



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Partial Assessment Form

Policy, practice, function or project assessed	Housing Strategy 2012-2016
Lead Officer	Julie Fletcher
Team	Housing Strategy & Development
Start date of assessment	27 th February 2012
Completion of assessment	

Please use this form to record your findings in relation to the assessment of an existing policy, function, service or practice.

A. POLICY, PRACTICE, FUNCTION OR PROJECT TO BE ASSESSED

A1. Please describe what are the main aims, objectives, purpose and intended outcomes of the policy or function?

To be the best housing service by providing good quality housing across all tenures that is accessible to all – that enhances residents' quality of life, their health and wellbeing, that supports economic growth and social opportunities, alongside improved energy security and reduced carbon footprints.

Affordable Housing Provision – To deliver a range of homes that are affordable to all and where people want to live that will support economic growth and economic activity.

Better Homes – To improve the living conditions across all tenures, to help make homes more energy efficient and to reduce fuel poverty.

Making Best Use of Existing Stock – To promote safe and sustainable communities, ensuring people are living in the right homes at a time that is right for them.

Securing housing with specialist support – To promote fully inclusive communities and to work with partners to provide support and assistance to enable independent living

Preventing and Tackling homelessness – To reduce homelessness through being proactive in preventative measures and ensuring there is sufficient suitable accommodation available to people who are, or who may become homeless.

Improving housing options and extending choice – To work in partnership to provide housing advice so that people understand their housing options, help them to sustain their current home or access alternative suitable accommodation.

Monitoring and Performance – To provide an Affordable Homes Service that is transparent and accountable, that is developed in consultation with our tenants, partner agencies and the wider public and demonstrates value for money.

A2. Is this policy or function associated with any other Council policy or priority?

Yes – Supporting policies/strategies to the Housing Strategy include:

- Tenancy Strategy
- Homelessness Strategy
- Empty Homes Strategy
- Private Sector Housing Action Plan
- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document
- Climate Change Action Plan
- Ageing Well Strategy
- HRA Business Plan
- Asset Management Strategy
- Warm Homes Strategy

Supports the following Council’s Corporate Priorities:

Key Aim (C6): Develop a sustainable process to address the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers

Key Aim (A11): Work with the newly elected Tenant Participation Group and other tenants to set up an independent Tenant Scrutiny Panel

Key Aim (C4): Work with older people to improve their independence and quality of life

Key Aim (C9): Work to ensure the provision of a sustainable housing service for the Council’s sheltered housing residents

A3. Who are the intended beneficiaries/stakeholders of the policy or function? How many people are affected and from what sections of the community?

The Housing Strategy is the overarching housing-related strategic document for South Cambridgeshire that includes the delivery of affordable housing, including supported/adapted accommodation, assessing housing needs, allocations and housing choice, preventing homelessness and providing housing advice; as well as housing in the private sector, such as understanding the condition of homes in the District, energy efficiency, empty properties and tackling fuel poverty.

The Strategy is far-reaching to all residents living in South Cambridgeshire. It has a particular focus on ensuring the most vulnerable in the District have access to good quality affordable housing. Its key partners to the Strategy are registered housing providers, voluntary housing groups and partner local authorities.

A4. Is the policy/function corporate and far-reaching?

Yes – see A2 and A3 above.

A5. Are you expecting to make any significant change to the policy or service in the near future? If so, please give details.

The delivery of the Strategy is over a 5 year period. There are significant changes to housing policy in the forthcoming years, which are outlined in the Strategy.

A6. Is this a new or existing policy or function?

No. The previous Housing Strategy expired in July 2010.

B. EVIDENCE/ DATA and CONSULTATION

It is important to consider all information that is available in determining whether the policy or function could have a differential impact. Please attach examples of monitoring information, research or consultation reports.

B1. What monitoring or other information do you have about relevant target groups, which will show the impact of the policy or function?

The Housing Strategy is all encompassing for all groups within the range of protected characteristics. Particular focus is given to the following:

- **Elderly** – The age group 60 to 74 is expected to increase by over 15,500, growing from 16,400 to 31,900 or around 95% in just twenty years. In percentage terms there is an even bigger increase in the number of residents aged 75 or over. This age group is expected to increase from 9,200 in 2001 to over 19,100 by 2021, a rise of around 9,900 or 108% with a 98% increase in those aged 85+. Therefore the Strategy identifies the need for housing provision that supports a growing elderly population.
- **Young People** – There are currently 232 single applicants and 148 couples on the housing register aged under 25, this compares to 30 homes allocated to this age group in 2010/11. With high deposits required for first time buyers, the lack of privately rented accommodation and proposed changes to LHA rates for single occupants under 35; this provides a real challenge in meeting the housing needs of young people.
- **People with Disabilities** – The 2008 Place Survey identified 28% of respondents in South Cambridgeshire reported having some long-standing illness, disability or infirmity. For the Council's housing stock, this percentage is much higher, with 41% of households stating that they have a disability following the tenancy survey carried out in December 2009. The Private Sector House Condition Survey (2011) stated 14.3% of households containing at least one member affected by long-term illness or disability. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment carried out in 2008 for Physical and Sensory Impairment and Long Term Conditions states:
 - housing is a major factor determining physically disabled people's health and wellbeing. It appears that most people with disabilities live in unsuitable accommodation.
 - Low income people are more likely to have disabilities than medium or high level income people. Moreover, people with physical disabilities tend to have less disposable income than people without disabilities. Often, this leads into debt problems and deprived housing.
- **Gypsies and Travellers** – Gypsy & Travellers make up almost 1% of the population in Cambridgeshire and represent the largest ethnic minority in the county. The Cambridgeshire Gypsy & Travellers JSNA 2010, identifies that lack of secure accommodation is the biggest issue facing Gypsy & Traveller communities in the East of England and many are homeless.

B2. Have you compared the data you have with the equality profile of the local population? What does it show?

Yes – see B1 above.

B3. Have you identified any improvements or other changes that could be made from monitoring the data?

No – the data collected compares to the District profile indicating that the Housing Strategy is targeting resources at the groups of people with specific needs.

B4. Have you consulted or involved external stakeholders about the policy or function? If so, what were their views?

Yes – District Councillors, parish councils, registered providers, private developers, voluntary housing organisations and the Tenant Participation Group were consulted in the development of the Housing Strategy. This consultation was carried out by way of a survey asking respondents to help shape a housing vision for the Council and whether we have effectively identified the main priorities for housing over the next five years. As part of the survey, respondents were asked to identify what they considered were the top three priorities the Council should focus on – the key themes arising from this include: More Affordable Housing, Making Best Use of Existing Stock and homeless prevention.

In addition to this, the Council consulted young people through its community development with schools. Approximately 50 young people aged 14-15 were consulted, the majority of which said that they felt very strongly that there should be more affordable housing.

A copy of the survey results and how these have been addressed through the Strategy will be published on the Council's website. The draft Housing Strategy has been further consulted on through the groups mentioned above and published on our website.

B5. Have you undertaken any consultation with staff to assess their perception of any impacts of the policy or function? If so, what has been learnt from them?

The Strategic Housing Group is an internal group of Officers across the Council that meet on a quarterly basis to discuss crosscutting issues relevant to the strategic housing role. Full participation from the group has helped to develop the Housing Strategy.

B6. Please provide information about any other consultation, research, or involvement undertaken in relation to this impact assessment.

The Supporting People Team have been consulted separately as part of the development of the Housing Strategy, as well as Members and parish councils. The Housing Strategy has to take into account and contribute to the wider housing agenda nationally and for the sub region.

C1. IMPACT OF THE POLICY OR FUNCTION

Assess the potential impact on each of the following protected characteristics. The impact could be negative, positive or neutral. If you assess a negative impact for any of the groups then you will need to assess whether that impact is low, medium or high. Refer to the evidence you use.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT	Nature of Impact (Positive, Neutral, Adverse)	Extent of Impact (Low, Medium, High)
AGE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different age groups.		
There are specific sections in relation to Supporting Older People (page 66 – Chapter 6) and Housing Options for Young People (page 78 – Chapter 9)	Positive	
DISABILITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on disabled people.		
There are specific sections relating to Securing Housing with Specialist Support (page 65 – Chapter 7) and future housing provision for households with specific housing needs (page 42 – Chapter 4)	Positive	

GENDER REASSIGNMENT: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people that have changed gender identity.		
The Housing Strategy is inclusive to people who have undergone or are undergoing gender reassignment, but is not specific to gender reassignment.	Neutral	
MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people who are married or in a civil partnership.		
The Housing Strategy is inclusive to people regardless of their marital status, but is not specific to marriage or civil partnerships.	Neutral	
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on pregnant or maternal mothers and those women who wish to breastfeed.		
The Housing Strategy is inclusive to pregnant and maternal mothers, but is not specific to pregnancy or maternity.	Neutral	
RACE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different ethnic groups, including national origins, colour and nationality.		
Particular reference is given to Gypsy & Travellers and the allocation of HCA funding for the provision of an affordable site. Over the coming years, we will work in partnership with Cambridge City Council to identify a potential public Gypsy & Travellers Site and seek a development and/or management partner to take a site forward by 2015 (page 43 – Chapter 4).	Positive	
RELIGION/BELIEF: Identify the potential impact the policy or function on different religious/faith groups.		
The Housing Strategy is inclusive and applies to people of all religious/belief groups, but is not specific to religion/belief.	Neutral	

SEX: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on men and women.		
The Housing Strategy is inclusive and applies to both men and women, but is not specific to sex.	Neutral	
SEXUAL ORIENTATION: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people.		
The Housing Strategy is inclusive and applies to lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people, but is not specific to sexual orientation.	Neutral	
OTHER CHARACTERISTIC SPECIFIC TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE – RURALITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people who are rurally isolated.		
House prices in South Cambridgeshire’s rural villages are higher than in most other parts of the Cambridge Sub Region. Existing social rented housing provided in the rural villages is usually under long-term occupancy and properties rarely become available to re-let. The Housing Strategy makes reference to delivering rural housing for local people through our Exceptions Site Policy (page 40 – Chapter 4) Reference is also made to tackling fuel poverty, which can be associated to those households living in the more rural locations within South Cambridgeshire that are off-grid and therefore unable to connect to a gas supply. Within our Council stock there are 620 homes in off-grid villages that have oil heating which is expensive to run (page 55 – Chapter 5).	Positive	

PLEASE NOTE: Following completion of the section above, if the nature of the impact is adverse then you may need to proceed to a full equality impact assessment.

C2. Could you minimise or remove any adverse or potential impact that is high, medium or low significance, in advance of a full impact assessment? Explain how.

N/A

C3. Does the policy or function actively promote equal opportunities and good community relations? Or could changes be made so that it does so?

Yes – The Housing Strategy focuses on people with specific needs – Housing Vision:

To be the best housing service by providing good quality housing across all tenures that is accessible to all – that enhances residents’ quality of life, their health and wellbeing, that supports economic growth and social opportunities, alongside improved energy security and reduced carbon footprints.

C4. Please provide any further information, qualitative or quantitative that does not fit into the questions but you feel has a likely impact on this assessment.

N/A

D. CONCLUSIONS			
D1. Was there sufficient data to complete the partial assessment?	Yes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If “NO”, what arrangements are in place for evidence gathering and continuing with the assessment?
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D2. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have an adverse impact (medium or high impact) on one or more target group?	Yes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	If “YES”, will you proceed to a full assessment? If so, what arrangements are in place to carry out the full assessment?
	No?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

D3. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have a neutral or positive impact on equalities?	Yes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>If “YES”, have you included proposals in the Action Plan to further improve the impact of the policy or function on equalities?</p> <p>Do you plan to review the service or policy again in future to assess whether there has been any change? If so, when? The Housing Strategy has a 5-year lifespan. Actions within the Housing Strategy will be monitored quarterly and reviewed annually by the appropriate partnerships to ensure their success in delivery, as well as to make certain their continued relevance amongst potential changes in national and local policy.</p> <p>Has the Equalities Steering Group and the Consultative Forum reviewed the assessment? If so what were their comments?</p>
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D4. Do you have any other conclusions/outcomes from the partial assessment?			
None.			

ACTION PLAN for enhancing existing practice

Recommendation/ issue to be addressed	Planned Milestone	Planned completion of milestone (date)	Officer Responsible	Progress
None				

RESOURCES

Does the above action plan require any additional resources?

No.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING

Please give your plans for monitoring the achievement of the above actions.

It is important for us to manage and monitor the progress we make against this Housing Strategy. We will do this, primarily through the monitoring of the strategies and action plans that sit under the Housing Strategy and through the Affordable Homes Service Plan. Progress on all key actions and projects are monitored through the Housing Services Management Team who meet on a fortnightly basis and various working groups are/will be established to carry out some of the actions identified. To avoid duplication, it is not necessary to have a separate Housing Strategy Action Plan but a monitoring plan has been developed outlining the lead officer and how the action will be monitored.

SIGN OFF: The officers below confirm that this partial assessment has been completed in accordance with the Council's guidance

Signature of Lead Officer

Date:

Signature of Corporate Manager or Chief Officer:

Date:

Please retain the original form on your service area and return a copy of the completed form to the Equality & Diversity Officer.