

Equality Impact Assessment Form (Guide to completion)

This form is designed to ensure that any policy, strategy, service procedure or practice employed within Stratford District Council does not, in any way, discriminate against any sector of the community.

Equality Impact Assessments should be undertaken during the formative planning of the new strategy, policy, etc rather than at final stages.

There are two stages to the process, the first is a scoping exercise and Stage 2 is a full Equality Impact Assessment. Stage 2 only needs to be undertaken if there is likely to be an adverse impact on a particular group(s) as a result of introducing or implementing your policy, strategy, procedure etc.

FIRST STAGE (screening/scoping exercise)

Gather an understanding of the scope of the policy and establish what outcomes you want.

You should always consider the impact of outcomes on the groups contained within the 6 strands of legislation, illustrated on the legislation wheel below, as well as low income households.

If any of those outcomes have an adverse or negative effect on any of the groups you then need to establish whether you can mitigate the impact, perhaps through discussion with a voluntary organisation or charity who represent a specific minority group. If not, alternatives should be considered.

SECOND STAGE (full assessment)

If you are unable to mitigate the impact, a full assessment should be carried out.

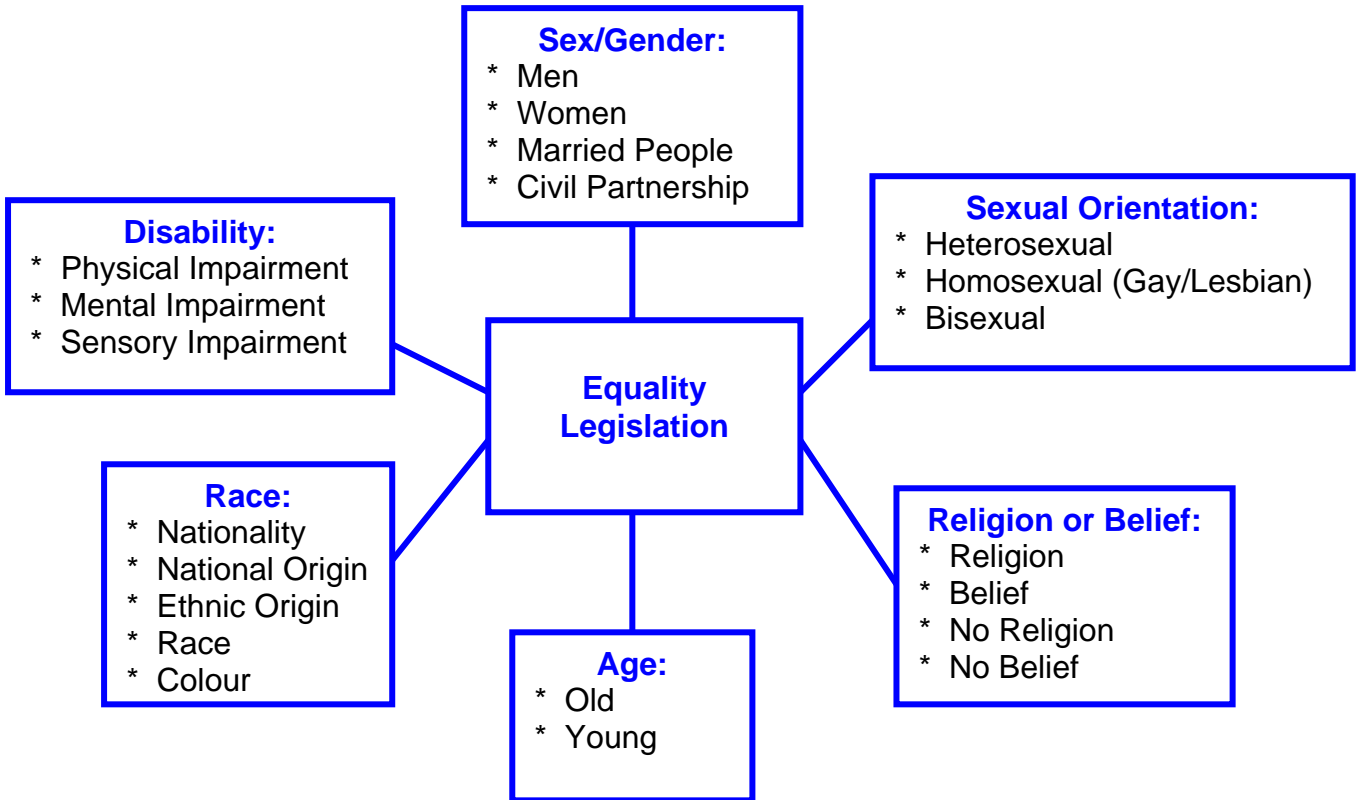
Full assessments should be carried out by a minimum of three trained assessors. The process should take no more than an hour.

To establish the team contact Ann Catchpole (Policy Officer, Social Inclusion Unit) who has an up-to-date list of officers who have been on the EIA training course. Ideally, the team should comprise of at least one member not directly linked to the department formulating the policy to enable a broad overview.

If you are seeking committee approval to introduce/implement a new policy or strategy, a copy of the completed assessment form should be attached as an appendix to your report for future reference.

An electronic copy of all assessments should be stored in the EIA folder on the 'G drive' for future reference.

LEGISLATION WHEEL



Screening/Scoping

Pro Forma

Screening / Scoping Pro Forma

(Verified by District Housing Forum 23 September 2009 following publication of draft Strategy)

Section:	Housing Policy and Development	Officer responsible for the screening/scoping:	Renata Mosz Tony Mindham		
Name of Policy to be assessed:	Housing Strategy 2009 - 2014	Date of Assessment:	May 2009.	Is this a proposed new or existing policy/procedure/practice?	New, but based on an existing strategy
<p>Note: The Chartered Institute of Housing's Practice Brief <i>Equality, Diversity and Good Relations in Housing</i> has been used in undertaking this assessment. It is available to download at: http://www.cih.org/publications/pub801.htm</p>					
1	Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure/practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify and evidence the priority housing issues facing the District. • To justify and describe the strategic actions to be taken to improve the quality and mix of housing; to improve provision for some vulnerable groups; and to contribute to more sustainable communities and a reduction in socio-economic inequalities. • To interpret the housing components of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Corporate Strategy; to link with relevant 'external' strategies such as Supporting People 5 Year Strategy; and to set the strategic context for implementation plans including the Homelessness Strategy and the Empty Homes Strategy. • To encourage Government, partner agencies and individuals to invest in housing in the District. 			
2.	Are there any associated or specific objectives of the policy/procedure/practice? Please explain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update, expand and strengthen – in response to comprehensive partner and public consultation – the vision, aims and analysis of Housing Strategy 2006-2011. • To articulate a housing strategy that complements the draft (Planning) Core Strategy. • To address any emerging housing issues; incorporate all strategic matters relating to private housing; and deal in detail with the housing needs of older people and the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. 			

<p>3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All District residents, who will enjoy more choice in where they live, better quality homes, and stronger communities. • People who cannot afford or cannot access market-priced housing, through the continued enabling of affordable homes. • People who need help to live independently at home, through wider housing options, continued provision of support, and financial assistance for adaptations. • People at risk of homelessness, through more preventative programmes, support, and wider housing options.
<p>4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy/procedure/practice?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more balanced housing market. • More affordable homes. • Improved condition of housing in the District. • More options and support for key groups of vulnerable people. • Less homelessness. • Commitment to continued partnership working.
<p>5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to plan for an adequate total number and appropriate distribution of new homes. • Only seeking new affordable homes in the rural parts of the District. • Failure to act in line with the evidence on housing needs and market function. • Reluctance to drive through unpopular but needed initiatives that seek to widen choice for vulnerable people. • Poor performance in the local economy, too little 'public' resources available. • Dissipation of resources through inefficiency, duplication or focusing on ineffective or unimportant actions.

<p>6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy (eg charities or voluntary organisations representing minority groups and/or vulnerable sectors/?)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) • Stratford District Partnership (LSP) • Parish councils • District Housing Forum (a forum of organisations involved as ‘client’ agencies, referring agencies or housing support providers) • Housing Partnership Meeting (the forum of the housing associations that have developed new affordable housing in the District in recent years) • Senior Citizens Action Networks • Housebuilders • Private landlords • General public 	
<p>7 Who implements the policy, and who is responsible for the policy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy 2009 will be adopted by SDC and endorsed by LSP Core Group. • The organisation or forum responsible for leading on the implementation of each of the actions will be identified in the Action Plan. This will often (but not always) be SDC. • SDC (Housing Advisory Panel) will monitor progress on all actions and lead on the review of the Strategy. 	
<p>8. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on racial groups?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The options, policies and actions in the Strategy will be generally neutral in respect of race or ethnicity, with one exception where they will have a positive impact.</p> <p>The Strategy will highlight the local situation in respect of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, and is likely to promote an expansion of provision of caravan sites / pitches, in line with local evidence that shows a significant under-supply of pitches in the District.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>		

<p>9. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to gender?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The options, policies and actions in the Strategy will be generally neutral in respect of gender, other than those that promote the continuation or expansion of housing or support for older people – overall, these are likely to benefit more women than men due to there being more older women than older men in the District (true for all ages over 70 years). Some existing specialist support services (which are likely to be referenced in the Strategy) might benefit more women than men and others more men than women. The accommodation provided by the domestic violence support service is available only to women (and their children) – there is no accommodation in the District that is specifically designated for men who are the victims of domestic violence.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>		
<p>10. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to disability?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The options, policies and actions of the Strategy are likely to have a net positive impact on disabled people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable homes are likely to be built to the Lifetime Homes Standard. • The Strategy is likely to include actions to enable more disabled people to live at home through a programme of property adaptations and other assistance.
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>		
<p>11. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The options, policies and actions of the Strategy are likely to be neutral in respect of sexual orientation.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>		
<p>12. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to their age?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The options, policies and actions of the Strategy are likely to have a net positive impact on older people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategy is likely to refer to changing approaches to the care and housing of older people living in communal environments. • Older people’s housing needs will continue to be reflected in development schemes and in the provision of affordable housing. <p>The options, policies and actions of the Strategy are likely to have a net positive impact on younger people:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Strategy is likely to recognise people aged 16-25 as one of the groups of vulnerable people in the District with the most urgent unmet accommodation and support needs, and include actions that expand and increase the provision and support available for young people at risk of homelessness or other harm.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
13. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to their religious belief?	No	The options, policies and actions of the Strategy are likely to be neutral in respect of religion or belief. Several of the organisations providing housing support to vulnerable people have a Christian ethic but do not discriminate against people of other or no faith.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
14. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to them having dependants/caring responsibilities?	No	The options, policies and actions of the Strategy are likely to be neutral, or possibly positive, in respect of carers and people with dependants. For example, the Strategy might seek to discourage the creation of one bedroom homes that cannot accommodate a household with children or a relative who requires care.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
15. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to them having an offending past?	No	The options, policies and actions of the Strategy are likely to be neutral, or possibly positive, in respect of people who have offended in the past. For example, some people at risk of homelessness will have offended and any action that seeks to improve provision and support for those at risk of homelessness will thus have a positive impact.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
16. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to them being transgendered or transsexual?	No	The options, policies and actions of the Strategy are likely to be neutral in respect of trans people.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		

<p>17. Could the differential impact identified in 8 – 16 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy/procedure/practice?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>It is likely that the Strategy will have a neutral or positive impact in respect of all the equality strands and a positive impact on socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>The law requires the Strategy to address the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. A failure to do so would contribute to the continued substantial disadvantage experienced by Gypsies and Travellers. This potential negative impact would relate to a continuation of the status quo rather than a new adverse impact as a result of the content of the Strategy (and this potential negative impact is acknowledged in the context of the likelihood of a positive statement of intent on Gypsies and Travellers being included in the Strategy).</p>
<p>18. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Tackling the inequality experienced by Gypsies and Travellers will not be 'at the expense' of the equality of opportunities of any other group.</p>

Business improvement

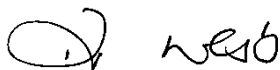
<p>19. Is there any concern that there are unmet needs in relation to any of the above groups? Please explain</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>There is not enough appropriate housing or housing-related support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people • Younger people at risk of homelessness or harm • Some other groups of vulnerable people • People who cannot afford market-priced housing. <p>There is significant outstanding demand for Disability Facilities Grants. There is a significant shortage of caravan pitches for Gypsies and Travellers.</p>
<p>20. Does differential impact or unmet need cut across the equality strands (e.g. elder BME groups or low income households)?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled people and older people are disproportionately represented among low income households, and are thus more likely to need more financial support to live independently. • Older people are more likely to be disabled than younger people, and thus need different housing choices.

21. If yes, should the full EIA be conducted jointly with another service area/contractor/partner/agency?	N/A	See question 23
22. Is there a missed opportunity to improve your business in relation to any of the policies, procedures or practices to promote racial, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief equality?		Housing Strategy 2009 will focus on improving housing availability and living conditions across the District. It is not the vehicle to promote equality directly although many of its actions will contribute, perhaps indirectly, to less inequality in the District. Limited resources available to produce the Strategy, and the need for a concise document, mean that some other actions that would promote equality will not be included in the Strategy.
23. Should the policy proceed to a full equality impact assessment?	No	As currently scoped, Housing Strategy 2009 is highly unlikely to contain any proposal or action that would have an adverse impact in respect of any equality strand, or have the effect of increasing socio-economic inequality. However, the need for a full assessment will be kept under review as the content of the Strategy takes shape during the drafting process, and again through the formal approval process.
24. If No, are there any changes required to the policy to improve it around the equality agenda?	No	See question 22

Signed
(completing officers) Tony Mindham, Renata Mosz

Date 18 June 2009.

Signed (Head of Section)



Date 19 June 2009

Countersigned
(Corporate Diversity/Diversity/Policy Team).....

Date.....