



Equality Impact Assessment Form

An Equality Impact Assessment is a way of examining how different communities or groups of people will be affected by a current or proposed service, policy or project. It helps identify ways of removing or reducing any adverse or negative impacts and with developing an action plan for ensuring the service, policy or project has the most positive outcomes for our communities.

Equality Impact Assessments consider a range of issues in relation to equality groups. The Public Sector Equality Duty focuses on a set of protected characteristics which can be used as a tool to help us understand how our services will impact on our communities.

The Equality Duty covers the following 9 **protected characteristics**:

Age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership (only in the respect of the requirement of the general duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination)

The Council has also chosen to consider **rurality** and **socio economic status** as part of its Impact Assessments.

EIA title: What service change, policy or project are you assessing?

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-2027

1. What is the purpose of this service change, policy or project?

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out our vision for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Allerdale over the next five years.

This Strategy sets out the Council's commitment to meeting the challenges that tackling homelessness presents and details how the Council and its partners can work together to prevent homelessness, tackle to causes of homelessness and provide outcomes for people who are or are at risk of homelessness. It aims to provide a service to all households presenting as homeless whether or not the local authority has a statutory duty.

There are four priorities in the strategy:

1. Reduce levels of hidden homelessness and rough sleeping
2. Prioritise prevention
3. Make sure there is appropriate support in place
4. Make sure there are suitable accommodation options available

2. How does it contribute to the priorities and objectives in our Council Strategy?

Directly contributes - 'Preventing and reducing homelessness' is one of the strategic objectives in the Council Strategy 2020-2030.

3. Who is likely to be affected by the service change, policy or project? For example: all residents, young people, people with disabilities.

- People in the district experiencing or at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping
- Members of the public
- All key statutory agencies and others with an interest / involvement in working with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness

The strategy will affect residents who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The proposals within this Strategy are aimed at providing an effective service for anyone who is currently experiencing homelessness or facing homelessness and households who may become homeless in the future. Certain groups are given priority as part of homelessness legislation,

however the strategy recognises a need to move beyond statutory duties and take into account the needs of those who may not be considered a 'priority need' or 'intentionally homeless'.

Legislation requires the particular needs of the following groups must be taken into account: people released from prison or youth detention accommodation; care leavers; former members of the regular armed forces; victims of domestic abuse; people leaving hospital; people suffering from a mental illness or impairment; and, any other group that the authority identifies as being at particular risk of homelessness in their district.

Homelessness can affect all households / individuals however local data and research has shown that certain households / individuals are more at risk and are affected in differing ways - the strategy is focused on addressing these.

In terms of who has accessed the homelessness service in the past we know that 25-34 year olds represent the largest proportion of applicants and that single people are over-represented. Just over half of households owed a prevention duty contained dependent children. Domestic abuse cases have risen substantially over the past three years meaning that more women are presenting as homeless.

We know that being homeless increases vulnerability and a number of groups are particularly identified:

- Rough sleepers
- Single homeless people
- Young people who have left home and cannot return
- Care leavers
- People with complex needs
- People with addiction issues
- People with mental health issues
- People and children who are victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence
- People discharged from hospital
- Some people with physical disabilities and learning disabilities
- Some black and minority ethnic groups including refugees, asylum seekers and Gypsies and Travellers
- Some former members of the armed forces
- Some offenders and ex-offenders who have no home to go to when discharged from prison
- People in financial hardship, including older people who are on low incomes
- People in insecure employment

4. What information and evidence have you used to support your findings on impacts? List any consultation or engagement undertaken. For example: customer monitoring data, customer profiles, demographic information, survey results, customer feedback outcomes of consultation exercises.

Homelessness monitoring data (H-Clic)
Cumbria Choice data
Feedback from service users
Socio-economic and demographic information
Engagement with partners to develop the strategy

5. How can this service, service change, policy or project help us to meet our equalities duties? For example: by engaging young people, promoting good race relations or targeting services to meet the needs of older people.

The strategic priorities have been determined through homeless and rough sleeping research, data review and consultation based on addressing and meeting the needs of those most at risk and most vulnerable within the district.

6. Are there any known equalities issues relating to this service, service change, policy or project that have been raised outside of Allerdale? For example, by other councils, or through national research.

National research shows that homelessness is complex and often reflects other vulnerabilities or circumstances. Homelessness often results from a combination of events such as relationship breakdown, debt, adverse experiences in childhood and through ill health. This can mean that certain groups are more at risk. For example, homelessness and ill health have been shown to be intrinsically linked. Evidence suggests that the health of people experiencing homelessness is significantly worse than that of the general population¹.

¹ [LGA \(2017\) The Impact of Homelessness on Health](#)

7. Impact and action plan

Use the table below to indicate whether the service change, policy or project is likely to have a positive², adverse³ or neutral impact on each of the groups listed and what that impact is. (See glossary below for definitions)

You also need to indicate what actions or provisions you have put in place, or propose to put in place, to ensure you address the adverse impacts identified.

Equality group	Positive (tick)	Adverse (tick)	Neutral (tick)	What is the impact?	Mitigating actions proposed (to address adverse impact)
Age	✓			<p>The homelessness strategy will ensure that services are in place to prevent homelessness for all age groups.</p> <p>It is recognised that some age groups may require particular support, for example, young people and especially care leavers, where clear and meaningful pathways need to be in place to support them away from homelessness.</p>	
Disability	✓			<p>The homelessness strategy will ensure that services are in place to prevent homelessness for all households irrespective of their disability. Disability is listed as a common support need amongst homeless households in Allerdale and the council works with a range of agencies and statutory partners to address support needs such as disability.</p>	

² A **positive impact** is where one or more group or groups of people are put at an advantage by the way a particular policy or procedure is carried out. A positive impact may also occur where a particular policy or procedure will contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relations within equality target groups.

³ An **adverse impact** is where one or more group or groups of people are put at a disadvantage by the way a particular policy or procedure is carried out. For example, disabled or elderly people, or people living in very isolated rural areas may struggle to use wheelie bins as easily as other people.

Equality group	Positive (tick)	Adverse (tick)	Neutral (tick)	What is the impact?	Mitigating actions proposed (to address adverse impact)
Gender	✓			<p>The homelessness strategy will ensure that services are in place to prevent homelessness for all households irrespective of their gender.</p> <p>A particular positive impact is identified in the case of victims of domestic abuse as specific support is available.</p>	
Gender reassignment			✓	The homelessness strategy will ensure that services are in place to prevent homelessness for all households irrespective of their sexual orientation.	
Marital and civil partnership status			✓	The homelessness strategy will ensure that services are in place to prevent homelessness for all households irrespective of their marital/civil partnership status.	
Pregnancy and maternity			✓	The homelessness strategy will ensure that services are in place to prevent homelessness for all households including those that contain pregnant individuals.	
Race and minority ethnic groups			✓	The homelessness strategy will ensure that services are in place to prevent homelessness for all households irrespective of their race.	
Religion and/or belief			✓	The homelessness strategy will ensure that services are in place to prevent homelessness for all households irrespective of their religion or beliefs.	
Sexual orientation			✓	The homelessness strategy will ensure that services are in place to prevent	

Equality group	Positive (tick)	Adverse (tick)	Neutral (tick)	What is the impact?	Mitigating actions proposed (to address adverse impact)
				homelessness for all households irrespective of their sexual orientation.	
People in rural areas			✓	We are aware that take up of the homelessness service can be more difficult in rural areas. The council offers digital access to services where this is appropriate, and a 24 hour phone line is also available. The council continues to work with voluntary and third sector organisations across Allerdale.	
People on low incomes	✓			People on low incomes are particularly vulnerable to homelessness and the strategy aims to ensure prevention activity supports households at risk of homelessness to retain their tenancies.	

This strategy aims to have a positive impact on any resident that is homeless or at risk of being homeless. While we aware that take up of this service may vary depending on factors such as rural/urban location, general awareness of the service or reluctance to approach for advice, overall the strategy aims to have a positive rather than just neutral impact. There is no evidence to suggest that protected characteristics of those individuals that the policy affects will be impacted in an adverse way.

8. Are the adverse impacts justified? If they are, explain in what way. For example: disproportionate costs, legislative constraints.

EIA completion

Date completed:	4 March 2022
Lead officer:	Holly Cosgrove, Housing Options Manager
Chief Officer:	Sharon Sewell, Chief officer (Place and Governance)

Please forward an electronic copy of this completed assessment to: policy@allerdale.gov.uk

Glossary

Age: This refers to a person having a particular age (for example, 32 year-olds) or being within an age group (for example, 18-30 year-olds).

Disability: A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Includes: Physical/sensory disability; Mental Health; Learning disability.

Gender: This refers to a person being either male or female.

Gender reassignment: This is the process of transitioning from one sex to another, considered a personal process rather than a medical one and it does not require someone to undergo medical treatment in order to be protected.

Marital and civil partnership: Legal recognition of a same-sex couple's relationship. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a range of legal matters.

Maternity: The period after giving birth. It is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding.

Race: It refers to a group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins. Includes, Asian, Black and White minority ethnic groups inc. Eastern Europeans, Irish people and Gypsy Travellers.

Religion or belief: "Religion" means any religion, including a reference to a lack of religion. "Belief" includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (for example, Atheism). The category includes, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and non-religious beliefs such as Humanism.

Sexual orientation: This is whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Rurality: Allerdale is defined as 'Rural-80' – this means we have at least 80 percent of our population in rural settlements and larger market towns.