



City of Westminster

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

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Completing an EQIA is the simplest way to demonstrate that the Council has considered the equality impacts of its decisions and it reduces the risk of legal challenge. EQIAs should be carried out at the earliest stages of policy development or a service review, and then updated as the policy or review develops. EQIAs must be undertaken when it is possible for the findings to inform the final decision.

SECTION 1:

Title	Long Term Empty Residential Properties (Private Sector) Interim Strategy Statement
<p>What are you analysing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the policy/project/activity/strategy looking to achieve? • Who is it intended to benefit? Are any specific groups targeted by this decision? • What results are intended? 	<p>The aim is to bring back Long Term Empty Residential Properties (private sector) into use and to assess different approaches in order to help develop a full Empty Property Strategy. This involves engaging with owners.</p> <p>If properties are bought back into use, this can lead to direct financial benefits for the homeowner (the home is occupied, let etc.) and wider benefits for the community.</p> <p>There are 1,150 homes registered as long term empty on the Council Tax register (although this number is likely to be higher). This is less than 1% of the total housing stock. The number of potential beneficiaries overall is unlikely to be high.</p> <p>Intended beneficiaries: <u>Private Homeowners and landlords</u> of long-term empty homes (direct impact) through providing them with advice and support to bring the empty property back into use.</p> <p>There is currently no information or data about the protected characteristics of individual homeowners. The Empty Property Officer will attempt to gather this information if it is available. Owners could potentially represent all protected groups.</p> <p>There is evidence that most empty homes in the city fall under the higher council tax band and are likely to be of high value. While it is unlikely that their owners have low incomes – they could still benefit from advice / support in bringing the empty property back into use. It is noted however, that not every owner may welcome the council’s intervention.</p>

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	<p><u>Communities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing empty properties back into use will help to make the best use of Westminster’s limited housing stock and occupied properties also help to support the local economy (It is noted that due to the high value of Westminster’s housing market, the properties (if bought back into use) are not likely to be affordable for those on low incomes or housing benefit claimants). • Although the number of empty properties attracting anti social behaviour, are dangerous or in disrepair are likely to be small, addressing any that are, will have a beneficial impact on the local community.
Details of the lead person completing the screening/EQIA	Rahima Begum
Date sent to equalities@westminster.gov.uk	
Version number and date of update	1
<p><i>You will need to update your EQIA as you move through the decision-making process. Record the version number here and the date you updated the EQIA. Keep all versions so you have evidence that you have considered equality throughout the process. However <u>only</u> the most updated version will be saved in the Equalities SharePoint folder. 1</i></p>	

SECTION 2: Do you need to complete a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)?

Not all proposals will require a full EQIA, the assessment of impacts should be proportionate to the nature of the project/policy in question and its likely impact. To decide on the level of detail of the assessment required consider the potential impact on persons with protected characteristics.

<p>2.1</p>	<p>Please provide an overview of who uses/will use your service or facility and identify who are likely to be impacted by the proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>If you do not formally collect data about a particular group then use the results of local surveys or consultations, census data, national trends or anecdotal evidence (indicate where this is the case). Please attempt to complete all boxes.</i> <i>Consider whether there is a need to consult stakeholders and the public, including members of protected groups, in order to gather information on potential impacts of the proposal</i> 															
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<p>2.2 Are there any groups with protected characteristic that are overrepresented in the monitoring information relative to their size of the population? If so, this could indicate that the proposal may have a disproportionate impact on this group even if it is a universal service.</p>	<p>No information</p>															

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2.3 Are there any groups with protected characteristics that are underrepresented in the monitoring information relative to their size of the population? <i>If so, this could indicate that the service may not be accessible to all groups or there may be some form of direct or indirect discrimination occurring.</i>	No information			
2.4	Does the project, policy or proposal have the potential to disproportionately impact on people with a protected characteristic? If so, is the impact positive or negative?			
	None	Positive	Negative	Not sure
Men or women		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People of a particular race or ethnicity (including refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and gypsies and travellers)	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disabled ¹ people (consider different types of physical, learning or mental disabilities)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People of particular sexual orientation/s		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People in particular age groups (consider in particular children, under 21s and over 65s)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People who are intending to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Impact due to pregnancy/ maternity		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People of faiths and beliefs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People on low incomes	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If any of the answers to the questions above is, “negative” or “unclear” you will need to undertake a detailed impact assessment.				

¹ Disability discrimination is different from other types of discrimination since it includes the duty to make reasonable adjustments.

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2.5	Based on your responses, should a full, detailed EQIA be carried out on the project, policy or proposal?
	No – not at this stage. This may be needed when a full Empty Property Strategy is developed.
2.6	Provide brief reasons on how you have come to this decision?
	There is insufficient information to carry out a full EQIA. As this is a new area of work for the council, there is no information on the protected characteristics of empty property owners and external data on their profile is also not available. Over the next year the Empty Property Officer will aim to gather intelligence on their profile although it is acknowledged that this could be difficult. An assessment of the project on wider communities will also be undertaken – taking into account community benefits and impacts. In the interim equalities considerations will be taken into account for example in our engagement with property owners and residents reporting them, ensuring they are sensitive if they have health issues for example.

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SECTION 3: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

In order to be able to identify ways to mitigate any potential impact it is essential that we know what those potential impacts might be. Using the evidence gathered in section 2, explain what the potential impact of your proposal might be on the groups you have identified. You may wish to further supplement the evidence you have gathered using the table below in order to properly consider the impact.

Protected Group		Positive impact?			Negative impact? If so, please specify the nature and extent of that impact	No specific impact	If the impact is negative, how can it be mitigated? Please specify any mitigation measures and how and when they will be implemented	What, if any, are the cumulative effects of this decision when viewed in the context of other Council decisions and their equality impacts
		Eliminate discrimination	Advance equality	Good relations				
Gender	Men	N/A						
	Women							
Race	White							
	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups							
	Asian/Asian British							
	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British							
	Gypsies / travellers							
	Other ethnic group							
Disability	Physical							
	Sensory							
	Learning Difficulties							
	Learning Disabilities							
	Mental Health							

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Protected Group		Positive impact?			Negative impact?	No specific impact	What will the impact be? If the impact is negative, how can it be mitigated? (action)	What are the cumulative of effects
		Eliminate discrimination	Advance equality	Good relations				
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay men, bisexual	N/A						
Age	Older people (50+)							
	Younger people (16 - 25)							
Gender Reassignment								
Impact due to pregnancy/maternity								
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs								
People on low incomes								

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SECTION 4: ACTION PLAN

4.1	Complete the action plan if you need to reduce or remove the negative impacts you have identified, take steps to foster good relations or fill data gaps. <i>Please include the action required by your team/unit, groups affected, the intended outcome of your action, resources needed, a lead person responsible for undertaking the action (inc. their department and contact details), the completion date for the action, and the relevant RAG rating: R(ed) – action not initiated, A(mber) – action initiated and in progress, G(reen) – action complete.</i> NB. Add any additional rows, if required.						
	Action Required	Equality Groups Targeted	Intended outcome	Resources Needed	Name of Lead, Unit & Contact Details	Completion Date (DD/MM/YY)	RAG
	To collect data about long term empty residential properties, contact details of owners and to deal sensitively with owner’s protected characteristics, where encountered.	All	A list of property owners and contact details		Mark Pledger, Team Manager, Public Protection and Licensing mpledger@westminster.gov.uk	TBC	
	<i>Enter additional rows if required</i>						

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE RELEVANT SERVICE MANAGER

SIGNATURE: 

FULL NAME: Ezra Wallace

UNIT: Innovation and Change

EMAIL & TELEPHONE EXT: ewallace@westminster.gov.uk

DATE (DD/MM/YYYY): 20/01/2022

WHAT NEXT?

It is the responsibility of the service to complete an EQIA to the required standard and the quality and completeness of EQIAs will be monitored by EMT.

All EQIAs for proposed changes to levels of service arising from budget proposals must be completed by (insert date).

All completed EQIAs should be sent to equalities@westminster.gov.uk