how feedback is provided when work has been completed.

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