

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA): Stage 1: Initial Screening Form for New/Revised Policies or Functions

A: Summary Details

Directorate: Housing

Section: Housing Strategy Team

Person responsible for the assessment:

Contact details: Sue Lawrence, Scheme Co-ordinator, x7046

Name of Policy to be assessed: Old Age Pensioners and Older Disabled Tenants Decorating Programme.

Is this a new or revised policy: Existing – first equality impact assessed in 2004.

Date policy scheduled for Overview and Scrutiny/Cabinet/LAB: N/A

B: Preparation

It is important to consider all available information that could help determine whether the policy could have any potential adverse impact. Please attach examples of available monitoring information, research and consultation reports.

1. Do you have monitoring data available on the number of people (from different target groups) who are using or are potentially impacted upon by your policy? *Please specify what monitoring information you have available (your monitoring information should be compared to the current available census data to see whether a proportionate number of people are taking up your service).*

We have diversity monitoring data of tenant's that have received decorating through the scheme and their level of satisfaction with the way the scheme operates. This data has been obtained through the satisfaction with works received phone survey by the Scheme Co-ordinator and the rate of volunteering this information is high (61.5%: 142 out of 231 people receiving decorating through the scheme from 1 April to 1 November 2006 volunteered diversity information).

We also have some limited data (obtained from housing benefit records) which shows who met the age criteria and the income/benefit criteria but were ineligible to have decoration works done owing to having a person/s between the ages of 18 – 60 living with them.

2. If monitoring has NOT been undertaken, will it be done in the future or do you have access to relevant monitoring data for this area? If not, specify the arrangement you intend to make; if not please give a reason for your decision.

N/A – monitoring data has been available to undertake this assessment.

3. Please list any consultations that you may have had and/or local/national consultations, research or practical guidance that will assist you in completing this EIA

Customer satisfaction/exit poll phone survey results.

C: Your Policy or Function

1. What is the main purpose of the policy or function?

The intention behind the Decorating Programme for Old Age Pensioners & Older Disabled tenants is to help some of the Council's (and partner landlords¹) more vulnerable tenants (who may not be able to improve their surroundings unassisted – financially or with the help of family members) to live in a decent and pleasant home.

The programme is offered to Council and partner landlord tenants who are:

- 65+ years of age and in receipt of a Housing Benefit or a Disability Living Allowance; and
- not living with anyone between the ages of 18 – 60; and
- tenants who do not have an active right to buy application.

The scheme funds and covers the administration of making the arrangements for two rooms to be decorated.

2 Are there any other objectives of the policy or function, if so what are they?

Housing views the aims of the Decorating Programme as having very strong links with the Council's Strategic Plan and the wider Community Plan aim for making Tower Hamlets a Better Place for Living Well.

¹ Poplar HARCA tenants, Toynbee Island Homes and EastEnd Homes

One of the Council's twelve key priorities for 2002 – 2006 is "to ensure good quality housing", described as all residents having a safe, decent and affordable home which is suitable to their needs. (LBTH Strategic Plan)

The Decoration Programme also meets key priorities within the Tower Hamlets Supporting People Strategy. The Strategy seeks the provision of effective housing-related support services which tackle social exclusion and improve housing and liveability outcomes for vulnerable people by supporting them to live in their own homes.

The scheme further supports wider aims and objectives of other Tower Hamlets strategies for Older People, Mental Health and Valuing People.

3 Do any written procedures exist to enable delivery of this policy or function?

Yes.

4 Are there elements of common practice in the service area or function that are not clearly defined within the written procedures?

No. The previous EIA in 2004 identified the use of discretionary decoration allowances for people who met all of the eligibility criteria but were just under the income threshold. Since 2006/07, discretionary decoration allowances are no longer offered by the Scheme Co-ordinator.

5 Who are the main stakeholders of the policy?

Council and partner landlords, and their elderly tenants. Also local agencies which identify and refer tenants in need to the scheme: includes Repairs Help Centre, Social Services, Tenancy Support Team and Mental Health Services.

6 Is the policy associated with any other Council policy (s)?

See section 2 above.

7 Are there any areas of the service that are governed by discretionary powers? If so, is there clear guidance as to how to exercise these?

There is no statutory requirement for the council to provide a decoration service for old age pensioner tenants. However it has chosen to make budget available to

provide one and all areas of the service are set out in the procedure notes (which has been subject to independent audit by the Supporting People Review Team.)

8 Is the responsibility for the proposed policy or function shared with another department or authority or organisation? If so, what responsibility, and which bodies?

Responsibility for running the programme is with the council, (who receive the Supporting People grant to fund administration of the scheme) although we use repairs partnering contract services for the actual decoration services (Morrisons and EPS).

D: The Impact

Assess the potential impact that the policy could have on each of the target groups. The potential impact could be negative, positive or neutral. If you have assessed negative potential impact for any of the target groups you will need to also assess whether that negative potential impact is high, medium or low – see glossary in the attached guidance notes for definitions.

1.

a) Identify the potential impact of the policy on men and women:

Gender	Positive	Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)	Neutral	Reason
Women	55%	Low		Take-up levels are inline with the age profile of the borough at 2001 census (54% of TH population over 65 years of age are female.)
Men	45%	Low		See above.

b) Identify the potential impact of the policy on different race groups:

The first Impact Assessment of the Decoration Programme in 2004 looked at those receiving the scheme and satisfaction with the way it operated. For this reassessment, we have chosen to analyse some data from the 2006/07 programme which looks at ethnicity data of those tenants excluded from the Decorating Scheme because they had a person or persons between the ages of 18 – 60 living with them to see if this had any impact on a particular ethnic community.

Race	Excluded from scheme due to not meeting no dependants eligibility criteria
Asian (including Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Other Asian Background – please specify_____)	357 (6.7%)
Black (including Caribbean, Somali, Other African, Other black background – please specify_____)	296 (5.5%)
White (including English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Other white background – please specify_____)	2,262 (42.4%)
Mixed Dual heritage (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Other mixed background - please specify_____)	18 (0.4%)
Ethnicity Unknown	2,406 (45% of all exclusions)
Total including unknown ethnicity	5,339 (total including unknowns) (100%)

2001 census data for people over the age of 65 in Tower Hamlets shows lower proportions of BME in older age groups. Therefore the above data on exclusions – with the white ethnic group with the largest number of exclusions – is approximately proportionate to the ethnicity data broken down into the applicable age bands in the next page. For this reason the impact of an eligibility criteria which excludes 5,339 OAPs with benefit or disability living allowance on the basis that they live with a person/s between 18 – 60 is assessed as “Low”.

Table 1 Population Breakdown (Source Census 2001)

Quinary Age Group	All	%White	%BME	%Bangladeshi (largest ethnic group in BME population)	
40 to 44	11,390	57.0%	43.0%	24.0%	Note increased BME Percentages in 40 – 49 age group
45 to 49	8,884	59.8%	40.2%	25.1%	
50 to 54	7,306	72.0%	28.0%	14.0%	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> Eligible Age Range for OAP Tenants Decoration Scheme </div>
55 to 59	5,899	71.7%	28.3%	16.1%	
60 to 64	6,360	57.7%	42.0%	28.0%	
65 to 69	5,467	64.8%	35.2%	22.9%	
70 to 74	5,100	76.6%	23.4%	14.2%	
75 to 79	3,888	87.4%	12.6%	5.3%	
80 to 84	2,250	86.6%	13.4%	5.5%	
85 to 89	1,156	94.1%	5.9%	1.3%	
90 and over	495	89.1%	10.9%	5.5%	
All 40 and over	58,195	67.60%	32.40%	19.30%	

c) Identify the potential impact of the policy on disabled people:

Disability	Positive	Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)
772 (18% of people receiving decorating)	✓	Low
Note: this data is from 04/05		

The Programme is intended to benefit people who are disabled and frail elderly. 18% of older tenants receiving decoration works have a disability and this represents a fair level of take up.

d) Identify the potential impact of the policy on different age groups:

The Scheme is specific and only eligible to those of 65 years of age and over. There is no budget to allow for decoration works for two rooms of a council tenant flat to be offered to those tenants who do not meet the eligibility criteria of frail elderly.

e) Identify the potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people:

It is not possible to assess the effect of the Decorating Programme on the basis of sexuality since it is not monitored. However there is no evidence via complaints (where diversity monitoring is carried out) to suggest that the policy or the way it operates (such as the behaviour of the contractors or staff) discriminates against people on the basis of sexuality.

f) Identify the potential impact the policy on different religious/faith groups?

It is not possible to assess the effect of the Decorating Programme on the basis of faith since it is not monitored. However there is no evidence via complaints (where diversity monitoring is carried out) to suggest that the policy or the way it operates (such as the behaviour of the contractors or staff) discriminates against people on the basis of their faith or belief.

g) As a result of completing Question 1 a-f above what is the potential impact of your policy?

High Medium Low

If you have assessed the potential impact as HIGH you must complete a full potential impact assessment.

2. Could you minimise or remove any negative potential impact that is of medium or low significance? Explain How.

Not applicable.

3. If there is no evidence that the policy promotes equal opportunity– could it be adapted so it does? How?

The policy promotes equal opportunity and has been subject to an independent review by the Supporting People Team as it is classified as a “Home Improvement Agency” function. There were no concerns raised in relation to the service take up by diversity monitoring information or the satisfaction ratings achieved. No recommendations have been identified for this re-assessment, but to keep potential service improvement and access improvement activities under review as satisfaction surveys are carried out.

Please ensure that all actions identified are included in the attached action plan and in your service plan.

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send one to Equalities Team.

Signed
Lead Officer
Date

Signed
Service Head
Date

Signed
Strategy and Programmes
Date