

Equality impact assessment template



NORWICH
City Council

Name of head of service or executive head authorising:	Andy Watt
role:	Head of City Development
Brief synopsis of assessment	The assessment considers the impact of the Housing Strategy 2013-2016.
Lead review manager name:	Laurina Compton
Role:	Housing Strategy Officer
Date:	May 2013

1. Title of proposed policy, function or project:

Housing Strategy 2013-2018

The purpose of the strategy is to set out the council's vision and priorities for housing in Norwich over the next five years.

2. What are the aims and objectives?

The council's vision for housing is Decent Housing for all. The strategy sets out five outcomes we want to achieve together with the priorities that will help us to deliver them. The outcomes are:

1. We want to ensure an adequate supply of good quality homes across all tenures
2. We want our residents to have the choice of good quality, well-managed, affordable accommodation of different types and sizes across the city.
3. We want all vulnerable residents with a specialist housing need to have access to suitable accommodation, care and support.
4. We want to improve economic prosperity in Norwich through a healthy and balanced housing market.
5. We want to tackle poor housing conditions and reduce health inequalities.

Outcomes 4 and 5 reflect the important role of housing in helping to achieve wider policy objectives such as the creation of jobs and training opportunities and improvement of health and wellbeing.

3. Who are the key stakeholders?

Everyone living in Norwich

All agencies (public, private and voluntary and community sector) involved in providing housing services to residents of Norwich.

4. What evidence has been used for this assessment?

Responses to a formal 12-week public consultation between 21st January and 14th April, 2013.

An overview of the evidence base supporting the strategy was included in the consultation document. It contained information on the demographic and socio-economic profile of Norwich, together with housing market information and details of housing need/demand and supply. An up-dated and fuller version incorporating the latest Census 2011 data is appended to the final strategy document. This will be further up-dated later in the year when a fresh Strategic Housing Market Assessment will be jointly commissioned with Broadland Council and South Norfolk Council. An assessment of the condition of the city's private sector stock will also be undertaken.

Feedback from a stakeholder workshop held in September 2012 to help inform and shape the strategy.

5. Have any concerns been raised about the proposed policy? (Copy and paste this symbol ✓ to tick the relevant fields below)

	Yes	No	Not known
Age	✓		
Disability	✓		
Gender	✓		
Racial group			✓
Religion or belief			✓
Sexual orientation			✓

5a. What have people from these equalities groups told you about their concerns?

Disability

Agencies who work with disabled people proposed that more wheelchair accessible homes should be built.

Age

It was suggested there is a need for more sheltered housing, in particular bungalows.

It was also proposed that the Council consider alternative models of allocation for young people in order to make it more affordable.

It was also noted that young people leaving supported accommodation need access to a range of support services – more than a roof.

Gender

A need for more single gender supported accommodation provision was identified.

6. Do different groups have different needs in relation to this policy?
(Copy and paste this symbol ✓ to tick the relevant fields below)

	Yes	No	Not known
Age	✓		
Disability	✓		
Gender			X
Racial group	✓		
Religion or belief			X
Sexual orientation			X

6a. Please explain what the potential outcomes are for these equalities groups:

The strategy sets out a number of priorities to help address the housing needs of particular groups:

Age

The Census 2011 shows that seventy per cent of the population in Norwich is aged below 50 compared to 58 per cent for Norfolk and 65 per cent for England. The city has a high proportion of young people aged 20-29 (21.2 per cent) compared with just 11.9 per cent in Norfolk and 13.66 per cent in England. This high proportion is reflected in the housing register where 43% of applicants during 2012-2013 were aged 16-34. Housing benefit changes mean that single people under the age of 35 in private rented housing have had their housing benefit cut. Approximately 200 people in the city have been affected, losing on average £40 per week. This group in particular will be seeking one-bedroom affordable housing for which there is high demand but an under-supply. For example, only 21% of Norwich City Council stock is one-bedroom.

The Census 2011 shows that fifteen per cent of people living in Norwich were aged 65 and over which is reflected in the sixteen per cent of housing register applicants in 2012-2013 who were aged 65+, the majority seeking sheltered housing. Nonetheless, a recent review of sheltered housing shows that there has been a fall in overall demand for this type of accommodation, in particular flats.

The strategy sets out a number of priorities to help address the mismatch between supply and demand, including building new homes which meet Lifetime Homes standard, bringing empty private sector homes back into use and the re-modelling of existing council stock. The council also has an aspiration to build new bungalows, specifically designed to meet the needs of older people. In terms of younger people, the council has in the past operated a cluster model where young people share facilities. However, lack of demand and management issues made it untenable. This experience tells us that the model is neither what clients want nor prepared to accept. However, the council is open to discussions with partners to review the situation.

Disability

Census 2011 shows that 9 per cent of people in Norwich said they had a long-term health problem or disability which limited their day-to-day activities a lot compared to 10 per cent who thought their day-to-day activities were limited a little. Six per cent of housing register applicants in 2012-2013 had a disability (83 per cent did not identify).

The English Housing Survey (EHS-Household-2012) showed that households which included a disabled person were no more likely to live in homes which failed to meet the Decent Homes standard or which had serious damp than other households. However, they were more likely to live

in homes with substantial disrepair.

The EHS also shows that there are significantly higher proportions of households in poverty, with a disability or from ethnic minorities living in the social rented sector, than those households not in poverty, without a disability and with a white household reference person (HRP).

To help ensure vulnerable residents have access to suitable accommodation, care and support, the housing strategy identifies the following priorities:

- To promote independent living through the provision of information, disabled facilities grants, discretionary loans, adaptations of council homes
- To collaborate with Norfolk County Council as commissioners of social care and Supporting People services, the voluntary sector and the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure an integrated approach towards providing housing care and support to vulnerable groups and people with specialist housing needs

Racial Group

The data from Census 2011 shows the Norwich population is becoming more diverse. The proportion of people from black and minority ethnic groups has increased significantly from 3.2 per cent in 2001 to 9.2 per cent in 2011. The proportion of non-British white residents has also increased, most notably growth of the Polish group to around 1 per cent of the population in 2011. The largest individual ethnic groups in Norwich, apart from white, are Indian (1.3%), Chinese (1.3%) and African (1.3%). Gypsies or Irish Travellers represented 0.1 per cent of the city's population.

Evidence from the 2007 Housing Market Assessment shows that the black and minority ethnic population is more likely than the rest of the population to live in privately rented housing. Migrants from Eastern Europe represent the majority of the White Other group and are more likely to share poor quality private rented housing.

The EHS shows households with an ethnic minority HRP were more likely to live in homes with damp than households with a white HRP. Ethnic minority HRP households were also more likely to live in homes with significant levels of disrepair.

The strategy contains a number of priorities that will help improve the housing outcomes for these groups:

- to provide eight new pitches for Gypsies and Travellers by 2016.
- to tackle hazardous, poorly managed and sub-standard privately rented homes through enforcement
- to ensure the operation of a fair and transparent allocation scheme to meet housing and support needs.

7. Is there a chance to: a. promote equality of opportunity, and b. promote good relations in the community? (Copy and paste this symbol ✓ to tick the relevant fields below)

	Yes	No	Not known
Age	✓		
Disability	✓		
Gender			X
Racial group	✓		
Religion or belief			X
Sexual orientation			X

7a. Please explain whether the potential is for a positive or neutral outcome:

As noted above, the strategy sets out a number of priorities to address different housing needs in respect of age, disability and racial group. Taken together it is expected the priorities and the actions which support them will have a positive outcome for equalities groups as well as the community as a whole.

For example, the evidence shows that the quality of housing together with the wider environment and neighbourhoods have a significant impact on health and wellbeing. Priorities that will contribute towards a positive impact on health and wellbeing include: to improve the energy efficiency of all homes in Norwich; the promotion of community cohesion and tackling anti-social behaviour; tackling hazardous and sub-standard housing and, building new homes to Lifetime Homes standard to support independent living.

8. Is there evidence to suggest that the policy may have a disproportionate adverse impact on an equalities group? (Copy and paste this symbol ✓ to tick the relevant fields below)

	Yes	No	Not known
Age		✓	
Disability		✓	
Gender		✓	
Racial group		✓	
Religion or belief			✓
Sexual orientation			✓

8a. Please explain what this potential impact is and how you intend to mitigate against it in a proportionate and relevant way:

9. Please outline key recommendations and actions committed to in the future:

Please see link to the Action Plan 2013-2014 (to be inserted following adoption of the strategy).

10. On the basis of this assessment, should this policy go on to the further impact assessment stage?

Yes

No

X

11b. Please explain:

Please note that the further impact assessment is only necessary if a potentially disproportionate negative impact has been identified.