

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Impact Assessment



As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment.

This form:

- can be used to prompt discussion when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation where a section is not applicable

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|---|---|
| Directorate: Environment and Neighbourhoods | Service area: Private Sector Housing, Housing Partnerships |
| Lead person: Mark Ireland | Contact number: 3957154 |
| Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment: 8th May 2013 | |

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| 1. Title: HIA – Group Repair |
| Is this a: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| Is this: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New/ proposed <input type="checkbox"/> Already exists and is being reviewed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is changing |
| (Please tick one of the above) |

2. Members of the assessment team:

| Name | Organisation | Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service, specialist |
|-----------------|---------------------|--|
| Donna Smith | LCC | Service specialist |
| Phil Beesting | LCC | Service specialist |
| Mark Ireland | LCC | Manager of service |
| Neera Tyagi | LCC | Specialist |
| Mark Rutherford | LCC | Manager of service |
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3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed:

The Regulatory Reform Order 2002 allowed a LA to introduce its own types of financial assistance to help private owners maintain and improve their homes. The order allowed local authorities, once they had followed the relevant guidance to determine how it offered financial assistance to the private sector to meet the local needs of the area.

The Council's policy allowed for the provision of grants to private sector owners on a geographical basis to assist with the overall regeneration of the area. Offers of grants are based upon defined Council priority areas.

Grants are available to both owner/occupiers and private landlords. Owners are entitled to at least 75% of eligible works, with the face lift element offered free of charge. Landlords are offered a maximum of the 75% grant and have to pay the remaining 25% of the costs. Owner/occupiers are offered a test of resources which means they could be liable for all the works free or any percentage of costs up to a maximum of 25%. Each owner/occupiers contribution will be dependant upon their circumstances. The test of resources criteria are laid down by Government to ensure equality.

Owners are offered external works to their homes, namely new roofs, energy efficiency works, doors, windows, pointing, yards and boundary walls. Each property is subject to a survey to determine the works required and individual scheme of works determined for each owner.

The works are delivered by a Contractor procured by the Council, though it's procurement process. The works are monitored by officers to ensure value for money and that standards are met. Owners are billed for their contributions once works are completed.

The Council has delivered such schemes in various geographical areas of the city over the last 15 years. Considerable experience, knowledge and skills have been gained by officers with E&N on the delivery of such scheme. Significant improvements and changes have occurred in the delivery of such schemes and this continues to be part of the process.

An initial Impact Assessment was undertaken into the service in 2008. However as the programme ceased in 2011 following the Government 2011 spending review, it is now an opportune time to review arrangements. The new Sustainable Communities Improvement Programme was agreed by Executive Board in February 2013, and included further Group Repair schemes as part of the programme. It is therefore necessary to review the existing assessment to ensure the best outcome of this or any future such schemes within the city.

4. Scope of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

(complete - 4a. if you are assessing a strategy, policy or plan and 4b. if you are assessing a service, function or event)

4a. Strategy, policy or plan

(please tick the appropriate box below)

The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes and the supporting guidance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A specific section within the strategy, policy or plan | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Please provide detail: | |

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 4b. Service, function, event please tick the appropriate box below | |
| The whole service (including service provision and employment) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| A specific part of the service (including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Procuring of a service (by contract or grant) (please see equality assurance in procurement) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Please provide detail: The assessment is to consider the whole of the financial assistance offered as part of the assistance to vulnerable owner/occupiers and how it may be improved. | |

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| <p>5. Fact finding – what do we already know</p> <p>Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment. This could include: previous consultation, involvement, research, results from perception surveys, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback.</p> <p>(priority should be given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration related information)</p> <p>The private sector forms approximately 77% of all the housing stock within the city. This equates to around 248,000 homes of which 206,000 or 64% are owner occupied. The 2007 stock condition survey indicated that 51,400 private home occupants could be classified as vulnerable being in receipt of at least 1 relevant benefit.</p> <p>It is also possible to use Super Output Area data to help inform Council priority areas. This work is done by others and helps to inform which areas the Council prioritises for intervention and regeneration. The provision of group repair may be part of the overall intervention in some areas of the city subject to funding.</p> <p>Improvements to homes have positive health and social impacts for individuals. They are used to improve thermal efficiency helping to reduce fuel poverty, make properties safer to</p> |
|---|

occupy, improving security and ensuring that homes are free from serious disrepair. All of this helps owners to have a better quality of life due to improvements to their health and well being as well as helping to maintain their independence. Customer satisfaction surveys of previous group repair schemes shows that 100% of owners felt happier about the condition of their home, 76% felt more secure and 88% felt that their home was warmer. Since 2006 the group repair schemes have been part of the regeneration programmes within priority areas of the city. These areas have been agreed by the Council and partners as priorities for intervention in the city. The areas benefiting from the schemes have been Burley Lodge, Beeston Hill (both of which were declared statutory renewal areas) and Cross Green.

Leeds Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2007

Leeds has a higher than national average (14.7% compared with 12.1%) of older small terraced properties which include the presence of 19,500 back to back properties within the city. Back to back properties represent 7.2% of the private housing stock. The survey showed that the worst housing conditions are to be found in the inner east and south of city.

The survey showed that 33% of the private housing stock in the city does not meet the decency standard. For Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) households this raises to 44%. The age of the head of the household is also related to decency. 62% of households with a head over 85 years old failed to meet the decency standard. Those where the head was between 16 and 24 formed the second highest group at 42%. It is perceived that this could be income related as these two groupings have the highest percentage of people earning £10k or less per annum. Disabled individuals are no more likely to be living in non decent homes than the city average.

Legislation uses the Housing Health and Safety Rating System to assess risks within properties. A local authority has a duty to take action on all properties found to have a significant health and safety risk to the occupier. This is referred to as a category 1 hazard. In Leeds 3 of the 29 hazards were found to be prevalent. These are excess cold, falls (on stairs, on the level and between levels) and fire safety. Of these hazards excess cold is the main issue facing the stock as it accounts for 61% of all category 1 hazards in the stock.

Health Impact assessment on Group Repair

Improving public health is not a key aim of Group Repair, but it is seen as a natural outcome of the intervention. This was demonstrated by the Health Impact Assessment study. Not just participants but neighbours showed that following a scheme there was increased satisfaction with their neighbourhood and an increased feeling of being more safe and secure in their area and home. This contributed to an increased feeling of well being. The majority of participants in the scheme believed that as a result of the works there had been a positive impact on their health.

Customer data

Customer satisfaction surveys are undertaken after each phase of the works, both by the Contractor and the Council. All participants in the scheme are left a customer satisfaction survey questionnaire as part of the billing process. Previous years have shown a high level of satisfaction with the service. However feedback has resulted in improvements to the service, including improved communication and keeping clients informed of progress and better promotional material.

Equality monitoring has been reviewed and up dated as required by Council policy. Recent changes have resulted in the inclusion of information regarding religion, sexuality etc as required.

Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information

Please provide detail:

The current stock condition survey is over 5 years old and therefore requires to be updated, subject to available funding.

Definition of vulnerable – the Government definition of vulnerability is currently used.

Need to consider if other households could be economically vulnerable beyond the existing legislation.

Better use of equality monitoring information to ensure that assistance is offered to those most in need based on stock condition information.

Action required:

To consider a new private sector stock condition survey which should be undertaken as soon as possible to determine current stock condition. Need to consider the issue of funding the survey in the current financial climate

Analysis of equality monitoring information – target elderly, young and BME households to have the greatest benefit to improve the stock and health of its occupants.

Examination of the equality monitoring data procedure to ensure that processes are in place to collect relevant information and ensure analysis occurs as part of the customer satisfaction process to ensure all groups have access to the service

To review the existing customer satisfaction survey process based on the proposed new scheme introduced in 2012/3. Introduce a new survey to ensure customers are engaged and views are fed back so as to ensure consideration can be given to any issues raised.

6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Members – lead and ward

LCC colleagues – partners in regeneration activities and strategy development

Local communities – individuals and groups

Energy Unit – related to hotspots project and cross referral of potential customers

Customers – via surveys and projects

Leeds Priority Board – Housing and Regeneration Board

Welfare Rights – referral for assistance where under claiming benefits following visit

Contractors – part of standards of work and delivery of schemes

Action required:

To continue to work with these groups on the delivery of schemes and the development of new schemes and funding

7. Who may be affected by this activity?

please tick all relevant and significant equality characteristics, stakeholders and barriers that apply to your strategy, policy, service or function

Equality characteristics

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age | <input type="checkbox"/> Carers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sex (male or female) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

(for example – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background, education or skills level)

Please specify: social class, income, employment/unemployment, owner/occupiers, equity availability,

Stakeholders

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Services users | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Unions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members | <input type="checkbox"/> Suppliers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify | | |

Potential barriers.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Built environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Location of premises and services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information and communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Timing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stereotypes and assumptions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation and involvement |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function | |

Please specify

Group repair is available to private owners on a geographical basis. There is potentially 25% cost contribution towards the works which may affect some owners ability to participate.

8. Positive and negative impact

Think about what you are assessing (scope), the fact finding information, the potential positive and negative impact on equality characteristics, stakeholders and the effect of the barriers

8a. Positive impact:

Allows occupiers to reduce hazards and improve their homes. Has a positive impact on the health and well being of occupiers. Improves security of homes
Improves fuel poverty by improving thermal efficiency
Strong working relationship with others to help deliver and develop assistance to home owners
Home visits to all potential customers – can identify other potential needs and refer to partner agencies so adding value to service
Positive impact on the community and neighbourhood as a whole – especially when part of an overall plan to improve an area.
Potential training and employment opportunities via the contract to deliver any scheme

Action required:

To procure contractor – include employment/training provisions
To use the feed back from customers and partners to continually improve service delivery
To look at potential future funding sources to continue with the programme
To work with colleagues to look at additional works using green deal/eco

8b. Negative impact:

Due to changes in Government spending following 2011 no private sector housing grant was available – need to look at other funding sources which could be available.
Budget pressure means very limited schemes will be possible even within priority areas with very poor quality homes.

Action required:

To look at alternative forms of funding to allow assistance to continue long term & alternative options for individuals who don't qualify/ can't afford to take part.
To continue to work with partners on how to improve the schemes

9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

The schemes are geographically based and require close working with the community to make them a success. Part of work on the scheme also involves working with the community on projects providing help with activities to help bring communities together. Group repair is part of an overall regeneration plan which helps contribute to this activity.

Action required:

None

10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other (e.g. in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)?

Yes

No

Please provide detail: The scheme is community based and is subject to consultation as part of the overall regeneration of an area.

The Scheme includes working with local communities on projects – carol concerts, visits to schools, children helping to design parts of the works ie tiles to go in walls, books, charity work – provision of facilities in local centres etc.

Action required:

None

11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

This can be seen as benefiting some owners within an area at the expense of others within the neighbourhood but outside the target area for the scheme.

The scheme may exclude those owners whose finances don't allow them to be considered for a scheme even with a test of resources available for o/o.

As it is an option only available within priority areas other areas are excluded from such schemes as an option to improve their area.

Action required:

To look at other funding options to allow more schemes to be undertaken.

12. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration action plan

(insert all your actions from your assessment here, set timescales, measures and identify a lead person for each action)

| Action | Timescale | Measure | Lead person |
|--|------------------|---|--------------------|
| <p>To review the existing definition used by the Council for vulnerability based on Govt definition and the findings from a review of the means testing undertaken.</p> <p>To determine what if any changes need to be made to the eligibility criteria based on evidence gathered.</p> <p>To agree changes, if any, via the appropriate internal decision making process.</p> | March 2012 | Review of eligibility criteria for applicants completed and findings implemented for 2012/3 | Phil Beesting |
| <p>To continually consider all funding streams appropriate to the scheme to ensure vulnerable owner/occupiers can benefit from improvements to their homes.</p> | Ongoing | All alternative funding considered and if appropriate bids made from assistance to vulnerable owner/occupiers | Mark Ireland |
| <p>To review current promotion of the scheme and target audience. To consider what if</p> | March 2012 | Review of promotional activities completed and recommendations | Phil Beesting |

| Action | Timescale | Measure | Lead person |
|--|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| any new or additional promotional activities may be appropriate to ensure vulnerable owner/occupiers benefit from the scheme. This will be undertaken in light of the limited budget available | | implemented | |

13. Governance, ownership and approval

State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

| Name | Job Title | Date |
|--------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| John Statham | Head of Housing Partnerships | 20 th January 2012 |

14. Monitoring progress for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration actions (please tick)

- As part of Service Planning performance monitoring
- As part of Project monitoring
- Update report will be agreed and provided to the appropriate board
Please specify which board
- Other (please specify)

15. Publishing

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Date sent to Equality Team | 20th January 2012 |
| Date published | |