

## **Community and Equality Impact Assessment**

As an authority we have made a commitment to apply a systematic screening process to both new policy development or changes to services.

This is to determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on different groups within our community.

This process has been developed, together with [full guidance \(PDF\)](#), to support officers in meeting our duties under the:

- Equality Act 2010.
- The Best Value Guidance
- The Public Services (Social Value) 2012 Act

In addition the guidance supports officers to consider our commitments set out in the [Thurrock Joint Compact](#) with the voluntary sector.

As well as supporting you to look at whether there is, or will be, a significant impact, the guidance will also consider ways in which you might mitigate this in the future.

**About the service or policy development**

Name of service or policy	Sheltered Housing Decommissioning Programme
Lead Officer	Bali Nahal
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**Why is this service or policy development/review needed?**

Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee endorsed the programme to decommission seven sheltered housing properties within the borough.

The sheltered complexes are available to tenants over sixty years of age, or who are aged between fifty five to sixty years, with a disability.

This assessment reiterates and highlights the support in place to minimise the impact of the programme.

The first phase of the programme has been successfully completed and three out of the seven schemes identified have been decommissioned. We are now entering the second phase to decommission the final four schemes.

**1. Community impact (this can be used to assess impact on staff although a cumulative impact should be considered).**

What impacts will this service or policy development have on communities?  
Look at what you know? What does your research tell you?

*Consider:*

- National and local data sets – for example, [key statistics and ward profiles](#)
- Complaints
- Consultation and service monitoring information
- Voluntary and Community Organisations
- The Equality Act places a specific duty on people with ‘protected characteristics’. The table below details these groups and helps you to consider the impact on these groups.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	What are the positive and negative impacts?	How will benefits be enhanced and negative impacts minimised or eliminated?
<b>Local communities in general</b>	Y		Y	Even though it was decided that the sheltered schemes	A lengthy public consultation took place for this work,

**COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

			<p>identified were unfit for purpose, the tenants living there built their own communities and embedded themselves into the wider community.</p> <p>The scheme residents are used to a certain lifestyle and living within familiar grounds.</p> <p>The community surrounding the schemes were used to older residents living near to them. This wider community may be more cautious of who will be moving into the sheltered schemes and some of them will be, and have already been, turned into general needs housing.</p> <p>Phase one has already been successfully completed.</p>	<p>which included those directly impacted and those living near to the complex. They were advised on plans for the initiative and given information about the proposed changes.</p> <p>In addition, phase one of the decommissioning programme has been successfully executed.</p> <p>The residents are aware that this work will be taking place and have had some time to adjust to the coming changes, whilst phase 1 has progressed.</p>
<p><b>Age</b></p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>The residents of the sheltered complex will need to move or face changes to the types of support received.</p> <p>However, it has been agreed that the sheltered schemes are unfit</p>	<p>As already highlighted, a consultation took place to ensure all residents knew about the proposed changes. The first phase of the programme has progressed well.</p>

**COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

			<p>for purpose; therefore it would be unwise to expect the residents to continue to reside in the properties as they have been traditionally set up.</p>	<p>A dedicated support officer has been recruited to assist those whose livings arrangements will change; the officer helps with all aspects of moving, such as bidding for new properties and arranging and assisting with the moving of belongings. This support has worked well and has proved effective.</p> <p>In addition, the council recognises that some may be ready for a change quicker than others, and some may want to live in unsupported accommodation. Therefore there has been three options;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Moving to another sheltered property</li> <li>2. Staying within the current property with some support</li> <li>3. Staying within the scheme and having priority for a new scheme to be built in the same</li> </ol>
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**COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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<b>Disability</b>	Y		Y	The complexes which are decommissioning have many properties which are on the first floor which do not have lifts. Whilst tenants with disabilities would not have moved there some tenants may have developed disabilities over time. This could have a serious impact on accessibility and could result in tenants becoming housebound.	<p>Tenants with an urgent need to move will be accommodated via the usual priority rehousing.</p> <p>For tenants who have less urgent needs or who anticipate needs in the future, a move to an alternative property will assist in meeting future needs.</p> <p>If the tenants agree to move to the new development and are successful in obtaining a property, there will be a number of ground floor properties which are fully adapted. The scheme will be lifted to all floors.</p> <p>Each case will be reviewed depending on need and any additional requirements will be assessed case by case.</p>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>		Y			
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>		Y			
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>		Y			

<b>COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>
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<b>Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)</b>		Y			
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<b>Religion or belief</b>		Y			
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<b>Gender</b>		Y			
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<b>Sexual orientation</b>		Y			
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<b>Any community issues identified for this location?</b> <i>See above link to ward profiles.</i> If the project is based in a specific location please state where, or whether Borough wide. Please note any detail of relevance e.g. is it an area with high unemployment, or public transport limited?					
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## 2. Consultation.

Provide details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the service or policy development e.g. on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups?  
***This is a vital step*** – see [full guidance \(PDF\)](#).

- A range of events were held at each of the complexes so that tenants and their family members could participate in face to face conversations
- A letter to all tenants was issued to ensure they were aware of the consultation and invited to take part.
- The consultation took place online and in paper format as it was recognised that many of the residents were not computer literate and were more comfortable completing a paper questionnaire.

## 3. Monitoring and Review

How will you review community and equality impact once the service or policy has been implemented?  
*These actions should be developed using the information gathered in **Section 1 and 2** and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.*

Action	By when?	By who?
The second phase of the decommissioning of sheltered complexes will be monitored closely. Residents will also	Sheltered Housing Officers and	Ongoing

<b>COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	
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How will you review community and equality impact once the service or policy has been implemented? <i>These actions should be developed using the information gathered in <b>Section 1 and 2</b> and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.</i>		
continue to be assisted by the supporting officer.  None of the residents will be forced to move, they will continue to have a range of options, so they can choose the one most suitable to them.	designated Supporting Officer	

#### 4. Next steps

It is important the information gathered is used to inform any Council reports that are presented to Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny committees. This will allow Members to be furnished with all the facts in relation to the impact their decisions will have on different equality groups and the community as a whole.

Take some time to précis your findings below. This can then be added to your report template for sign off by the Community Development and Equalities team at the consultation stage of the report cycle.

Implications/ Customer Impact
<p>Decommissioning has the potential to seriously impact the lives of older people living in these properties. It is anticipated that through the sensitive and supportive approach taken we can reduce the impact this may have.</p> <p>The Council will continue to provide a supportive and sensitive approach to the decommissioning whereby no tenant would be forced to move from their current home.</p>

#### 5. Sign off

The information contained in this template should be authorised by the relevant project sponsor or Head of Service who will be responsible for the accuracy of the information now provided and delivery of actions detailed.

Name	Role (e.g. project sponsor, head of service)	Date
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<b>COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	
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