

Equality Impact Assessment

Title of the policy/report /strategy/service	Preventing Homelessness Strategy
Date	Ongoing
Lead Officer	Stephen Pointer, Policy Manager
Who else is involved in undertaking this assessment?	Ann Ball, Housing Needs Manager; Jim Wheeler, Housing Officer

Step 1 – Overview of policy/function being assessed

A. Outline: What is the purpose of this policy? (specify aims and objectives)
The purpose of the review is to plan for a new preventing homelessness strategy to deliver improved and improving services for anyone with a local connection to Harborough District who is genuinely homeless or threatened with homelessness.
B. What specific groups is the policy designed to affect/impact?
Home seekers on the housing register and any person who is threatened with homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless.
C. Which groups have been consulted as part of the creation or review of the policy?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Home seekers who are homeless or threatened with homelessness seek security of tenure, stability and affordability in the long term. Some may welcome opportunities to move within and outside the social and affordable housing market. § Council priorities include meeting needs for social and affordable housing, achieving sustainable neighbourhoods and communities and making the best use of available resources in the area. § Registered providers and local authorities who are landlords aim to meet the need for social and affordable housing, to enable sustainable neighbourhoods and communities, and to manage sustainable, not-for-profit, businesses. § Landlords managing private sector tenancies who are looking for reliable and responsible tenants § Other interested parties including health and social care, advice agencies etc. Their priorities include improved health and wellbeing, reducing inequalities and disadvantage and economic stability.

Step 2 – What we already know and where there are gaps

A. List any existing information/data you have/monitor about different diverse groups in relation to this policy? Such as in relation to ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender, transgender etc.

Data/information such as:

- § **Consultation**
- § **Previous Equality Impact Assessments**
- § **Demographic information**
- § **Anecdotal and other evidence**

The housing register. Full equalities monitoring data (is accessible through the Abris database used to manage and report on the housing register. This data can be cross referenced by specific household details and housing need information to profile equalities information.

There are 1688 home seekers on the housing register for Harborough District (632 men and 1056 women)

Outcomes of consultation exercises as described in 1c above (*to follow*).

B. What does this information / data tell you about diverse group? If you do not hold or have access to any data/information on diverse groups, what do you need to begin collating / monitoring? (please list)

The age profile of the housing register is shown below:

Age Range	Number of Home Seekers
16-17	4
18-24	239
25-39	540
40-54	410
55-59	102
60-74	245
75+	148

The ethnic composition of the housing register is shown below:

Ethnic Origin	Number of Home Seekers
Any Other	14
Asian or Asian British Indian	8
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	2
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	1
Asian or Asian British Other	6
Black or Black British Caribbean	5
Black or Black British African	9
Black or Black British Other	1

Chinese	5
Gypsy	1
Irish Traveller	0
White British	1551 (91.9% of home seekers compared with 80% for England and Wales in 2011)
White Irish	5
White Any Other	50
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	10
Mixed White & Black African	0
Mixed White & Black Asian	1
Mixed Other	4
Did not declare	15

	Number of Home Seekers
Disabled	388 (23% of all home seekers on the register)
Not Disabled	1300

Sexual Orientation	Number of Home Seekers
Bisexual	15
Gay	5
Heterosexual	1324
Lesbian	7
Did not wish to declare	337

There are differences between the 2011 Census information for Harborough District and home seekers on the housing register, including:

- § Women represent a higher percentage of home seekers on the housing register (62.4%) compared with the general population
- § Higher percentage of home seekers in age group 16-39 (46.4%) compared with the general population (31.7% of people over age 15)
- § Lower percentage of home seekers in age group 40-59 (30.3%) compared with the general population (37.4% of people over age 15)
- § Lower percentage of home seekers in age group 60-74 (14.5%) compared with the general population (20.7% of people over age 15)
- § Slightly lower percentage of home seekers aged 75 years and over (8.8%) compared with the general population (10.2% of people over age 15)
- § Slightly higher percentage of home seekers with long term health problem or disability (23%) compared with the general population (22.1%)

Information about the ethnic origin of home seekers accepted by Harborough District Council as homeless and in priority need in 2011-12 is shown below:

White	13
Black/Black British	0
Asian/Asian British	2
Mixed	1
Other ethnic group	0

Ethnic group unknown	0
Total	16

We expect the profile to remain constant; however we will continue to monitor the profile of home seekers to ensure our services are appropriate to meet their needs.

Step 3 – Do we need to seek the views of others? If so, who?

A. In light of the answers you have given in step 2, do you need to consult with specific groups to identify needs / issues? If not please explain why.

The local community, particularly those with an interest in affordable housing, including those on our housing register and people who have received help and advice in connection with homelessness or threatened homelessness

All registered providers of affordable housing within the District

Other partner organisations, including those whose clients are likely to require access to affordable housing.

Step 4 – Assessing the impacts

	In light of any data/consultation/information and your own knowledge and awareness, please identify whether the policy has a positive or negative impact on the groups specified and provide an explanation for your decision. (please refer to the general duties on the front page)
A. Age	Young people under threat of becoming homeless need advice and support on how to address the issues they are facing that may cause them to be homeless. This will vary based on their personal and current housing circumstances.
B. Disability (physical, visual, hearing, learning disabilities, mental health)	Disabled people may need to access safeguarding services as a result of harassment by others, or victimization by family members. Those leaving care may require additional support to become independent. People with mental health issues may have specific needs that need to be addressed by services.
C. Gender / Sex	People may need information and advice on how to access support and

	possibly services as a result of domestic violence. Some women may prefer women only services.
D. Religious Belief	People under threat of becoming homeless need advice and support on how to address the issues they are facing that may cause them to be homeless. This will vary based on their personal circumstances including religious belief such as a preference for women only services. If they are experiencing harassment or discrimination they may need specific support on how to stop and redress what has occurred.
E. Racial Group	People under threat of becoming homeless need accessible advice and support (in other languages if necessary) on how to address the issues they are facing that may cause them to be homeless. The Homelessness should also contain provision for monitoring equality outcomes including impact on racial groups.
F. Sexual Orientation	Some people may face homelessness because of their sexual orientation (within family/kinship relationships) and need advice and support on how to address the issues they face. Or they may need information and advice on how to access support and possibly services as a result of domestic violence. Some individuals find hostel environments to be unsafe.
G. Transgender	Similar issues to section (F) above
H. Other protected groups (pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership)	Women may need to access advice and support as a result of their becoming pregnant. Pregnant women who are homeless may need health related advice and support as well as accommodation during and after pregnancy.
I. Other socially excluded groups (low literacy, priority neighbourhoods, socio-economic, etc)	There are potential negative impacts because the different types of tenancy available to home seekers may be confusing for some vulnerable households, including those with low literacy levels. However, provision of clear, concise and easily accessible advice and information to households at risk of becoming homeless could enable them to avoid homelessness.
J. All	The recently approved Tenancy Strategy for Harborough District also contains provision for monitoring equality outcomes. Recommendation that fixed term tenancies should normally be renewed other than in specific circumstances set out in page 16 of the Tenancy Strategy and specific needs should be considered as part of renewal process. Expectation that providers be involved in meeting the needs of homeless people. Probationary tenancies can help in developing a flexible approach to meeting the needs of homeless persons and a pathway to more secure and settled accommodation.

Please include any identified concerns/actions/issues in this action plan: <i>The issues identified should inform your Service Plan and, if appropriate, your Consultation Plan</i>			
Question Number (Ref)	Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date
	<i>To be developed as part of consultation about the homeless strategy review</i>	Housing Needs Manager	September 2013

Step 6 – Who needs to know about the outcomes of this assessment and how will they be informed

	Who needs to know (Please tick)	How they will be informed (we have a legal duty to publish EIA's)
Employees	√	Publication on the Harborough District Council website as part of public consultation(www.harborough.gov.uk)
Service users	√	Publication on the Harborough District Council website as part of public consultation(www.harborough.gov.uk) Link from Leicestershire CBL website
Partners and stakeholders	√	Publication on the Harborough District Council website as part of public consultation(www.harborough.gov.uk) Circulation to Registered Providers and other partners
Others	√	Publication on the Harborough District Council website as part of public consultation(www.harborough.gov.uk)
To ensure ease of access, what other communication needs/concerns are there?		No concerns

Step 7 – Conclusion (to be completed and signed by the Service head)

Please delete as appropriate

I agree / disagree with this assessment / action plan
If <i>disagree</i> , state action/s required, reasons and details of who is to carry them out with timescales:
Signed (Service Head):
Date:

Please send completed & signed assessment to the Equality and Diversity officer.

DRAFT