

Torbay's Housing Crisis Review V2 updated 21 October 2021

Scope and Timeline

Scope

The purpose of the review is to consider issues impacting on Torbay's housing crisis and explore what action is being taken to address the following key areas:

- shortage of temporary accommodation;
- implications of short term leases;
- social and affordable housing and the work of TORVISTA;
- empty properties;
- general housing supply; and
- the work of the Strategic Housing Board.

This links to the following Thriving People Priority Actions:

- Deliver and update our Housing Strategy Action Plan, including working with developers to encourage sites to be brought forward, to ensure a five-year housing land supply, thereby protecting our green spaces.
- Continue to work to enable work to start on stalled development sites across Torbay.
- Develop a sufficiency strategy approach to reduce the need for temporary accommodation.
- Working with Registered Providers across Torbay, facilitate the availability of social and affordable accommodation to enable people to move on from temporary accommodation including 'next steps' accommodation.

Timescales

- See further details below.

<p>Methodology</p> <p>The Review Panel was established at Overview and Scrutiny Board 14 July 2021.</p> <p>Task-and-finish group established to receive briefing notes and information arising from Call for Evidence (various dates).</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Board in (to be confirmed) for final agreement of recommendations for presentation to Cabinet and/or Council.</p>	<p>Communications and Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct emails to (partners, voluntary and community groups, registered landlords) • Invites to meetings (various) • Publication of final report (to be confirmed)
<p>Information required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As set out against each meeting below. • Overall update on the Council’s Housing Strategy and Action Plan (the Action Plan is made up of four key areas which are each being developed separately). • Timeline for future decision points (set out below). 	<p>Membership of Task-and-Finish Group (8 Members politically balanced): Councillor Foster, Scrutiny Lead for Corporate and Community Services (Chairwoman of the Group) plus Councillors Barnby, Brown, Mandy Darling, Douglas-Dunbar, Johns, Kennedy, O’Dwyer</p> <p>External Advisors to the Panel: Alistair Allender, Independent Chairman of the Strategic Housing Board Steve Barriball, Citizen’s Advice Torbay Community Development Trust (to be confirmed) Stuart Bakewell, Shekinah</p> <p>Support Officer: Teresa Buckley</p>

Meeting/Milestone	Action	Information Required	Key Lines of Enquiry
Task and Finish Group (meeting 1 - 27 September 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement of scope and timeline of the review and call-for-evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Scope and timeline 	
Task and Finish Group (meeting 1 - 27 September 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive an update on the work of the Strategic Housing Board (Alistair Allender/Kevin Mowat/Jo Williams). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Strategy. Housing Strategy Action Plan. Presentation on Housing Need. Housing need and impact on health and social care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the purpose of the Strategic Housing Board? How will the Board ensure that the housing crisis is managed in a timely manner?
Task and Finish Group (meeting 2 – 21 October 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive an update on the level of demand for temporary accommodation and consider if and is there sufficient capacity in place that is appropriate to meet statutory duties (Tara Harris/Lianne Hancock). To consider the demand on the service overall and ability to meet statutory duties in respect of housing needs (Tara Harris/Lianne Hancock). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary Accommodation (TA) needs analysis. Current usage by families etc, costs, provision, length of stay etc. Including information to illustrate the level of complexity which is now presenting. TA procurement strategy and progress including leased properties etc. Previous, current and projected spend. Demand on the service and impact on resourcing. Interventions put in place to manage demand, complexity and resourcing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the Council assess accommodation needs? What are the challenges in finding suitable accommodation? What are the opportunities to work differently with the community, voluntary sector and housing providers/owners to increase capacity and matching of suitable accommodation to tenants? How is the Housing Service ensuring it is meeting its statutory requirements? <p>Additional invitees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local letting agent to be invited to attend to provide their perspective.

Meeting/Milestone	Action	Information Required	Key Lines of Enquiry
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents who have been through the process to be invited to attend to provide their perspective.
<p>Task and Finish Group (meeting 3 – 23 November 2021)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive an update on housing supply and predicted future need within Torbay (David Edmondson/Adam Russell/Tara Harris/Nancy Meehan) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Papers from Strategic Housing Board providing an overview – detailing needs by sector including Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HEENA) report (draft.) Feedback from reviews – MHCLG – Young people. Current Housing Land Supply data and future predicted housing need. Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (draft). Stalled sites data. Data on adult services housing need and availability. Data on care experienced young people’s need and availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many properties are empty or have been empty for longer than six months in Torbay? What is being done to bring empty properties back into use, including grants and organisations available to assist homeowners? What action is being taken to monitor second homes which are empty and not being used? Are there any policy decisions that could be taken to reduce the number of second homes, taking into account that Torbay is a tourism destination? How is the planning system being utilised to bring forward suitable housing e.g. larger family homes, single units, units for care experienced young people or units assist adults to live independently, people with a disability? How are funds such as Disabled Facilities Grants and the Better Care Fund being used to help with suitable adaptations?

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many potential homes are there in Torbay with Planning permission that have not yet been built and what is the reason for this? • How many potential brown field sites are identified within the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans that have not been brought forward for development. What are the reasons for this and what incentives could be used to encourage developers to bring forward development on these sites? • Are there any charges that could be put on land which has planning permission and is not being developed within a specified period e.g. 2 years? • How does the outcome of the HELA and HEENA contribute towards bringing forward more affordable houses? • Have there been any recent help to buy schemes and what is being done to encourage similar schemes, particularly to help younger people onto the property ladder?

Meeting/Milestone	Action	Information Required	Key Lines of Enquiry
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is being done to work with our neighbouring local authorities to help increase local housing supply? • How many affordable homes have been built since the last Local Plan? • What was the affordable homes need at the start of the current Local Plan period? • How much land is there left which is physically available for housing across Torbay including the number of housing this land can provide? How many of these are predicted as affordable? • What action is being taken to encourage more development of brown field and stalled sites to bring forward new housing. • How much Section 106 money and Housing Grant Fund is in the pot for affordable housing and how much do we anticipate we need going forward? • What happens to money from right to buy and does it have to be reinvested back into affordable or social housing?

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<p>Task and Finish Group (meeting 4 – 15 December 2021)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive an update on the work of TORVISTA in bringing forward social and affordable housing (Liam Montgomery/David Edmondson). • To receive an update from social housing providers and community housing organisations on their work in bringing forward social housing (see additional invitees – Tara Harris/Lianne Hancock). • To determine if the Panel wishes to obtain any further evidence for the review or to convene a wash up meeting to agree their Report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview on work of TORVISTA, including planned and delivered work. • Level of social and affordable housing in train against need. • Shelter conversation and lobbying about affordable / social rents. • Occupancy of social rented properties and how to bring more properties back into use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many properties does TORVISTA have and what sort of size properties are they? What are their plans to increase their portfolio and provide additional affordable housing on Council land? • Based on the information discussed at previous meetings, what action is being taken to meet the need for affordable and social housing? • How can we work differently together to increase availability of suitable accommodation? • What consideration has been given to healthy homes options, and any additional climate change and building regulation changes that could impact delivery of new or better homes and what grants could be available to tenants or appropriate landlords to bring this forward? • What is being done to encourage people to move out of property that is too large for their needs to free this up for larger families? • What is being done to encourage people to move out of property that is too large for their needs?

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the decision-making process joined up and are the decision-makers making the right decisions and following up to ensure that the subsequent actions are being taken e.g. need a couple of hundred new affordable properties a year going forward. <p>Additional invitees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanctuary Housing • Sovereign Housing • Fran Mason – Community Housing Organisation
Overview and Scrutiny Board – (to be confirmed)	Agreement of final report to Cabinet/Council		

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