



# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

## Partial Assessment Form

<b>Policy, practice, function or project assessed</b>	<b>Building Control Service</b>
<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Andrew Beyer</b>
<b>Team</b>	<b>Building Control Surveyors and Technical Support</b>
<b>Start date of assessment</b>	<b>07.03.2011</b>
<b>Completion of assessment</b>	

**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?**

Building Control is primarily a statutory function provided to administer and enforce the building regulations. These regulations are designed to secure the health and safety of persons in and around buildings and improve thermal efficiency and energy performance of buildings. In addition we provide advice and guidance on regulations and all other building related matters.

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

The function is a statutory requirements of the Local authority. As part of that function the service is required to accord with the Council policies and priorities in relation to the provision and delivery of the service.

being a listening council, providing first class services accessible to all ensuring that South Cambridgeshire continues to be a safe and healthy place for you and your family

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

This service is intended to protect members of the public and all building users in the enforcement of regulations securing the health and safety of people in and around buildings. The service itself is accessed by Builders, Architects, Agents, and members of the public and or their representatives equally for the purposes of submitting applications for inspection and approval for any building proposals and ensuring the correct administration and construction of buildings in accordance with current legislation.

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

Yes The function is regulatory and specifically applies to new building work proposed and carried out by property owners and their representatives. It is far reaching in ensuring that all SCDC buildings are built safely and will provide secure energy efficient places for residents to live and work. Without Building Regulations there could be serious consequences to people in and around buildings.

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

The service is looking to improve accessibility by the introduction of a web based application process and progress monitoring to enable the service users to be kept informed of progress. This is expected to be in place by September 2011

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

The building control function has been administered by Local authorities for many years and is the subject of external competition.

**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?**

As part of our customer service we carry out an annual survey of service users to assess the service provided This does not target equality groups but as part of the service review this survey will be revised to take account of equality groups affected . We also offer a Building Control forum open to all to allow any users of the service to have a say in what we deliver and how we could improve. This does not address specific groups only service users but all users are welcome

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

**Yes.** Consultation with our agent's forum indicates that we could provide more guidance on legislation and service functions and as part of this we are arranging presentations on specific regulatory issues.

**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?**

Consultation and discussion with staff within the service area forms part of the development of service delivery and much of their feedback affects our procedures and functions. As a reactive service most of the feedback revolves around speeding up the process for users and providing self help information.

**B6. Please provide information about any other consultation, research, or involvement undertaken in relation to this impact assessment.** Ass part of this impact assessment I have consulted with adjoining authorities in relation to the services they provide and any assessments carried out by them.

**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)
<b>AGE:</b> Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different age groups.	<b>Neutral</b>	
The function is not age specific and will benefit all building users		
<b>DISABILITY:</b> Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on disabled people.	<b>Positive</b>	
As a statutory function this service applies equally to all members of the public and where there is an issue of interpretation or understanding and the customer is not represented we do provide face-to-face advice and guidance. Applications for the benefit of improving the usability of buildings for disabled persons are exempt building regulation fees.		
<b>GENDER REASSIGNMENT:</b> Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people that have changed gender identity.	<b>Neutral</b>	
The function is not gender specific and will benefit all users		

<b>MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS:</b> Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people who are married or in a civil partnership.	<b>Neutral</b>	
Benefits all users equally		
<b>PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY:</b> Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on pregnant or maternal mothers and those women who wish to breastfeed.	<b>Neutral</b>	
No impact and will benefit all users equally		
<b>RACE:</b> Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different ethnic groups, including national origins, colour and nationality.	<b>Neutral</b>	
The function is statutory and applies to all users equally there is the facility for translation if required or assistance with face to face advice and guidance		
<b>RELIGION/BELIEF:</b> Identify the potential impact the policy or function on different religious/faith groups.	<b>Neutral</b>	
The function is statutory and applies equally to all buildings and their users		
<b>SEX:</b> Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on men and women.	<b>Neutral</b>	
The function is not gender specific and applies to all		
<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION:</b> Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people.	<b>Neutral</b>	
The function applies to all building users .		
<b>OTHER CHARACTERISTIC SPECIFIC TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE – RURALITY:</b> Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people who are rurally isolated.	<b>Neutral</b>	
This is a statutory function and apples across the whole of South Cambridgeshire		

**PLEASE NOTE:** Following completion of the section above, if the nature of any impact is adverse then you 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?**

As a statutory function it applies equally to all. As part of the ongoing customer service improvement we are making more information and functionality available electronically.

**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

<b>D. CONCLUSIONS</b>			
<b>D1. Was there sufficient data to complete the partial assessment?</b>	Yes?	Yes	<b>If “NO”, what arrangements are in place for evidence gathering and continuing with the assessment?</b>
	No?		
<b>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?</b>	Yes?		<b>If “YES”, will you proceed to a full assessment? If so, what arrangements are in place to carry out the full assessment?</b>
	No?	No	
<b>D3. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have a neutral or positive impact on equalities?</b>	Yes?	Yes	<p><b>If “YES”, have you included proposals in the Action Plan to further improve the impact of the policy or function on equalities?</b></p> <p>It is proposed to put applications and progress on applications on the web to enable customers to serve themselves hopefully by September It is proposed that we revise our customer survey to address equality groups affected.</p>

	No?		<p>part of <b>Do you plan to review the service or policy again in future to assess whether there has been any change? If so, when?</b>  The service is reviewed annually and as part of the service plan and feedback from customers.</p> <p><b>Has the Equalities Steering Group and the Consultative Forum reviewed the assessment? If so what were their comments?</b>  Not as of yet</p>
<p><b>D4. Do you have any other conclusions/outcomes from the partial assessment?</b>  The partial assessment indicates that the service has little or no effect on any of the groups listed. The only group positively affected are those with a disability where the service fees are exempt where the specific works are for the benefit of the disabled person or persons.  <b>The service is provided to protect all.</b></p>			

**ACTION PLAN for enhancing existing practice**

<b>Recommendation/ issue to be addressed</b>	<b>Planned Milestone</b>	<b>Planned completion of milestone (date)</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>Better access to the service for all</b>	<b>Introduction of a web based application function and access</b>	<b>October 2011</b>	<b>A Beyer</b>	

**RESOURCES**

**Does the above action plan require any additional resources?**

None, this is already in place as part of the overall improvement plan.

## ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING

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

This will be monitored as part of the service plan and forms part of a project plan for the introduction of the new computer software into building control.

**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.