

Torbay Housing and Health Needs Assessment

November 2015



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The Torbay area

Torbay is a coastal area, encompassing the three towns of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham. It covers an area of 62.9 square kilometres/ 24.3 square miles and is administered by Torbay Council.

This needs assessment illustrates the housing and health profile and needs of the population, and the links between housing and health.

Figure 1. Distribution of homes/households within Torbay

Urban areas		Rural areas	
Number	%	Number	%
58,668	99%	342	1%

Source: 2011 census, www.nomisweb.co.uk

The vast majority of Torbay households are within an urban location.

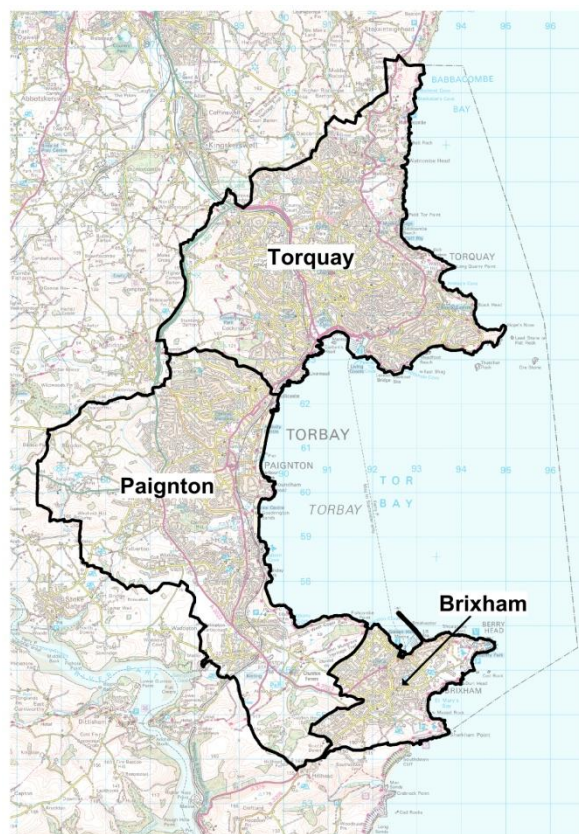


Figure 2. Population and households within each town

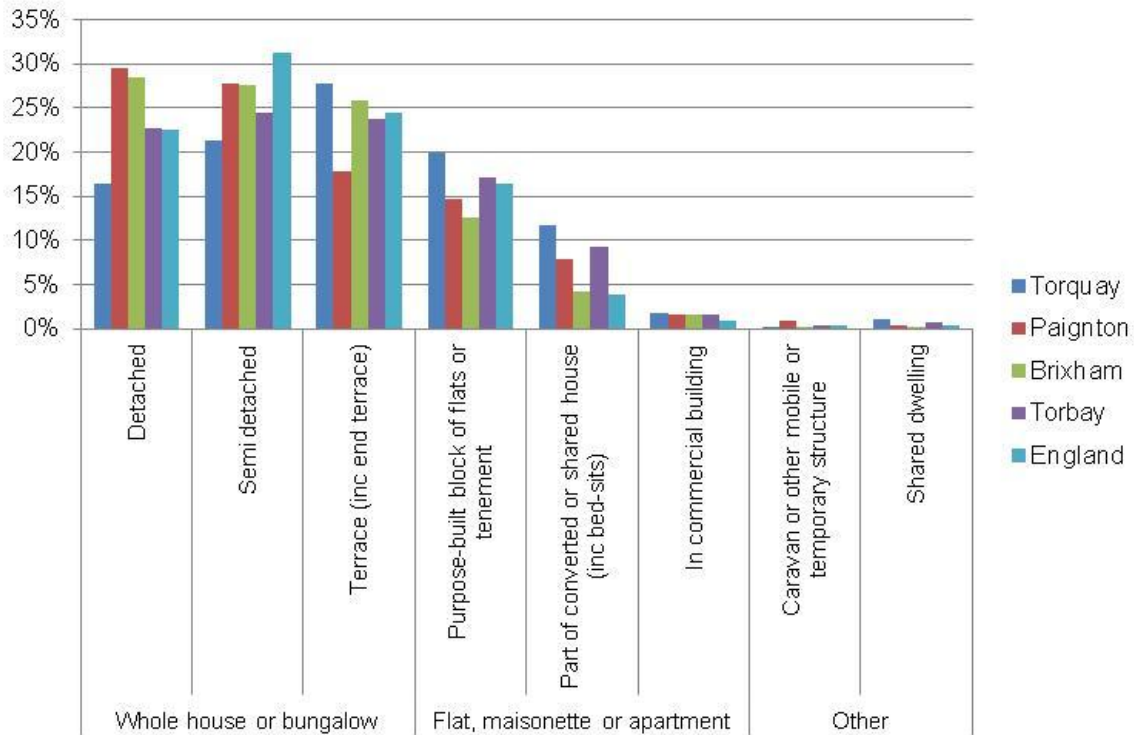
Town	Number of households	Number of people	% of households within each town
Torquay	29,510	65,245	50%
Paignton	21,764	49,021	37%
Brixham	7,736	16,693	13%
Total in Torbay	59,010	130,959	

Source: 2011 census, www.nomisweb.co.uk

Homes in Torbay

Dwelling type and tenure

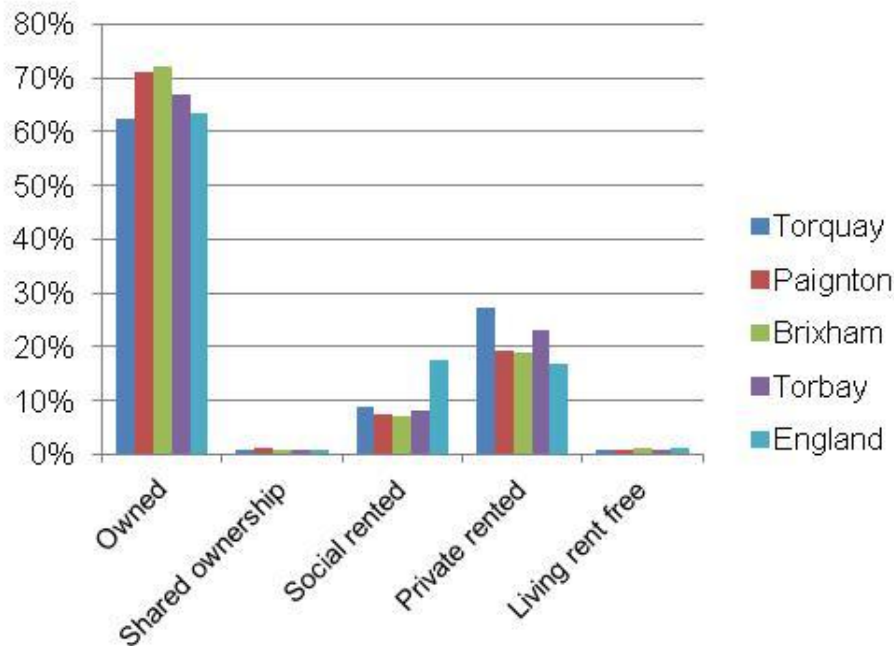
Figure 3. Dwelling type of homes in each geographical area



Source: 2011 census, www.nomisweb.co.uk

There is a higher proportion of flats, maisonettes, apartments, and bedsits in Torquay than in Paignton, Brixham or England, whereas Torquay has a much lower proportion of detached or semi-detached houses than these areas.

Figure 4. Tenure of households in each geographical area



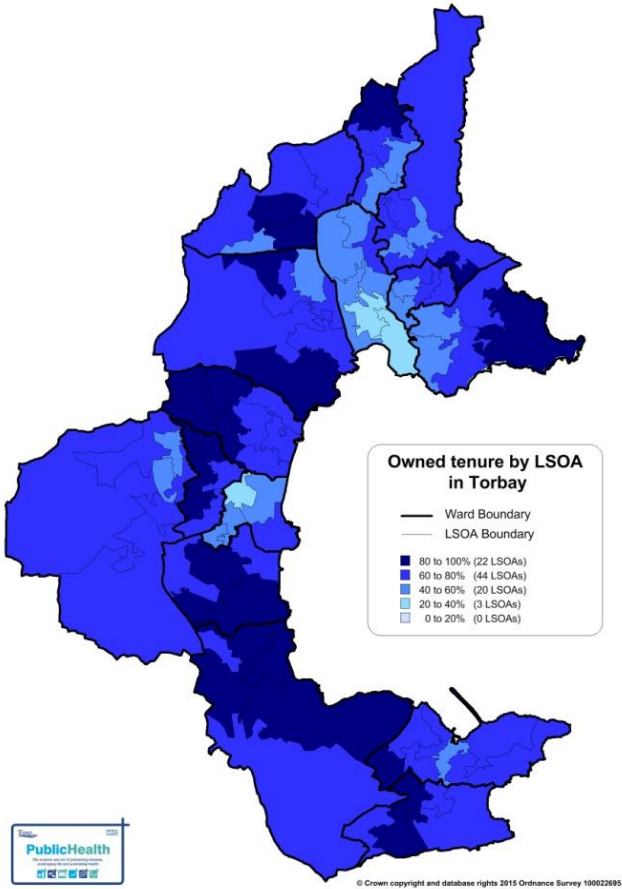
Source: 2011 census, www.nomisweb.co.uk

The tenure chart (Figure 4) shows that there is a:

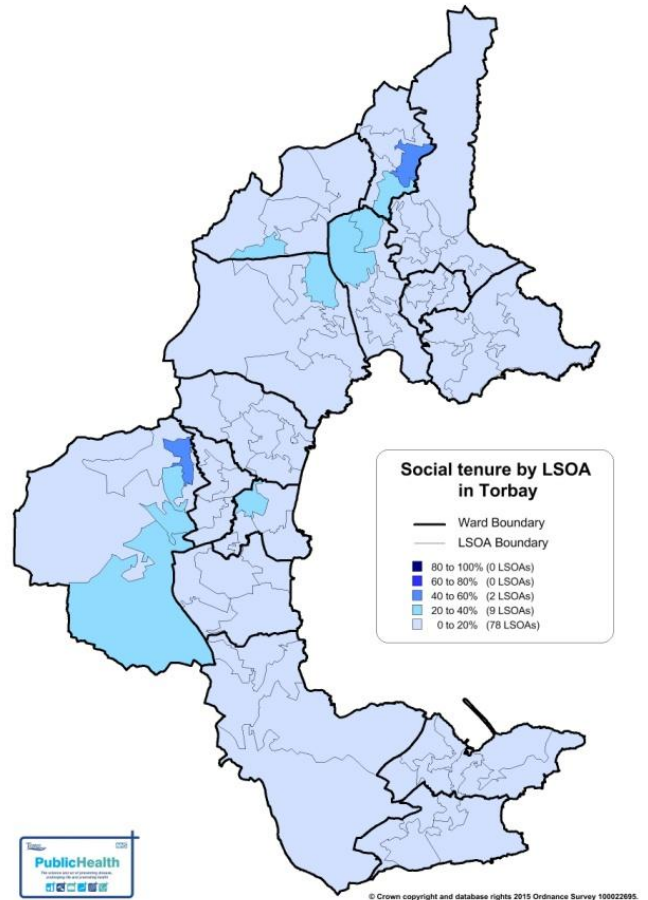
- Higher percentage of home ownership in Paignton and Brixham compared to England
- Significantly lower percentage of social rented housing in all three towns
- Significantly higher percentage of private rented housing in Torbay compared to England, particularly in Torquay

On the next page are maps showing this spread of tenure types throughout Torbay, as recorded in the 2011 census. Maps show the proportion of households that own their homes, live in social rented homes, or private rented homes within each small area (LSOA- Lower Super Output Area) of the Bay. These maps do not include shared ownership or households that live rent free (which are shown in Figure 4 above). However, these only make up 2% of all tenures.

Proportion of owned tenure by LSOA in Torbay - 2015



Proportion of social tenure by LSOA in Torbay - 2015



Proportion of private tenure by LSOA in Torbay - 2015

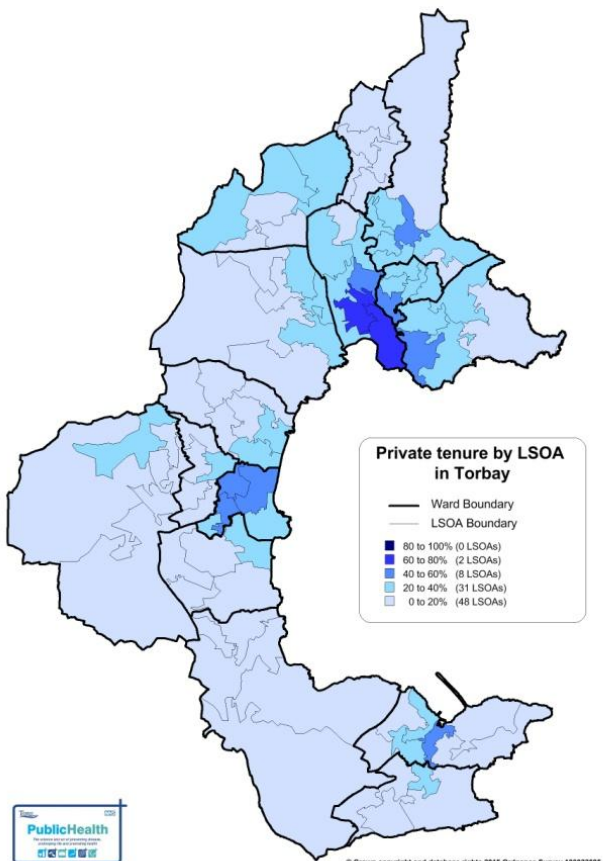


Figure 5. Owned tenure
Figure 6. Social rented tenure
Figure 7. Private rented tenure

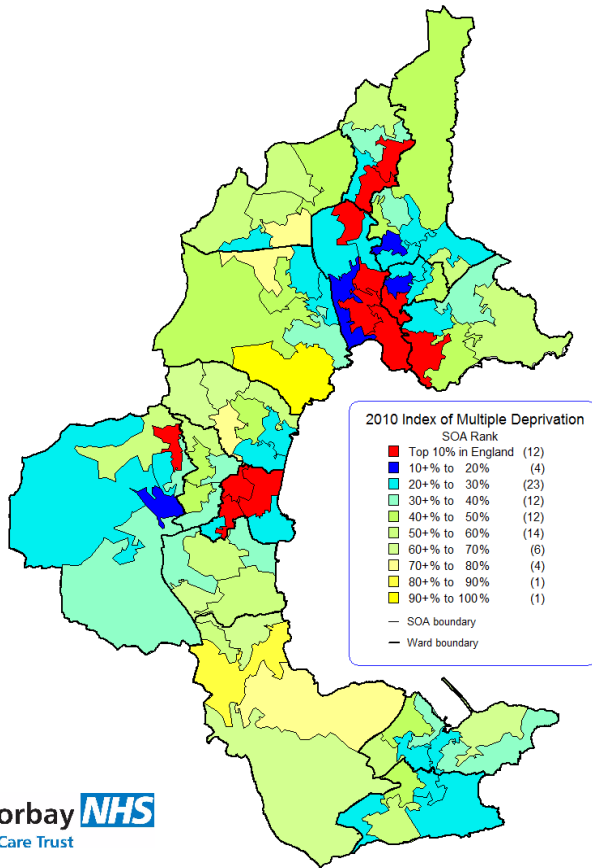
The darker the area of the map, the higher percentage of the tenure type in that area. The dark lines show ward boundaries

There is generally a high proportion of home ownership across the Bay and a low proportion of social rented housing.

Areas within Watcombe ward (Torquay) and Blatchcombe (Paignton) have the highest proportions of social rented housing.

Private rented properties are mostly situated in Torquay, Paignton and Brixham town centres

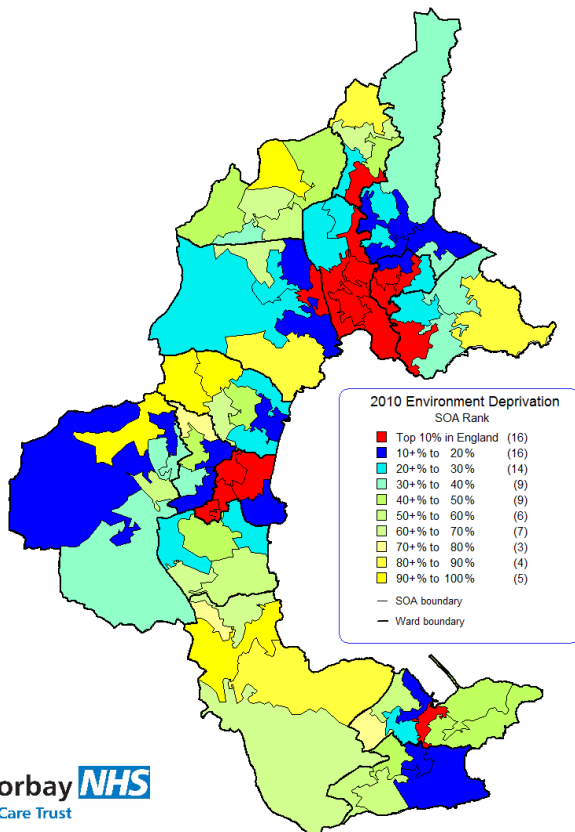
**THE ENGLISH INDICES OF DEPRIVATION 2010
RANK OF INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION**



Torbay NHS
Care Trust

Source: Department for Communities and Local Government

**THE ENGLISH INDICES OF DEPRIVATION 2010
RANK OF LIVING ENVIRONMENT DEPRIVATION**



Torbay NHS
Care Trust

Source: Department for Communities and Local Government

Figure 8. Rank of index of multiple deprivation

Figure 9. Rank of living environment deprivation

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2010, is a group of indicators that measure different aspects of deprivation and give a score for each geographical area.

Figure 8 opposite shows the spread of deprivation throughout the Bay. The red areas are those within the top 10% most deprived areas in England. This mainly includes areas within the wards- Tormohun, Watcombe and Roundham with Hyde.

Figure 9 below shows 'living environment' deprivation, which measures quality of individuals' immediate indoor and outdoor living environment- quality of housing, air quality and road traffic accidents. The areas that are within the top 10% most deprived in England in Figure 9 are similar to Figure 8 but include a small area in Brixham.

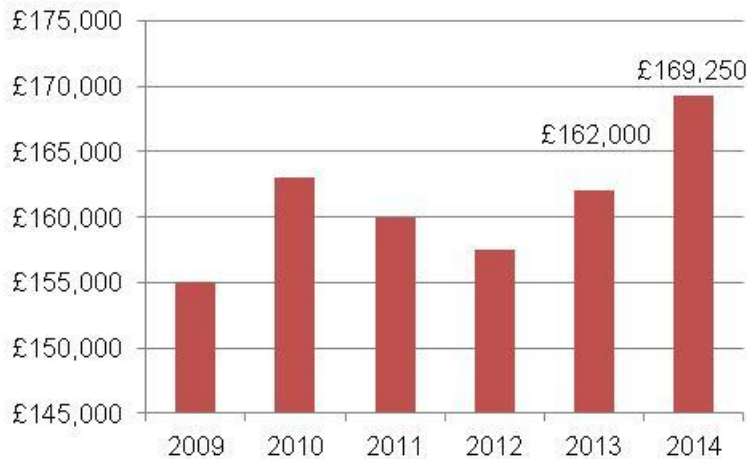
Comparing these maps with the tenure maps on the previous page:

- Areas with a low proportion of home ownership are within areas with the highest levels of deprivation (parts of Tormohun and Roundham with Hyde)
- Areas with the highest proportion of private rented households are also the areas of highest deprivation
- Areas with the highest proportion of social rented housing (within Watcombe and Blatchcombe wards) also are within the top 10% most deprived areas in England

House prices and earnings

Figures 10 and 11 below show the average (median) house price of all homes sold and registered in the year.

Figure 10. Average (median) house sale price of homes in Torbay



N.B. The 'median' is a type of average. The median property price/income is determined by ranking all property prices/incomes in ascending order and then selecting the middle value so that an equal number of values lie above and below that value. This means that the final figure is less susceptible to distortion by extreme values such as a small number of very high house prices or very high earners.

Source: Land Registry, House price statistics for small areas, www.ons.gov.uk

Figure 11. Average (median) house price by property type 2014 in Torbay

All dwelling types	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats and Maisonettes
£169,250	£246,000	£179,084	£150,000	£112,000

Source: Land Registry, House price statistics for small areas, www.ons.gov.uk

Figure 12. Average (median) house price to income ratio

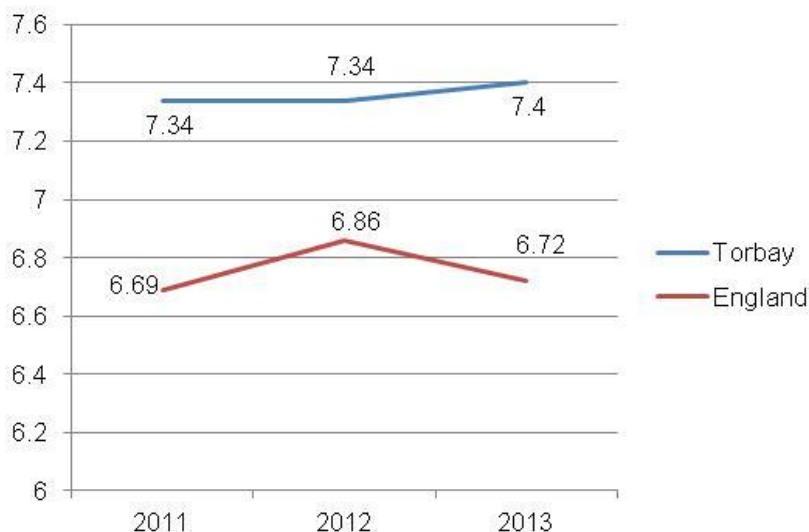


Figure 12 is a way of working out affordability of buying property- the higher the ratio, the less affordable it is for households to buy the property.

In 2013 the ratio figure for Torbay was 7.4 which means that it cost over 7 times the average Torbay salary to buy the average Torbay house. This ratio has remained consistently higher compared to England.

Source: Land Registry and the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Table 577, www.gov.uk, 2012 and 2013 figures are provisional

In 2014, the median gross annual income of Torbay residents who are full time workers was £22,200 compared to £27,500 in England as a whole, over £5000 a year less. Torbay

residents have earned at least £5000 less than the England average for the last three years. The Torbay workforce (full time workers who work in Torbay) earned less at £20,843 a year in 2014¹, showing the low earnings available within workplaces in the Bay

‘Average earnings of full time employees within the workforce across South Devon and Torbay are considerably lower than the England average. However, the average part time earnings are generally similar to the England average’²

Higher house prices and lower wages can indicate why many people in Torbay live in private rented housing.

Homes delivered

Figure 13. Net housing completions in Torbay



Source: Torbay Council, Figures are rounded to the nearest 10

Definition of Affordable Housing:

Affordable housing is social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

Affordable housing should:

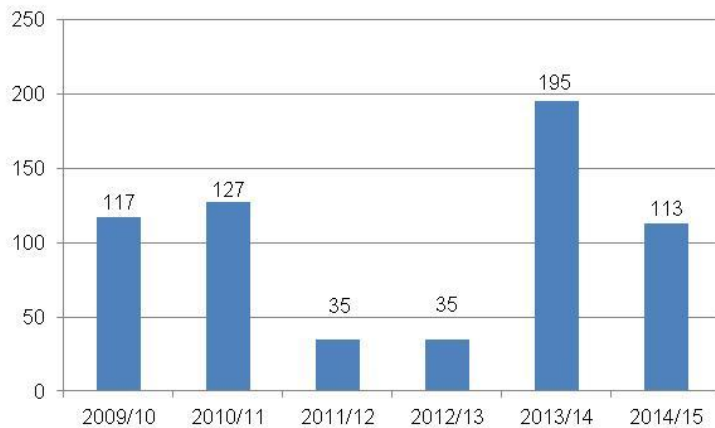
Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices; and include provisions for:

- (i) the home to be retained for future eligible households; *or*
- (ii) if these restrictions are lifted, for any subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

¹ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), www.nomisweb.co.uk

² Page 43, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), Living and working well, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

Figure 14. Total affordable homes delivered in Torbay



Source: Torbay Council

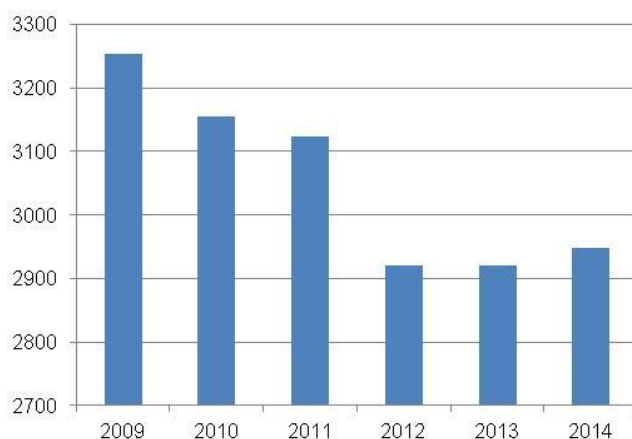
'Affordable housing is an issue in Torbay with an undersupply of social housing and relatively expensive property prices. There is a large waiting list for social housing.'³

'There is a pressing need for affordable housing in Torbay to meet the needs of local people who are unable to afford open market house prices or rents'⁴

The Local Plan 'seeks to identify land for the delivery of around 480 homes per annum, equating to about 8,900 new homes over the Plan period of 2012-2030'⁵ (draft, proposed Replacement Main Modification to the Plan)

Vacant dwellings

Figure 15. Number of vacant dwellings in Torbay (all vacants)



These figures cover all vacant dwellings of all tenures. These are residential properties/accommodation registered as vacant for Council Tax purposes.

Prior to April 2013 in Torbay there was a full Council Tax exemption on empty properties for the first 6 months and then the full charge less 10% was applicable indefinitely. From April 2013 there was a full Council Tax exemption for only 1 month and then the full charge was applicable.

Source: Department for Communities and Local Government, Table 615, www.gov.uk, Council Taxbase, Numbers as at a date in October each year

³ Page 26, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Population overview, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

⁴ Page 130, Torbay Local Plan –A landscape for success. The Plan for Torbay 2012-32 and beyond (Proposed Submission Plan) February 2014, www.torbay.gov.uk/newlocalplan

⁵ Torbay Local Plan– A landscape for success. The Plan for Torbay 2012-32 and beyond, (Proposed Replacement Main Modification- RMM1), June 2015, www.torbay.gov.uk/newlocalplan

Private rented sector

'For many households, the private rented sector is the first and only option as home ownership is financially out of reach and the demand for social housing far outstrips supply'⁶

Young people

The Youth Homelessness Prevention Commissioning Strategy says that due to limited availability of social and supported housing most young people will be living in private rented housing. 'In Torbay there needs to be greater focus on the various options that could be in place for managing and working effectively with this resource to make it more accessible, more successful, and a positive experience for young people.'⁷

Dependent children

'Around 24% of all households (all ages) across Torbay ... are privately rented compared to a national average of 18%. This is significantly higher for dependent children'⁸

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

A HMO is generally a property occupied by more than one household and more than two people, and may include bedsits, shared houses, non self contained flats and some self contained flats.

The Government introduced the Mandatory Licensing Scheme from 6 April 2006. The scheme requires that larger HMOs, with a greater risk to the occupier's health and safety are licensed.

HMOs which are required to have a mandatory license are;

- Properties with five or more occupiers (who form more than one household)
- Set out over three storeys or more (including attic conversions, basements and commercial premises)
- And have an element of sharing of an amenity (at least two households share a bathroom or kitchen) or lack an amenity (one or more dwellings lack immediate access to a bathroom or kitchen)
- Some other HMOs may need to be licensed in accordance with the Housing Act 2004

Figure 16. Licensed HMOs in Torbay, registered under the Housing Act 2004

Town	Number	%
Torquay	54	67%
Paignton	25	31%
Brixham	2	2%
Total	81	

Source: Torbay Council, <http://www.torbay.gov.uk/registers> Public register of HMOs as downloaded on 25 February 2015

The highest proportion of licensed HMOs are situated in Torquay

The ward with the highest number of licensed HMOs is Tormohun which is one of the areas in the Bay with the highest concentration of private rented accommodation, along with Roundham with Hyde ward in Paignton, which has the second highest number of HMOs

⁶ Page 2, 201415 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Population overview, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

⁷ Page 9, Youth homelessness prevention commissioning strategy, Torbay

⁸ Page 20, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Starting Well, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

This table only includes those HMOs that are licensed, so does not show a true spread of HMOs in Torbay. There are many more HMOs that do not require a license under the Housing Act

There are about 1,450 HMOs in the Bay, forming 2.3% of Torbay's housing stock compared to a national rate of 1.6%.⁹

Private rents

Figure 17. Monthly cost of private rent, 2013/14

	Monthly average/ median private rent
Torbay	£575
England	£595

Source: Valuation Office Agency, Private Rental Market Statistics Table 2.7, taken from a sample

This figure is across all sizes of accommodation. It does not include Housing Benefit funded tenancies. The samples used are not statistical and may not be consistent over time, as such the data should not be compared across time periods or between areas. This means that the statistics presented should be considered as indicative.

Torbay social housing register- applicant households

Council and housing association homes available to rent are advertised through Devon Home Choice. Applicants can look for and apply for social housing within all the Local Authority areas within Devon.

The Housing Act 1996 requires that 'Reasonable Preference' for housing must be given to people in certain categories. Applicants are assessed and given a band A-D, depending on housing need and placed on the housing register. Once on the housing register applicants can bid for properties they are interested in. In 2011 the Localism Act allowed Councils to restrict access to their housing registers. In May 2014 Torbay and other areas removed a fifth band- E (no housing need) from the register.

Torbay has introduced a five year residency requirement where applicants or a member of the household need to have lived in Torbay for five years to be eligible to go on the Torbay housing register. There are a number of exceptions to this.

The information in this section relates to households on the Torbay housing register, so applicants who have stated a wish to live in Torbay. It analyses the register as on one date- 9 January 2015.

Figure 18. Number of applicant households on the Torbay housing register within Bands A-D of housing need

Jan 13	Apr 13	Jul 13	Oct 13	Jan 14	Apr 14	Jul 14	Oct 14	Jan 15	Apr 15
1,690	1,642	1,631	1,588	1,448	1,372	1,428	1,489	1,638	1,857

Source: Devon Home Choice, Quarterly monitoring report, April 2015, page 2, www.devonhomechoice.com, as on 1st of each month or closest date available

⁹ Page 134, Torbay Local Plan– A landscape For success. The Plan for Torbay 2012-32 and beyond (Proposed Submission Plan) February 2014, www.torbay.gov.uk/newlocalplan

Figure 18 above shows that:

- The number on the Torbay housing register (within bands A-D) is increasing, a similar trend to other Local Authorities within Devon

Across Devon as a whole there has been an increase in numbers in housing need for the fourth quarter in a row but the total figure remains 22% lower than the peak in October 2011¹⁰

Following a change of computer system in June 2014 the number of applications increased whilst a process to remove out of date applications is developed. Once in place it is anticipated that numbers on the register will start to fall as old applications are removed

'The greatest need across all Local Authority areas [within Devon] remains for one bedroom properties'¹¹

Figure 19. Number of applicant households on the Torbay housing register, 9 January 2015- number of bedrooms needed and band of need

Number of bedrooms needed	Band of housing need of applicant households					Total
	Band A (Emergency need)	Band B (High need)	Band C (Medium need)	Band D (Low need)	Band E (No need)	
1 bedroom		204	147	576		936
2 bedrooms		78	153	211		445
3 bedrooms		26	98	66		190
4 bedrooms or more		31	60	24		116
Total	Under 5	339	458	877	Under 15	1687

Source: Devon Home Choice, Under 5 and under 15 - low numbers suppressed due to data confidentiality

The largest number of applicants have been placed in band D (low housing need) with a requirement for one bedroom

Please note that since May 2014 Torbay has no longer been allowing applicants who would be in band E (No housing need) on the housing register. The small number in band E in the table above will be cases which are awaiting review and will be either re-banded or closed.

Social housing tenants applying for a new property because they wish to downsize are given a band B need on the Torbay housing register

¹⁰ Page 2, Devon Home Choice quarterly monitoring report April 2015, www.devonhomechoice.com

¹¹ Page 1, Devon Home Choice quarterly monitoring report April 2015, www.devonhomechoice.com

Figure 20. Number of bedrooms needed by applicant households on the Torbay housing register, 9 January 2015- current area of residence

Area of current residence	Number of bedrooms needed				Total
	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms or more	
Torquay	440	195	90	45	770
Paignton	249	138	55	33	475
Brixham	84	44	14	8	150
No fixed abode/ Out of area	163	68	31	30	292
Total	936	445	190	116	1687
% of all applicants on the Torbay register	55%	26%	11%	7%	

Source: Devon Home Choice

Figure 20 above shows that:

- Most applicants live in Torquay. Torquay contains 50% of Torbay households and the 770 Torquay applicants make up 55% of those on the housing register who live in Torbay
- Just over half of applicants living in each town required accommodation with one bedroom

Band of housing need:

- Out of the three towns, Torquay has the highest proportion on the housing register in band B at 25% (191 households)
- Out of the three towns, Brixham has the highest proportion on the housing register in band C at 34% (51 households)

Torbay social housing register- lettings made

General needs homes are those that are not sheltered or supported accommodation.

Figure 21. General needs homes let in Torbay to applicants on the register- offers accepted

Year	Band of housing need of applicants					Total
	Band A (Emergency need)	Band B (High need)	Band C (Medium need)	Band D (Low need)	Band E (No need)	
2010/11	28	160	65	13	7	273
2011/12	6	199	97	26	9	337
2012/13	6	168	38	13	6	231
2013/14	10	215	111	36	21	393
2014/15	7	135	97	48	6	293

Source: Devon Home Choice monitoring reports, www.devonhomechoice.com

The number of lets in the financial year 2013-14 were significantly higher than previous figures possibly as a result of moves prompted by welfare reforms¹²

The number and proportion of lettings to applicants within band D has increased in the last two years.

Please note that since May 2014 applicants have not been placed in band E on the housing register meaning lower numbers of allocations to this band of need

Figure 22. General needs homes let in Torbay to applicants on the register- number of bedrooms

Year	Number of bedrooms in the properties				Total
	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms or more	
2010/11	103	99	60	11	273
2011/12	111	138	-	Under 5	337
2012/13	94	94	36	7	231
2013/14	92	189	89	23	393
2014/15	82	139	66	6	293

Source: Devon Home Choice, Under 5- number suppressed due to data confidentiality, '-' number suppressed so low number cannot be calculated

The highest number and proportion of lettings made in the last two years is of properties with two bedrooms

Sheltered homes let in Torbay to applicants on the register:

- Most sheltered homes were let to applicants within band B or C of housing need
- Most properties let contained one bedroom

Spare rooms in social housing

From April 2013, working age tenants living in social housing and receiving Housing Benefit have had a reduction in benefit by 14% if they have one more bedroom than required for the household or 25% if they have more than one extra bedroom.

Figure 23. Reductions in Housing Benefit made due to extra bedrooms, as in December 2014 in Torbay

	Number of households
14% reduction in Housing Benefit (so have 1 extra bedroom)	448
25% reduction in Housing Benefit (so have more than 1 extra bedroom)	96
Total	544

Source: Torbay Council

Altogether there were 4,223 households claiming Housing Benefit in social housing. Therefore in December 2014 around 13% of Housing Benefit claimants living in social housing were affected by 'Removal of the spare room subsidy'.

¹² Page 4, Devon Home Choice quarterly monitoring report, July 2014, www.devonhomechoice.com

The size criteria rules will not apply to the following;

- Any claimant over the qualifying age for state pension credit or with a partner over that age
- Shared ownership cases
- Any claimant who is accepted as homeless under homelessness legislation of the Housing Act 1996
- Any claimant that occupies “Supported Exempt Accommodation”

Please note that the 4,223 claimants cover both working and pension age claimants.

For those that are affected (working age claimants), to mitigate the impact of the restriction Discretionary Housing Payments can be awarded. This is where the claimant applies for additional help with their rent through Discretionary Housing Payments, which is a separate scheme that’s administered by local councils and funded by Central Government (Department of Work and Pensions).

It is not possible to quantify how many households renting from social landlords occupy accommodation where additional bedrooms are required, i.e. the accommodation is smaller than requirements.

Housing Stock Condition

A House Condition Survey for Torbay was carried out in 2011, giving a profile of housing stock in Torbay and whether it met the Decent Homes Standard. This gave a very high level assessment of the type of issues and the scale of which are experienced in Torbay.

The Housing Standards team deal with enquiries from members of the public who are experiencing problems with the condition of their rented accommodation. Tenants are encouraged to approach their landlords and resolve matters informally, if not the Housing Standards team have powers to inspect properties and undertake informant action if required. The following table illustrates the number of enquires that have required intervention by the team when tenants have not managed to resolve them.

Figure 24. Enquiries to Torbay Council relating to housing disrepair that have required an intervention, April 2013 – January 2015

Town where property situated	Number of enquiries	% of enquiries
Torquay	359	61%
Paignton	174	30%
Brixham	56	10%
Total	589	

Source: Torbay Council

Overcrowding

Overcrowding in this instance is defined as where there is one or more bedrooms too few for the household. According to census 2011 figures there is less overcrowding in Torbay social rented and particularly the private rented sector compared to England.

A lower proportion of people who stated they had bad/very bad health were in overcrowded homes (3-4%), than in England (6%)

Deprivation and poverty

As shown by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation maps on page 5, areas of Torbay are within the top 10% most deprived in England. These are also the areas that contain the highest proportions of private rented and social housing in the Bay.

- ‘The local authority areas of Teignbridge and Torbay have been identified as areas on ***the edge of poverty***. That is where a downturn could force thousands into poverty. The report [The Guardian, 2012] suggests parts of the UK that are most vulnerable if the economy worsens, Torbay and Teignbridge were placed 1st and 13th respectively. ... Torbay is ranked as highest nationally, with 37% of households (22,600) identified as being at risk of falling into poverty, compared to 28% in Teignbridge (15,600)’¹³
- ‘Health indicators for Torbay show a mixed pattern strongly related to demographics and levels of deprivation. Overall, average life expectancy in Torbay is in line with national figures but at a ward level, there is a difference as large as 7 years for both males and females between the most prosperous and most disadvantaged wards’¹⁴
- ‘Around 1 in 4 of children in Torbay live in relative poverty compared to around 1 in 5 across England’¹⁵
- **Fuel poverty** is determined by income, fuel price and likely fuel consumption of the household. Levels of fuel poverty in Torbay (2011/12) are very similar to England, slightly higher in Torquay. ‘National level statistics suggest that those most at risk of being in fuel poverty are the younger private renters, as well as those on pre-paid meters’¹⁶

Homelessness

Acceptance of a Full Housing Duty by the Local Authority

Households can make an application for homeless assistance to the Local Authority. The Authority then investigates their situation to determine what duty, if any, is owed to them. To be owed the ‘Full Housing Duty’ applicants need to be eligible for assistance, in priority need for accommodation and homeless unintentionally.

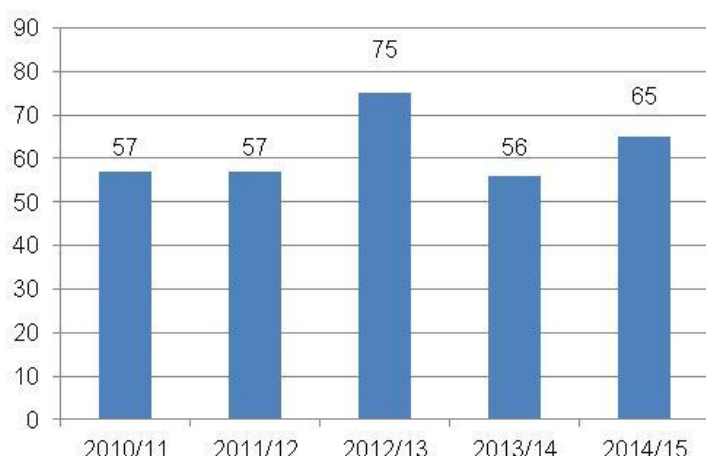
¹³ Page 42, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Population overview, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

¹⁴ Page 53, Torbay Local Plan –A landscape for success. The Plan for Torbay 2012-32 and beyond (Proposed Submission Plan) February 2014, www.torbay.gov.uk/newlocalplan

¹⁵ Page 12, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Executive summary, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

¹⁶ Department of Energy and Climate Change cited in page 29, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Population overview, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

Figure 25. Households accepted as owed the full housing duty, Torbay



There were more households accepted as owed the full duty in 2014/15 than the previous year, but lower than 2012/13

Source: Housing Options service, Torbay Council, Government P1E returns

Figure 26. Number of households accepted as owed the full housing duty per 1000 households



Source: Office of National Statistics, Table 784, using household population projections for each year

Figure 27. One person households accepted as owed the full housing duty, Torbay

Year	Number of one person households	Percentage of all households accepted as owed the full housing duty
2010/11	25	44%
2011/12	29	51%
2012/13	33	44%
2013/14	26	46%
2014/15	32	49%

Source: Housing Options service, Torbay Council, Government P1E returns

One person households make up around 50% of those accepted as owed the full housing duty

In 2013/14 and 2014/15 there were a higher proportion of single female than single male households whereas in the previous three years there were more males than females, but numbers are small so can skew the figures

Source: Torbay Council, Housing Options Team, Government P1E returns

Figure 28. Main reasons for loss of last settled home for applicant households accepted as owed the full housing duty in Torbay

	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner	11	19%	12	21%	18	24%	19	34%	14	22%
Loss of rented/tied accommodation due to:										
• Termination of assured shorthold tenancy	15	26%	17	30%	12	16%	13	23%	8	12%
• Reasons other than termination of assured shorthold tenancy	8	14%	8	14%	10	13%	7	13%	12	18%
Other reasons	23		20		35		17		31	
Total number accepted as owed the full housing duty	57		57		75		56		65	

Source: Torbay Council, Housing Options P1E returns

Domestic violence incidents by a partner are the main reason for loss of the home over the last three years

The other main reasons are the loss of rented/tied accommodation due to termination of assured shorthold tenancy, or the loss of rented tied accommodation due to other reasons

Other reasons for loss of home in Torbay since 2010/11 for those households owed the full housing duty involved very small numbers:

- Parents, other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate
- Non violent breakdown of relationship with partner
- Violent breakdown of relationship involving associated persons (not partner), Other forms of violence (not linked to racial or relationships)
- Harassment (racial and other)
- Mortgage arrears (repossession or other loss of home)
- Rent arrears on private sector dwellings
- Left prison/on remand, left hospital, left other institution or Local Authority care
- Other (e.g. homeless in emergency, sleeping rough or in a hostel, returned from abroad)

Priority need

To be accepted as owed the full housing duty by the Local Authority, the household must be identified as in 'priority need for accommodation'. Households with dependent children and pregnant women are always identified with this as their priority need regardless of any other priority need they may have.

In 2014/15 the number of households accepted as owed the full housing duty where the priority need was due to 'mental illness or disability' more than doubled compared to the previous year and was the highest number for at least the last five years. In 2014/15 this is the most common priority need (outside of children/pregnancy) for households owed the full housing duty, with 15 households (that do not contain dependent children/pregnancy) identified with this as their priority need.

Fleeing domestic violence is another main reason for being accepted as owed the full housing duty.

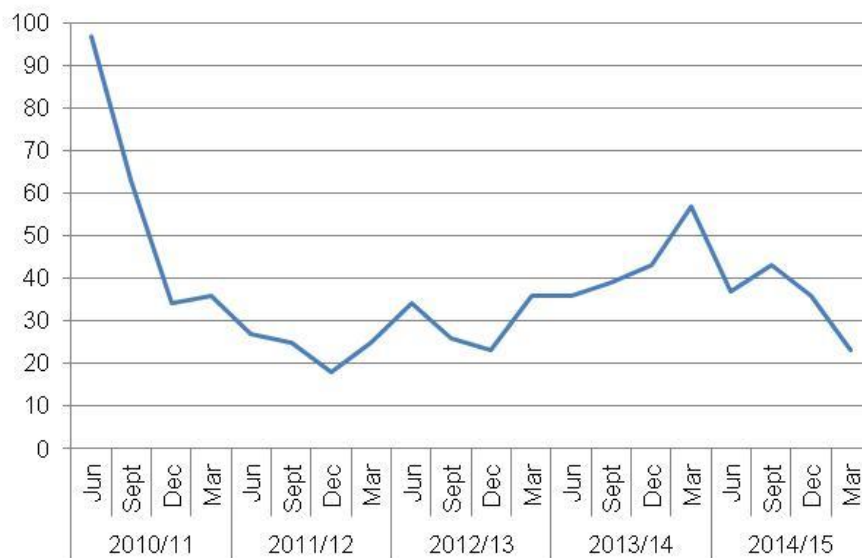
Source: Housing Options service, Torbay Council

Homelessness- temporary accommodation

The Local Authority has a duty to provide emergency accommodation when it has reason to believe that an applicant may be homeless, eligible and in priority need for accommodation.

The Local Authority also has a duty to provide emergency accommodation for households owed the full housing duty.

Figure 29. Number of households in emergency accommodation provided by Torbay Council, measured at the end of each quarter

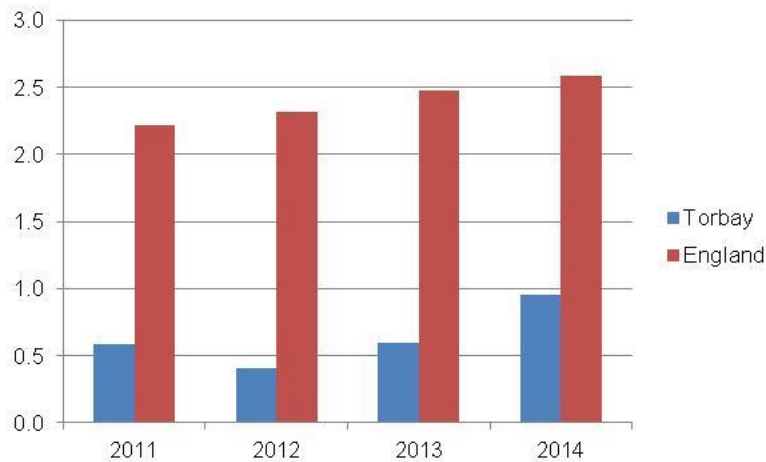


Source: Housing Options service, Torbay Council, P1E returns

The number of households in temporary accommodation measured at the end of each quarter has decreased generally since 2010/11, with a rise in 2013/14

As in June 2015 the number of households in temporary accommodation had increased to 52.

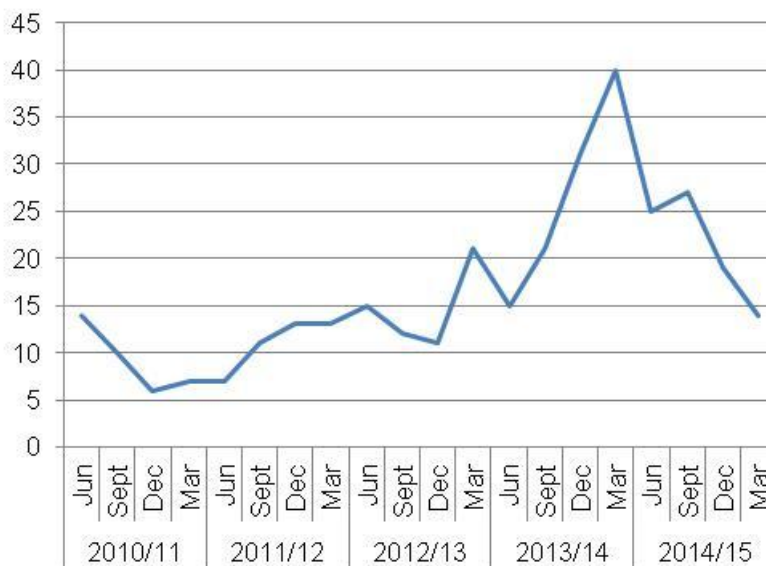
Figure 30. Number of households in temporary accommodation per 1000 households, measured on 31 March each year



Torbay has a lower rate compared to England with an increase in 2014

Source: Office of National Statistics, Table 784, www.gov.uk, using household population projections for each year.

Figure 31. Number of one person households in temporary accommodation



Source: Housing Options service, Torbay Council, Government P1E returns

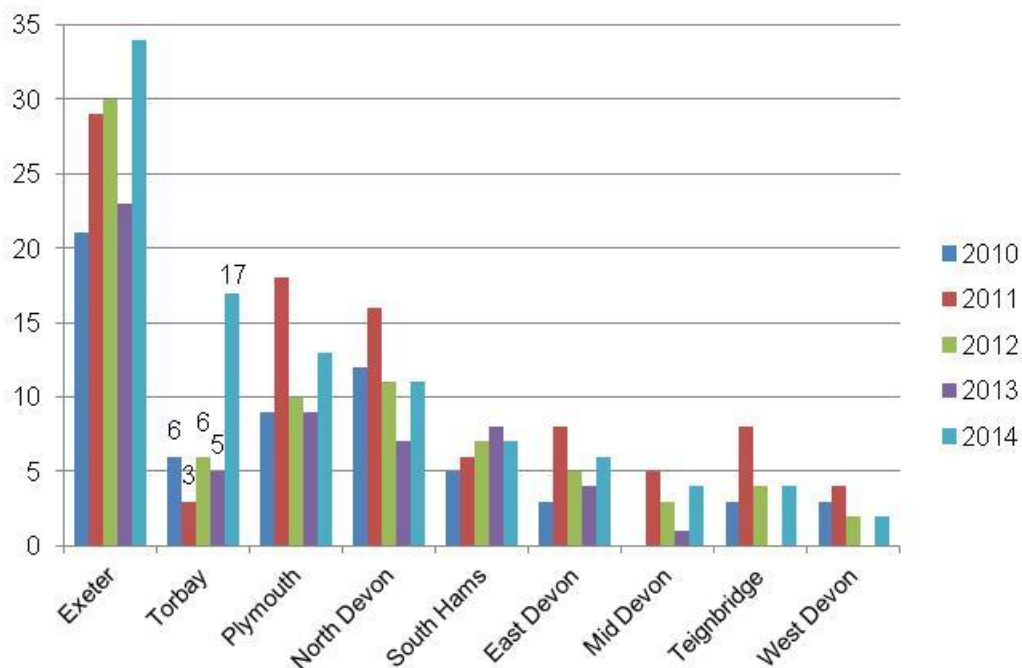
There was a high peak in use of temporary accommodation by one person households, particularly males, around the end of 2013/14.

'In the first half of 2014/15 there has been an increase in the use of emergency temporary accommodation for young people following a reduction in 2013/14'¹⁷

¹⁷ Page 15, Youth homelessness prevention commissioning strategy, Torbay

Rough sleeping

Figure 32. Counts and estimates of the number of rough sleepers in Devon, 2010-2014



Source: Department for Communities and Local Government, www.gov.uk
Lack of a column for a year means the estimate was 0.

The count/estimate takes place in Autumn each year.

- A count is a single night snapshot of the number of rough sleepers in a local authority area
- An estimate is the number of people thought to be sleeping rough in the area on any one night in a chosen week
- All of the above were estimates except: Exeter- 2010, 2011, 2013; Torbay- 2011; Mid Devon- 2013

Between 2013 and 2014, the Torbay estimate increased from 5 to 17 rough sleepers, an increase of 240%. All other Local Authority areas in the chart above (except South Hams) saw an increase in this period. England as a whole rose from 2,414 to 2,744 rough sleepers between 2013 and 2014- an increase of 14%

Accommodation for single homeless people

The Leonard Stocks Centre is a 24-bed hostel (engagement and resettlement centre) which provides accommodation and support to single homeless people with support needs and a local connection.

Figure 33. Number of people moving into Leonard Stocks Centre

Year	Number of clients
2009/10	91
2010/11	121
2011/12	91
2012/13	106
2013/14	115
2014/15	108

Source: Chapter 1 and Centre for Housing Research, <https://supportingpeople.st-andrews.ac.uk>

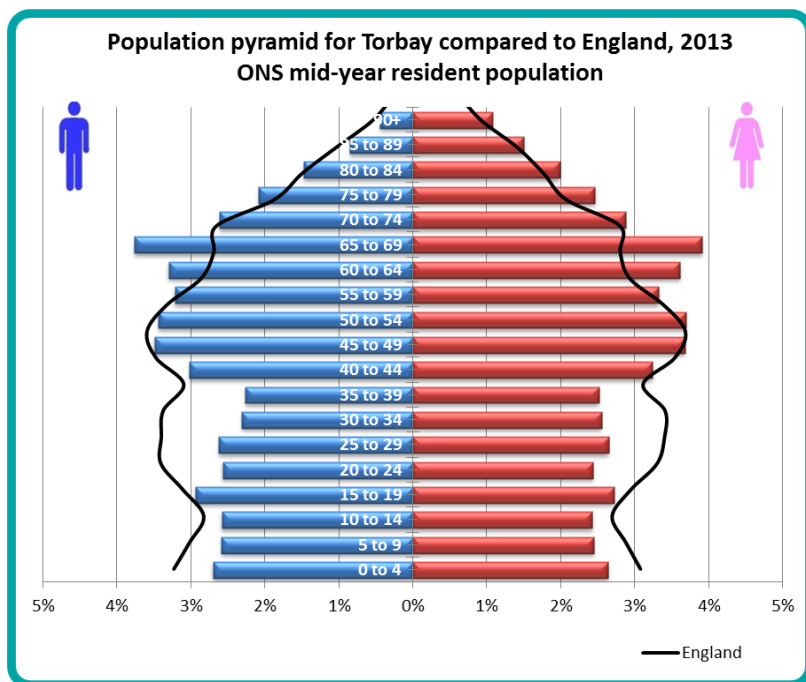
- In 2012/13 and 2013/14 there was an increase in people aged 51 years and over using Leonard Stocks Centre
- Most people using the service since 2010/11 were aged 25-50
- In 2014/15 28% of people who left the service rented privately owned accommodation. None in the last 6 years were recorded as moving into social housing or becoming owner occupiers

Source: Chapter 1 and Centre for Housing Research, <https://supportingpeople.st-andrews.ac.uk>

The population of Torbay

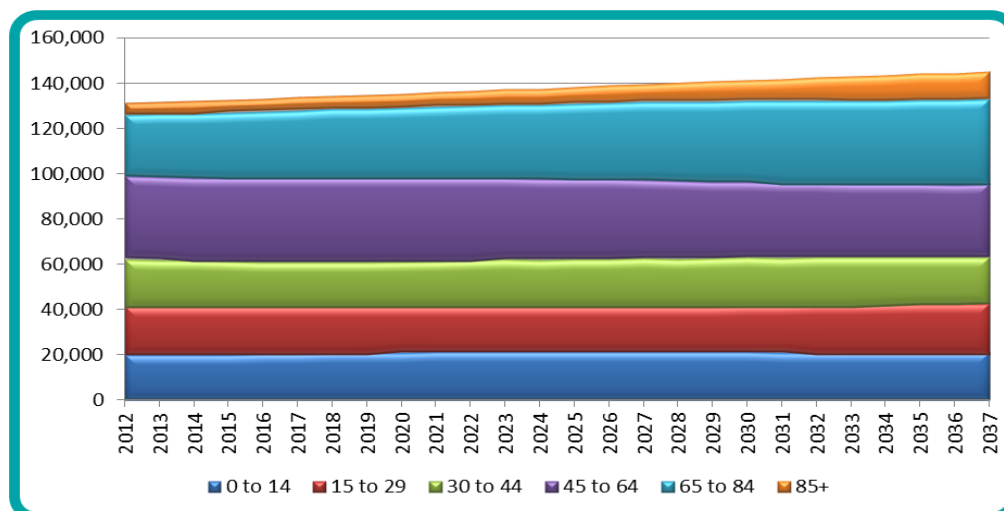
Age and gender

Figure 34



Future population estimates

Figure 35. Estimates of the age of the future population- up to 2037



Source: 2012 based subnational population projections, Office of National Statistics

An ageing population:

Overall there is expected to be an increase in Torbay's resident population, most noticeably those aged 65 and over and those aged 85 years and over. The population is projected to rise from 132,200 in the year 2014 to 145,200 in 2037.

Figure 36. Future resident population estimates by age group (proportion)

Age Group	Torbay			England		
	2014	2018	2022	2014	2018	2022
0 to 14	15.3%	15.6%	15.7%	17.8%	18.1%	18.1%
15 to 29	16.0%	15.2%	14.6%	19.5%	18.6%	17.9%
30 to 44	15.6%	14.8%	15.0%	19.9%	19.4%	19.7%
45 to 64	27.5%	27.4%	26.6%	25.3%	25.4%	25.0%
65 to 84	21.6%	22.7%	23.4%	15.2%	15.8%	16.4%
85+	4.0%	4.3%	4.8%	2.4%	2.6%	2.9%

Source: 2012 based subnational population projections, Office of National Statistics

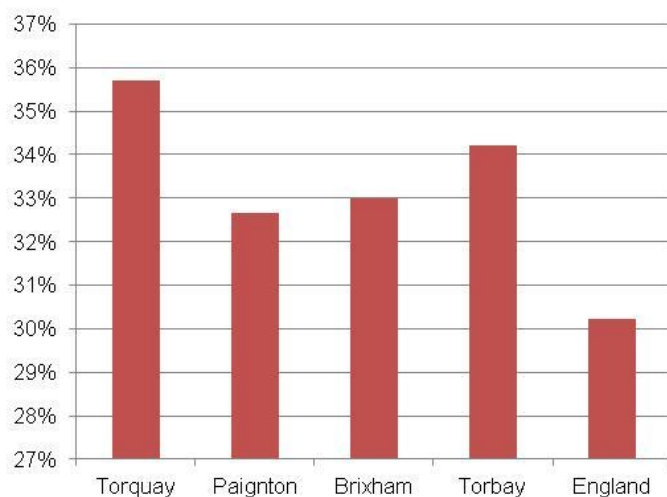
Figure 36 above shows that the proportion of people aged 45 years and over is projected to be higher in Torbay compared to England, with an increase in number and percentage aged 65 and over.

Groups within the population

Below are a selection of population groups:

One person households

Figure 37. One person households in Torbay



Source: 2011 census, www.nomisweb.co.uk

All three towns have a higher proportion of one person households- Torquay has significantly more- compared to England.

Lone parent families

'Torbay has higher proportions of lone parent families'¹⁸

Proportions of households with a dependent child aged 0 to 4 with a lone parent is highest in Torquay¹⁹

The census shows that proportionally the private rented sector contains 3% more lone parents households with dependent children compared with England.

Older people living alone

'Social isolation and loneliness have a detrimental effect on health and wellbeing. Studies show that being lonely or isolated can impact on blood pressure, and is closely linked to depression. Older people are particularly vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness owing to loss of friends and family, mobility or low income'²⁰

The census shows that compared with England:

¹⁸ Page 19, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Developing Well, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

¹⁹ Page 20, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Starting Well, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

²⁰ Page 2, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Ageing and dying well, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

- Social rented properties contain a higher proportion of one person households aged over 65- 22% in Torbay compared to 19% in England. The proportion is higher in Paignton and Brixham.
- 18% of owned properties were owned by one person households aged over 65 compared to 13% in England. In Brixham it is higher
- Private rented properties in Torbay contain 5% more one person households aged over 65, this is higher in Brixham

Travellers

'A local assessment of traveller accommodation need in Torbay was carried out by the Council in Summer/Autumn 2013. The study confirmed that no evidence existed that indicated a need for the Council to make provision for permanent or transit site accommodation for travellers, namely 'gypsies and travellers' and 'travelling showpeople'. However, it is intended that the need for accommodation will be kept under review in conjunction with other Devon authorities.'²¹

Young people

Torbay's Youth Homelessness Prevention Commissioning Strategy says that:

- A range of options is needed to suit the complexity and diversity of need, and there is currently a lack of services for young people with complex needs and/or challenging behaviour
- Supported accommodation needs to replicate future experience of accommodation so to better manage their expectations. Young people need to be able to access brief intervention support if they have any problems relating to their tenancy/income. Young people need to be able to understand their responsibilities as a tenant.

Benefits

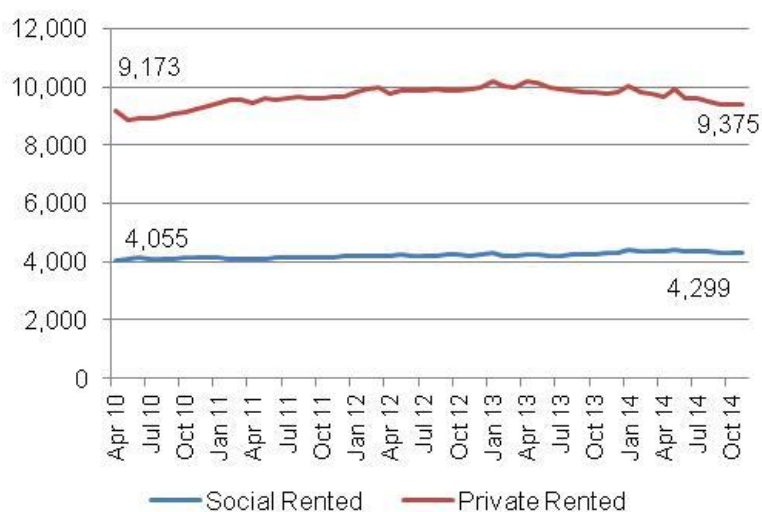
Housing Benefit claimants

Payments to Torbay residents are administered by Torbay Council. Tables below give some information about the profile of claimants in Torbay.

The figures for February 2015 are based on a database extract run on 17 February 2015 showing a snapshot of claimants as on that date.

²¹ Page 136, Torbay Local Plan– A landscape for success. The Plan for Torbay 2012-32 and beyond (Proposed Submission Plan) February 2014, www.torbay.gov.uk/newlocalplan

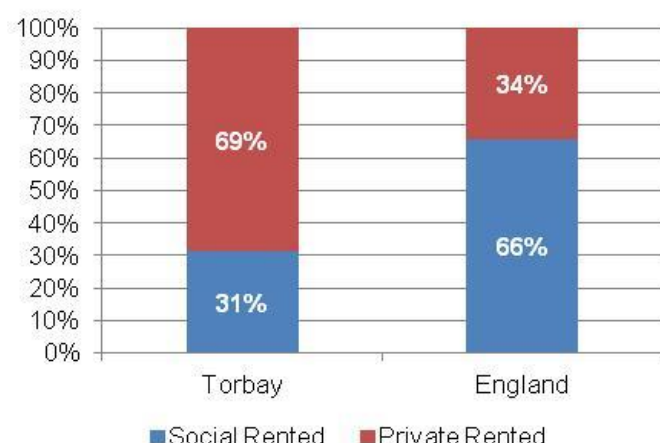
Figure 38 Number of Housing Benefit claimants, by tenure



Torbay has a higher proportion of private rented tenure compared to England. This likely accounts for the difference between Torbay and England in Figure 39 although there could also be additional reasons

Figure 38 shows that the number of claimants is much higher in private rented accommodation in Torbay. Figure 39 shows that in 2014 the proportion of claimants in private rented housing was 69% in Torbay compared to 34% in England as a whole

Figure 39. Tenure of Housing Benefit claimants, 2014



Source: Department of Work and Pensions, <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>, Figure 38- count as on one day each month

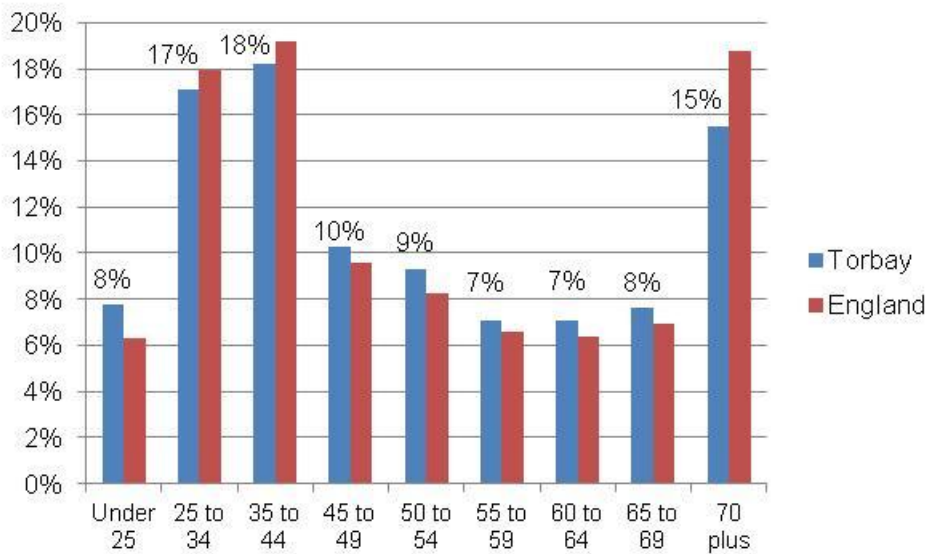
Figure 40. Tenure type of Housing Benefit claimants, February 2015

	Proportion of claimants in social rented	Proportion of claimants in private rented	Total number of claimants	% in each town out of total Torbay claimants
Torquay	30%	70%	7,852	57%
Paignton	32%	68%	4,307	32%
Brixham (includes Churston and Galmpton)	34%	66%	1,508	11%
Total in Torbay	31%	69%	13,667	

Source: Torbay Council

Figure 40 shows that the proportion of claimants living in private rented accommodation is highest in Torquay and lowest in Brixham.

Figure 41. Age of Housing Benefit claimants, 2014



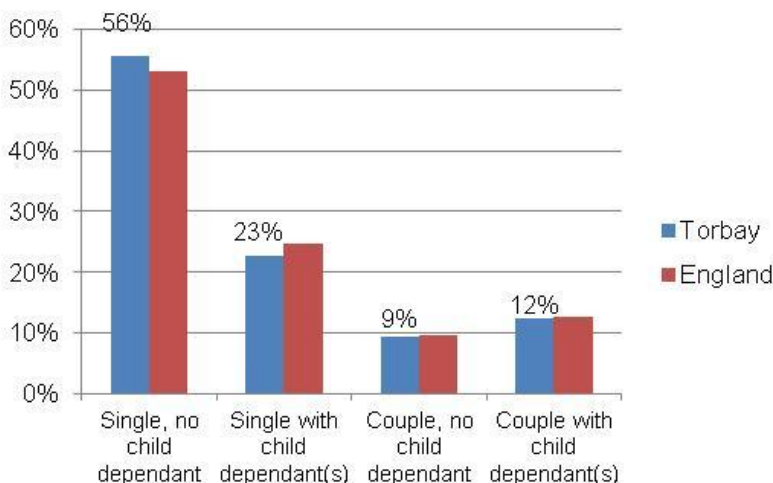
Source: Department of Work and Pensions, <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>, refers to the age of individual claimant or, if claiming as a couple, the eldest age within that couple

Compared to England, Torbay has a lower percentage of claimants aged 70 years and over but a higher percentage aged under 25

Within Torbay (February 2015):

- Brixham (including Churston and Galampton) has a higher proportion of claimants in the older age ranges, particularly aged 70 and over
- Torquay has the highest proportion of claimants in the younger age ranges.

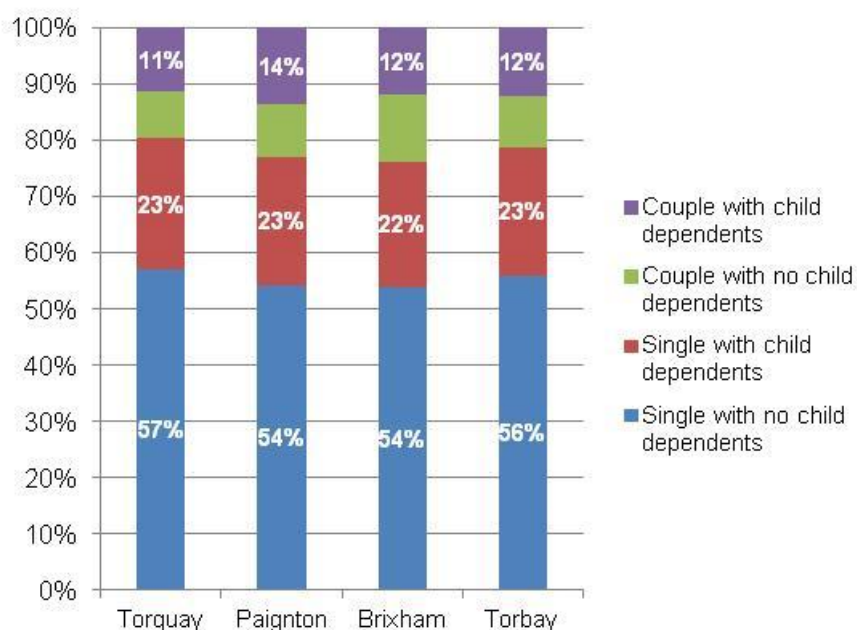
Figure 42. Family type of Housing Benefit claimants, 2014



Compared to England, Torbay has a higher proportion of claimants who are single with no child dependants and a lower proportion of claimants who are single with child dependants. These proportions and numbers have remained similar since 2010

Source: Department of Work and Pensions, <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>

Figure 43. Family type of Housing Benefit claimants, February 2015



Source: Torbay Council, count as on one date

Figure 43 shows that within Torbay (February 2015):

- Torquay has the highest proportion of claimants who are single with no child dependents (57%) and the lowest proportion of claimants who are couples (11%)
- Paignton has the highest proportion of claimants who are couples with child dependents (14%)
- Brixham (includes Churston and Galmpton) has the highest proportion of claimants who are couples with no child dependents (12%)

Council Tax Support claimants

The figures for February 2015 are based on a database extract run on 17 February 2015 showing a snapshot of claimants as on that date.

Figure 44. Claimants of Council Tax Support, February 2015

Town	Number of claimants	Number of households with a liability to pay Council Tax*	% of claimants out of households with a liability to pay Council Tax
Torquay	8,592	30,231	28%
Paignton	5,535	20,966	26%
Brixham (includes Churston and Galmpton)	2,138	8,706	25%
Total in Torbay	16,265	59,903	

Source: Torbay Council, *Excludes properties where there are 100% exemptions, discounts and reliefs

Figure 44 shows that the town with the highest proportion of households claiming Council Tax Support is Torquay with 28% of the households with a liability claiming

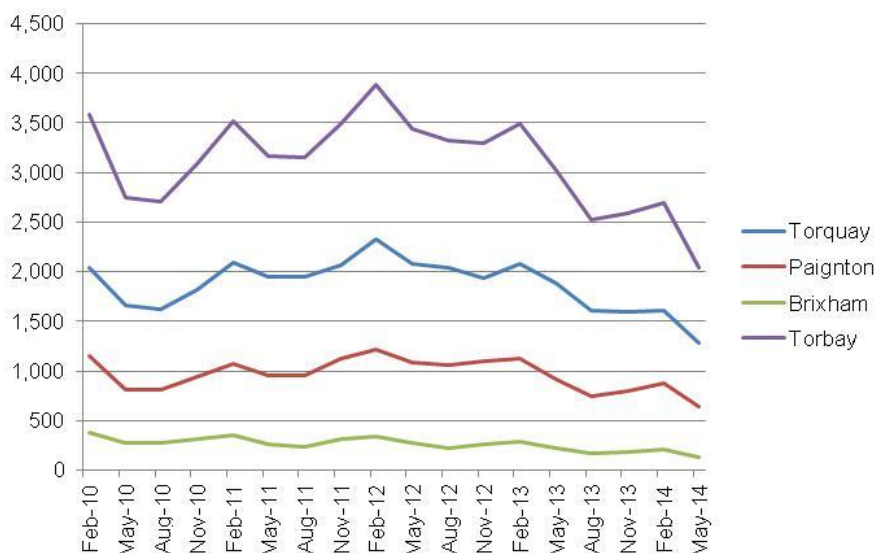
Similarly to Housing Benefit figures:

- Brixham (includes Churston and Galmpton) had the highest proportion of Council Tax Support claimants who were aged 70 and over. Torquay has the highest proportion in the younger age ranges
- The highest proportion of claimants are single people with no child dependents (particularly in Torquay), with a higher proportion of claimants in Brixham who are couples with no child dependents

Unemployment/ Job seekers allowance claimants

As in 2012/13, the unemployment rate in Torbay is dropping at 7.5% of 16-64 year olds actively seeking work, having just become slightly lower than the England rate of 7.8%.²²

Figure 45. Claimants of Job Seekers Allowance

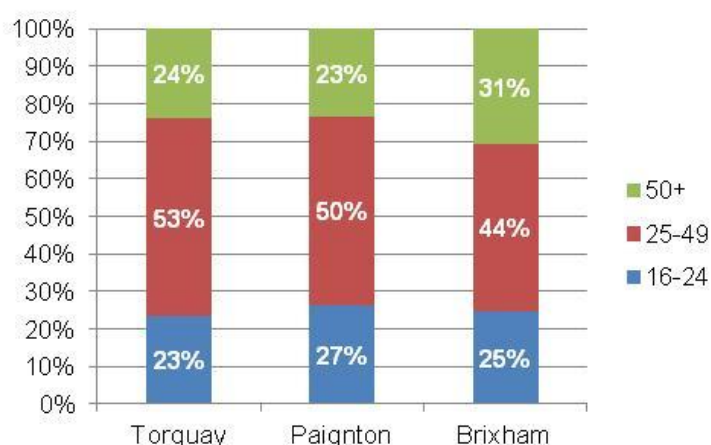


The number of claimants has decreased since 2010 in all three towns.

Source: Department of Work and Pensions, www.nomisweb.co.uk

²² Office of National Statistics: Model-based estimate of the % of people who are economically active, aged 16-64, who are unemployed but actively seeking work. Data is % of the economically active population

Figure 46. Age of Job Seekers Allowance claimants, 2014



There is a higher percentage of claimants aged 50 and over in Brixham than in Torquay or Paignton.

Source: Department of Work and Pensions, www.nomisweb.co.uk,

There is a higher percentage of 18-24 year olds claiming Job Seekers Allowance in 2013/14 compared to England: Just over 7% of 18-24 year olds in Torbay, 8% in Torquay and 6% in combined Paignton and Brixham, compared to less than 5% across England²³

Health issues and disability

Links between housing and health

'Health, well-being and the built environment are inextricably linked. Where new development occurs it is therefore important that the implications of the proposals upon the health and the well-being of the affected communities are considered. This approach reflects the Marmot Review 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives' (2010) which considered health inequalities in England. It proposed an evidence based strategy to address the social determinants of health, the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age and which can lead to health inequalities.'

'Development can contribute to creating healthier communities in a number of ways, e.g. by providing decent accommodation, reducing the effect of fuel poverty, providing open space and recreation areas. Developments should consider how they can promote healthier outcomes'²⁴

'There are a range of health related conditions associated with non-decent housing, including cardiovascular diseases; respiratory diseases depression and anxiety, and physical injury from accidents.'²⁵

²³ Page 30, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Developing well, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

²⁴ Page 147, Torbay Local Plan –A landscape For success. The Plan for Torbay 2012-32 and beyond (Proposed Submission Plan) February 2014, www.torbay.gov.uk/newlocalplan

²⁵ Page 2, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Population overview, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

Health issues and disability within the population

Figure 47. People with a disability that limits day to day activities

Town	People with disability that limited day to day activities	
	Limited a lot	Limited in some way
Torquay	11%	23%
Paignton	12%	25%
Brixham	13%	26%
Torbay	12%	24%
England	8%	18%

Source: 2011 census, www.nomisweb.co.uk

Figure 47 shows that Torbay has a higher proportion of people self reporting in the census that their day to day activities were limited by a disability/health issue compared to England. Further analysis (age standardisation) shows that this is not due to age, even though there is a higher proportion of older people living in Torbay. A possible explanation could be the higher prevalence of long term conditions in the population.

Brixham had the highest proportion of the population with limited day to day activities at 26%

Figure 48. Proportion of people in each tenure type with bad/very bad health

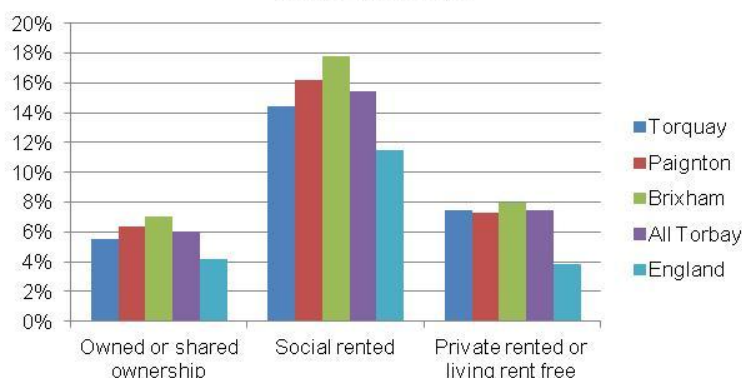
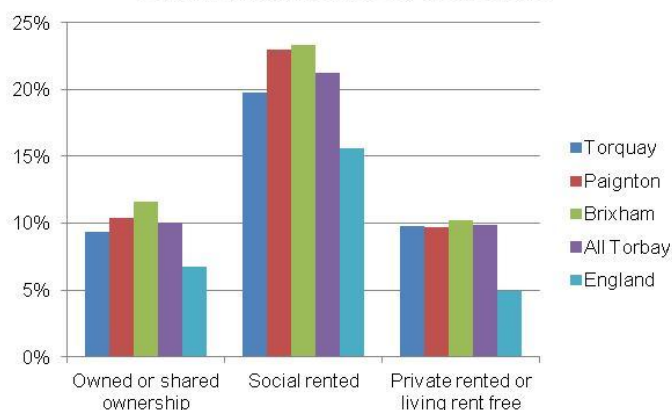


Figure 49. Proportion of people in each tenure type with disability that limits day to day activities a lot



Source: 2011 census, www.nomisweb.co.uk

Figures 48 and 49 above show that:

- The social rented sector contains a higher proportion of people in Torbay who reported bad health and/or disability issues compared to England, particularly in Brixham
- There is also a higher proportion in the private rented sector

'The health of the population is generally 'worse', that is there are higher proportions of the population identifying their health as bad or very bad, in Torbay compared to the wider South Devon and England averages. Most noticeably, 1 in 10 people in Torbay aged 50 to 64 identified their health as bad or very bad.'²⁶

²⁶ Page 57, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Living and working well, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

Disabled Facilities Grants

Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) are available from local authorities. They are issued subject to a means test and are available for essential adaption's to give disabled people better freedom of movement into and around their homes, and give access to essential facilities within the home.

Figure 50. Number of referrals by tenure over the last four years, Torbay

Year of referral	Registered Provider (Registered Social Landlord)	Owner Occupier	Private Tenant	Total
2012/13	73	22	48	143
2013/14	63	24	47	134
2014/15	92	27	59	178
2015/16 Quarter 1				44 <i>(Predicted 176 case)</i>

Source: Torbay Council

Since 2013/14 there has been an increase of 25% in the number of referrals made to the local authority

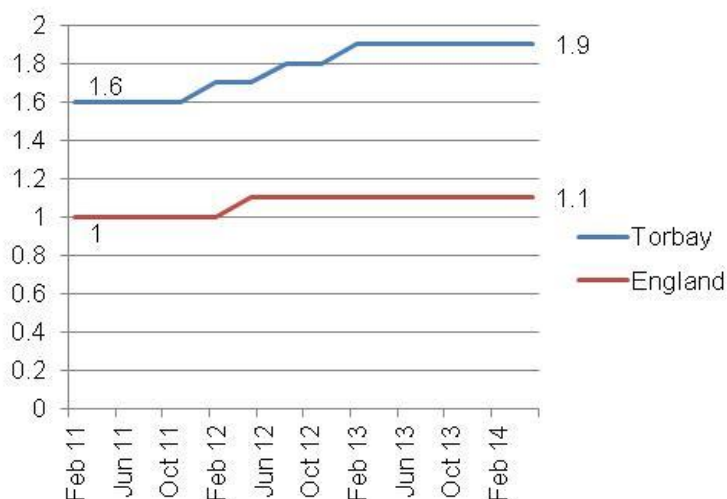
In the last 12 months:

- 20% of those that apply for a DFG live alone.
- 54% of individuals applying for a DFG are female
- There is an even split between clients living in Paignton and Torquay who apply for DFGs, each representing 41% of total referrals, and 18% of referrals are from Brixham.

Work is currently being undertaken into establishing where the need is as there has been a decrease in the average age of an individual requiring a DFG.

Disability benefits

Figure 51. Percentage of population aged 16-64 receiving state benefits who are disabled

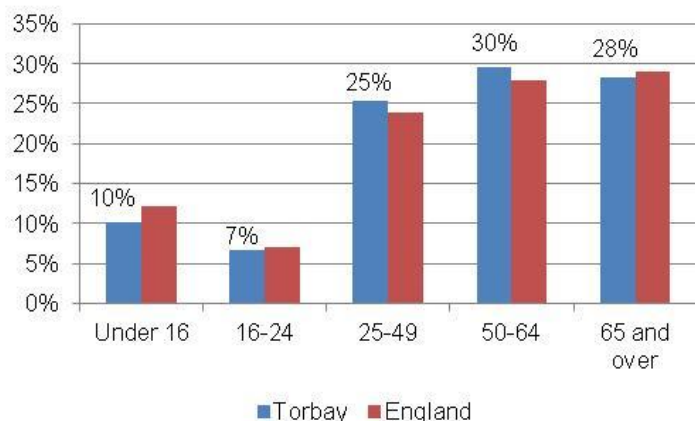


There is a higher percentage of people aged 16-64 claiming benefits who are disabled, compared to England. Torbay has seen a greater increase in the percentage of 16-64 year olds claiming a disability benefit.

Source: Office of National Statistics, www.nomisweb.co.uk, using mid-2013 resident population

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) provides a non-contributory, non means-tested and tax-free contribution towards the disability-related extra costs of severely disabled people. The number claiming DLA in Torquay, Paignton and Brixham has remained consistent at around 10,000 over the last 4 years (up to May 2014) apart from a slight increase in Torquay.²⁷

Figure 52. Age of claimants of Disability Living Allowance, 2014



In Torbay a higher proportion of DLA claimants are aged 25-64, compared to England

Source: Department of Work and Pensions, Office of National Statistics, www.nomisweb.co.uk

Mental health

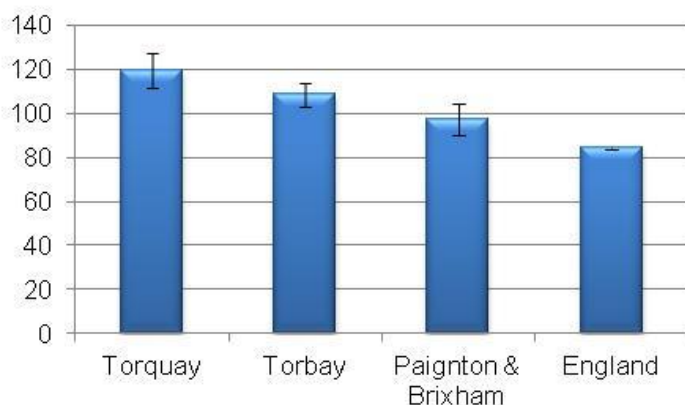
Figures 53 and 54 below show where people are registered with a GP and are known to have a mental health issue.

Figure 53. Number of patients on the mental health register- all ages

2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
1,358	1,429	1,468	1,503	1,572

Source: GP Disease registers, JSNA, Ageing and dying well, page 41

Figure 54. Rate per 10,000 of the GP registered population on the mental health register, 2012/13



The rate per 10,000 registered population in Figure 54 opposite shows significant variation, with Torquay higher than Paignton and Brixham.

Source: GP disease registers, JSNA, Ageing and dying well, page 41

It has been identified that stable accommodation and housing support is a priority in order to promote the mental health and wellbeing of the population. One of the foundations of good

²⁷ Department of Work and Pensions, Office of National Statistics, www.nomisweb.co.uk

mental health and wellbeing include a 'good home'. Many people recovering from mental ill health require extra support, especially around finding and maintaining a place in the community, housing and employment. These solutions need to be part of integrated approach with treatment functions and social support²⁸

Learning disability

Figures 55 and 56 below show where people aged 18 and over are registered with a GP and are known to have a learning disability.

Figure 55. Number of patients on the learning disability register- aged 18 and over

2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
598	678	690	721	755

Source: GP disease registers, JSNA, Ageing and dying well, page 39

Figure 56. Rate per 10,000 of the GP registered population who are on the learning disability register, 2012/13- aged 18 and over

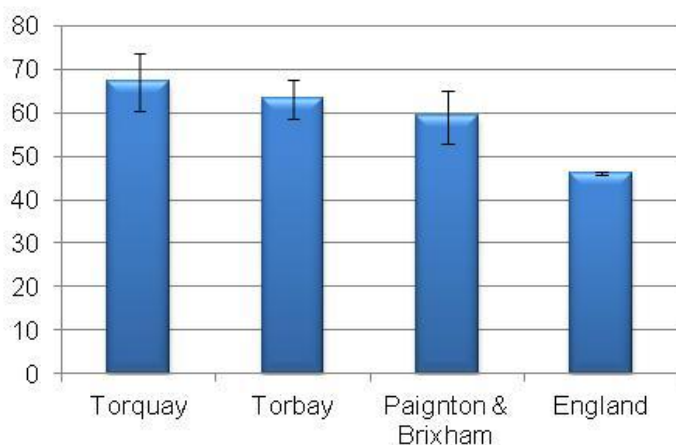


Figure 56 shows that there is a higher number of people aged 18 and over known to have a learning disability in Torbay areas than in England. 'This could suggest higher levels of recognition within primary care. However there are still estimated to be a noticeable number of persons with a learning disability not known to primary care.'²⁹

Source: GP disease registers, JSNA, Ageing and dying well, page 39

The Operational Commissioning Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities, Torbay and Southern Devon Health and Care Trust, 2014, focuses on what people want and plans for the future:

People with learning disability said that they want to live in their own home, in their local community. They want good quality housing and don't want to have to move as they grow older. They want good quality care to help them at home.

The Strategy says what is considered to be needed in the future. Some points are below:

'We would like as many people as possible to live in Torbay, in their own home with the right level of support. We would like to support as many people to use telecare to help them live independently and balance risk and choice. In order to achieve this we need to make sure there is a good choice of high quality support for people; excellent housing options and specialist provision for those people with the highest needs.'

²⁸ Pages 7-9, 15, A mental health commissioning strategy for Devon, Plymouth and Torbay 2014-17

²⁹ Page 39, 2014/15 South Devon and Torbay JSNA, Ageing and dying well, www.southdevonandtorbay.info

'People with learning disabilities are going to need a wide range of support options in the future. Particularly we are concerned about limited provision for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities; challenging behaviour and autism. We also acknowledge that some people need 24 hour support and specialist provision and the safest and most cost effective way of providing this may be residential or nursing care. We would like to make sure that young people and people with profound and multiple learning disabilities have access to a good range of support.'

'We would like more people with learning disabilities to use extra care and sheltered housing facilities. We particularly need services for the general older population to be able to support older people with learning disabilities, making reasonable adjustments to their provision under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005'

Applicants on the Torbay social housing register- Mobility needs, health/ disability issues

Council and housing association homes available to rent are advertised through Devon Home Choice. Applicants can look for and apply for social housing within all the Local Authority areas in Devon.

The information in this section relates to households on the Torbay housing register, so applicants who have stated a wish to live in Torbay. It analyses the register as on one date- 9 January 2015.

Mobility needs of applicants include where the following needs for a property have been identified:

- Maximum of 3 steps
- Step free
- Part wheelchair
- Wheelchair accessible

Figure 57. Applicants on the Torbay housing register- per 1000 households in the population, 9 January 2015

Number of households in Torbay	Number of applicants on the Torbay register living in Torbay, per 1,000 households	Number of these, who have mobility needs, per 1,000 households
60,000	23.3	6.5

Source: Office of National Statistics and Devon Home Choice. Number of households derived from 2011 based population projections for 2013

Figure 58. Mobility needs of applicants on the Torbay housing register, 9 January 2015

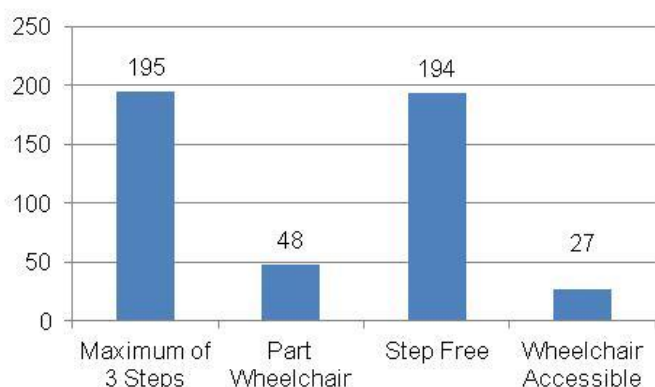


Figure 58 shows that:

The total number of applicants with mobility needs is 464, out of the 1687 applicant households on the Torbay register

The majority of mobility needs relate to steps

Source: Devon Home Choice

Number of bedrooms needed by applicants with a mobility need:

- 311 (67%) require a property with one bedroom
- 102 (22%) require a property with two bedrooms
- Low numbers of applicants require 3 - 6 bedrooms

Figure 59. Mobility needs of applicant households on the Torbay housing register- by area of residence, 9 January 2015

Area of current residence	Number of applicants with mobility needs	% of applicants on the register who live in each area who have mobility needs
Torquay	209	27%
Paignton	127	27%
Brixham	53	35%
Out of area/ No fixed abode	75	27%
Total	464	28%

Source: Devon Home Choice

Out of the three towns, Brixham has the highest proportion of applicants on the housing register with mobility needs at 35%

Figure 60. Health issue/disability of applicants on the Torbay housing register, by number of bedrooms needed, 9 January 2015

Number of bedrooms required	Disability/health issue of applicants		
	Learning disability	Mental illness	Physical disability
1	55	241	348
2	18	62	108
3	-	24	32
4 or more	Under 5	17	22
Total	84	344	510
% of the Torbay register	5%	20%	30%

Source: Devon Home Choice, Under 5- number suppressed due to data confidentiality, '-' number suppressed so that low number cannot be calculated

N.B. These will be self reported figures (taken from the application form) and not all will have been verified. There are duplicates between columns where applicants are identified with more than one health issue/ disability

Figure 60 shows that:

- Nearly a third of the Torbay register is identified with a physical disability need- 510 applicants out of 1687 on the register
- Most applicants require one bedroom
- The highest number of applicants have a physical disability requiring one bedroom

Disability/ health issue by town:

Out of the three towns, Brixham has the highest proportion on the housing register with a physical disability need (58 applicants), followed by Paignton (152 applicants) and Torquay (220 applicants)

Out of the three towns, Torquay has the highest proportion on the housing register with a mental illness (165 applicants), followed by Paignton (90 applicants) and Brixham (26 applicants)

A small number of applicants on the register have Autism as a health issue/disability need

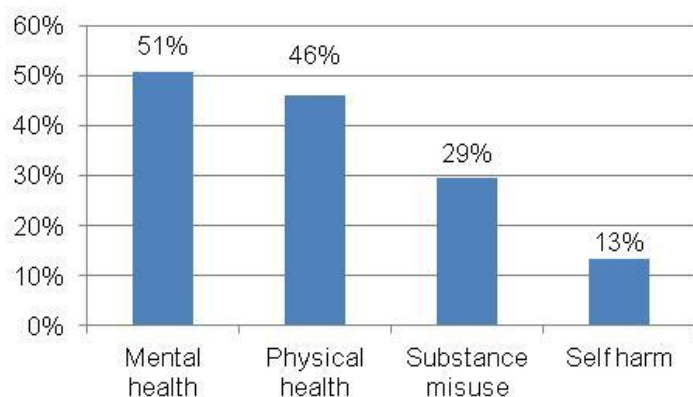
Other health/ disability needs on the register include: hearing, visual or speech impairment

Health issues of support service clients

Support services (previously known as Supporting People services) are funded by Torbay Council and include outreach and supported housing services, and include the Leonard Stocks Centre on page 20 of this report. People use these services for the short term and they provide support to help people live independently in the community.

The identified health needs of people using support services in 2013/14 are shown below. People were identified in their support plan as needing support to better manage these health issues:

Figure 61 Health needs of users of support services, 2013/14



Source: Centre for Housing Research, St Andrews
<https://supportingpeople.st-andrews.ac.uk>

There will be duplications between columns as some clients will have more than one of these health needs.

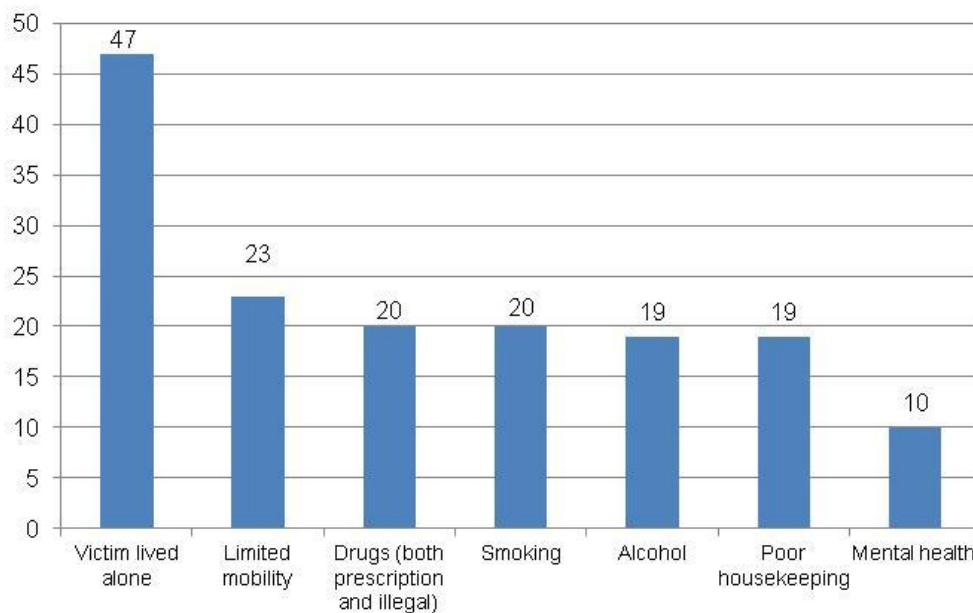
This chart shows the percentage of the 913 people who left services in the year who were identified with these needs. About half had a mental and/or physical health issue.

Please note that many of these services have now ended due to Central Government budget reductions.

Accidental fire deaths

Research was carried out into 88 accidental fire deaths within the South West area of England between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2013. The study identifies seven lifestyle or behavioural factors as key influencers:

Figure 62. Number of victims where each of the seven lifestyle or behavioural factors identified as key influencers in accidental fire deaths, South West England



Source: Fire deaths in the South West between 2008-13, a collaborative review, www.dsfire.gov.uk

The most common factor was that the victim lived alone- 53% of cases. 'The strong link between living alone and risk of fire death is reinforced when comparing the fatal fire study with Census statistics for the region. The government survey data shows 30% of households are occupied by a lone adult in South West England, yet this 'group' accounts for over half of accidental fire deaths. A large number of these victims were aged over 65.'

Health and disability issues are included within the seven factors- limited mobility, drugs, smoking, alcohol, and mental health.

The study also shows that in 44 (50%) of cases more than one of the seven factors was present. 'It is apparent from the data that no single characteristic of these fatal incidents would allow us to identify a 'silver bullet' solution. ... the research confirms what is generally believed throughout fire and rescue services; that in such unfortunate incidents there are a combination of factors that result in a tragic death.'

It says that 'of the 88 cases examined in the study, at least 29 were known to other agencies who had the opportunity to influence the victim's lifestyle and behaviour.'

End of report