

The Digital Exclusion Risk Atlas (DERA) was commissioned by the NHS England Healthcare Inequalities Improvement Programme, reflecting the growing recognition that digital exclusion is a key driver of health inequalities and must be addressed systematically across the health and care system. This should help to support more precise targeting of resources and interventions.

The DERA is broken down to Lower-layer super output area (LSOA) which is a geographical area of between 1,000 and 3,000 residents. There are 91 LSOAs in Torbay. The DERA is available at [Digital Exclusion Risk Atlas \(DERA\)](#).

Why is this important?



As more health and care services move online, unequal access to these services could lead to worsening health inequalities.

What is the local context?



Torbay has significant areas at heightened risk of digital exclusion due to an older population and higher levels of disability.

What should we do?



Promote access to ways in which the population can build their confidence and skills in relation to the digital world.

Domains of DERA: DERA is formed of the following 4 domains:

- Digital access and capability (15%)
- Affordability and economic pressure (30%)
- Ability and skills (30%)
- Agency, motivation and trust (25%)

Torbay DERA: The DERA index indicates that approximately half of the Torbay population live in areas that are among the 20% most 'at risk' of being digitally excluded in England.

Just over a quarter (27%) of the Torbay population live in areas that are among the 10% most 'at risk' of being digitally excluded.

Fig 1 shows a concentration of areas most 'at risk' of being digitally excluded in 3 blocks of central and eastern Torquay, central Paignton and Brixham. The areas at highest risk of digital exclusion are generally home to older populations than those areas at lower risk. For instance, all of Wellswood, which has the oldest average population of any electoral ward in Torbay is judged to be in the most 'at risk' decile.

In general, areas of higher deprivation are also more 'at risk' of being digitally excluded.

Torbay's relatively poor rating in this index is mainly due to its older population profile, higher levels of disability and a perceived lack of digital skills and confidence which has a relationship to age. Fig 2 shows a significant number of LSOAs

in the most 'at risk' quintile for Agency, motivation and trust (Agency), motivation and trust (Agency) caused by the older population in Torbay. Disability rates drive the high level of 'at risk' LSOAs for Ability and skills (Ability).

Fig 1: DERA 'at risk'

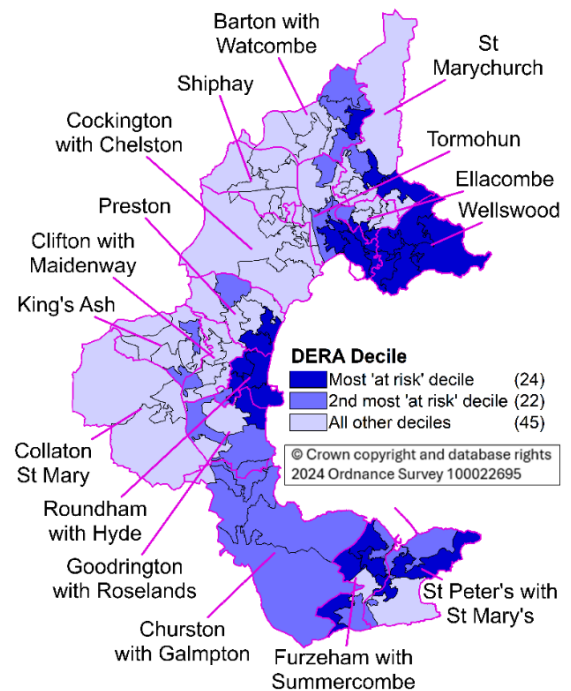


Fig 2: Number of Torbay LSOAs by domain and at-risk quintile (1=Most 'at risk')

	1	2	3	4	5
Access	3	49	38	1	0
Affordability	7	24	39	19	2
Ability	32	30	20	9	0
Agency	52	13	18	8	0

DERA domain – Digital access and capability:

This domain reflects areas where residents face greater structural barriers to digital participation. The 3 measures that make up the domain are:

- Fixed broadband inadequacy (25%)
- Mobile data constraint (35%)
- Digital skills and confidence (40%)

Most areas of Torbay sit within the middle 'at risk' deciles for this domain (Fig 2) but this hides very significant differences between the measures.

Fixed broadband inadequacy – Measures the proportion of residents unable to access fixed

broadband speeds of at least 10 megabits per second. Torbay has good connectivity and close to 90% of Torbay is within the least 'at-risk' decile.

Mobile data constraint – Measures the proportion of homes able to access indoor 4G mobile coverage from all major mobile network operators. This data was given at local authority level so all of Torbay was assigned the same value which was similar to England as a whole.

Digital skills and confidence – This score relates to the proportion of households that submitted their 2021 census return online which was used as a proxy for digital skills and confidence. Half of Torbay was rated in the most 'at risk' decile, the most 'at risk' decile areas had a noticeably higher proportion of people aged 65 and over when compared to those less 'at risk'.

DERA domain – Affordability and economic pressure:

This domain reflects areas where people are more likely to face financial and economic barriers to digital participation. The 3 measures that make up the domain are:

- Communications affordability pressure (33%)
- Income deprivation (33%)
- Housing Insecurity (33%)

Most areas of Torbay sit within the middle 'at risk' deciles for this domain (Fig 2).

Communications affordability pressure – Measures the 'Claimant Count', this includes all Universal Credit claimants who are required to seek work and be available for work, alongside Jobseeker's Allowance claimants. Torbay has a lower than average 'Claimant Count' than England with only 4 out of 91 Torbay LSOAs being in the 20% highest of England's LSOAs.

Housing Insecurity – Uses the Barriers to Housing and Services domain from the English Indices of Deprivation 2025. This measures travel time to key local services by walking, cycling and public transport, housing affordability, household overcrowding, homelessness, broadband speed and patient to GP ratio. Overall, Torbay's rating is similar to England.

Income Deprivation – Uses the Income domain from the English Indices of Deprivation 2025 which measures the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation due to low income. Torbay has levels of income deprivation that place it as the 51st most deprived out of 153 upper-tier local authorities in England.

DERA domain – Ability and skills: This domain reflects areas where residents are more likely to face personal or capability barriers to digital

engagement. The 3 measures that make up the domain are:

- Low educational attainment (33%)
- English language support need (33%)
- Disability and long-term illness (33%)

78 out of Torbay's 91 LSOAs are within deciles 1 (most 'at risk') to 5 for this domain, there are significant differences between the measures.

Low educational attainment – Measures the proportion of residents aged 16 and over with no formal qualifications. Rates of low educational attainment are a little higher in Torbay when compared to England.

English language support needs – Measures the proportion of residents whose main language is not English and who report that they cannot speak English well or cannot speak English at all. 78 out of 91 Torbay LSOAs are within deciles 6 to 10 (least 'at risk').

Disability and long-term illness – Measures the proportion of residents whose day-to-day activities are limited a little or a lot due to a long-term physical or mental health condition. 63 of the 91 Torbay LSOAs are in the 20% most 'at risk' in England.

DERA domain – Agency, motivation and trust:

This domain reflects areas where social factors, age related characteristics, and concerns around trust and safety reduce engagement with digital technologies. The 3 measures that make up the domain are:

- Older age structure (45%)
- Living alone in later life (45%)
- Trust and online safety concern (10%)

This domain produces the most 'at risk' rating for Torbay with half of all Torbay LSOAs in the 10% most 'at risk' decile due to Torbay's older population.

Older age structure – Torbay has a population that is significantly older than the England average which is thought to be an 'at risk' characteristic.

Living alone in later life – Torbay has a much higher proportion of its total population aged 66 and over and living alone compared to England.

Trust and online safety concern – Measures 'recorded fraud and computer misuse offences' as a proxy measure for concern around online safety and trust. Each LSOA in Torbay was assigned the same 'at risk' rating based on the Devon and Cornwall police area, this risk was significantly better than the England average.