

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

## A: Summary Details

Directorate:

*Housing*

Section:

*Tenancy Support Team*

Person responsible for the assessment:

*Mike Allred*

Contact details:

*x. 5544. mike.allred@towerhamlets.gov.uk*

Name of Policy to be assessed:

*Function: Tenancy Support Team*

Is this a new or revised policy:

*Tenancy Support has been an existing function since January 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).

*Tenancy Support has monitoring data via the Client Record System, developed by the ODPM to record standard information about clients/ service users who utilise the Supporting People Programme in England. The preliminary statistical analysis is carried out by the Centre for Scottish Housing Research (JCSHR).*

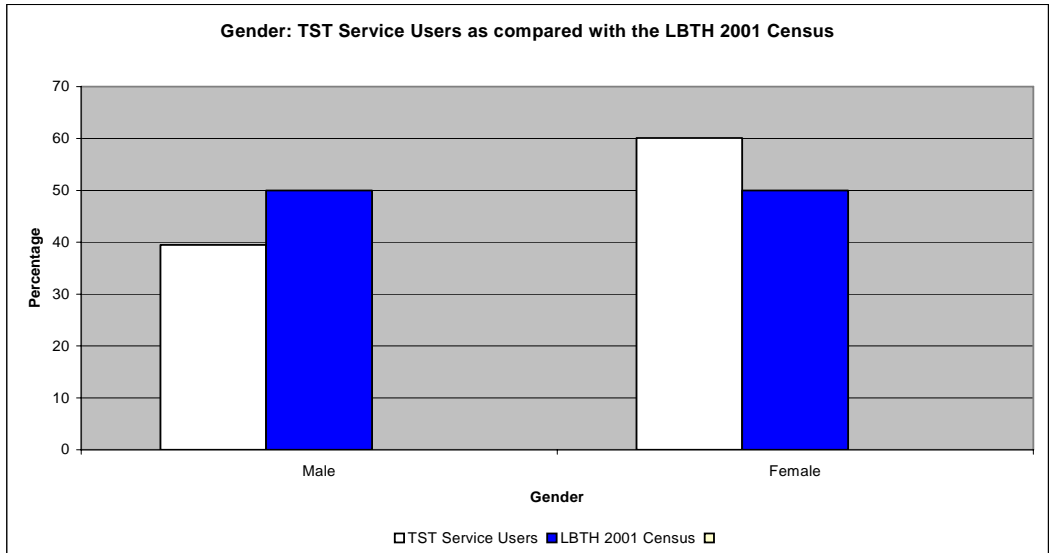
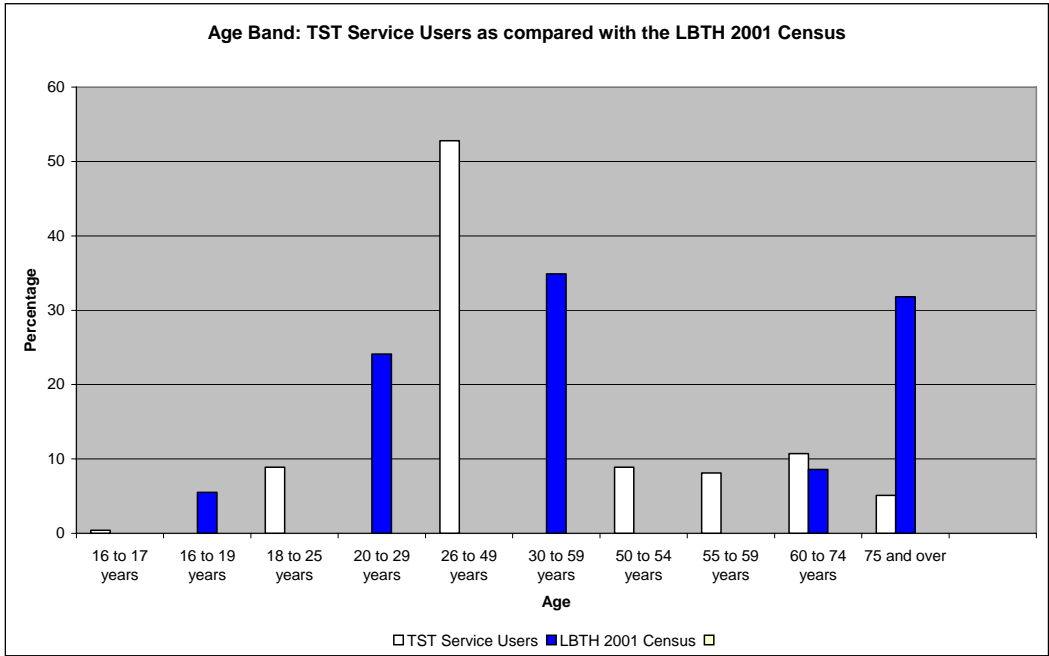
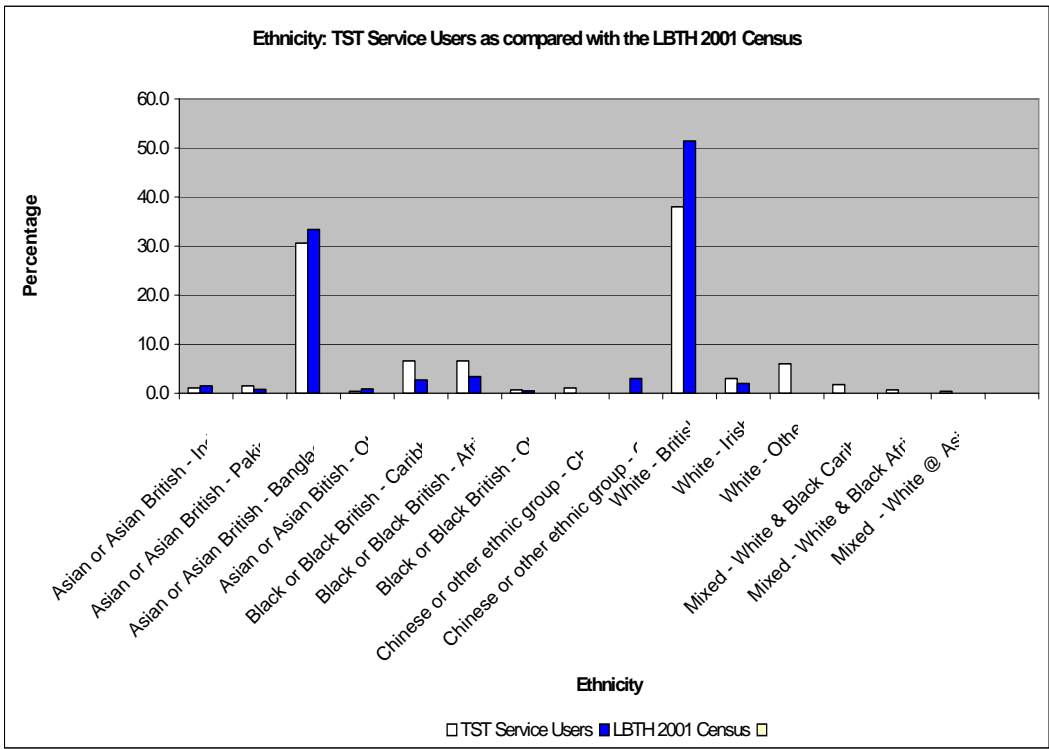
*The Client Record Forms provide information about access to Tenancy Support. The data is processed by the Client Record Office and passed on to the relevant Administering Authority and the ODPM. Each Administering Authority receives a complete dataset of Client Record information about services.*

*This enables Tenancy Support to analyse data and produce reports. The same reports are published on [www.spclientrecord.org.uk](http://www.spclientrecord.org.uk). This information is used to monitor fair access to Supporting People services for those who are eligible, and to examine whether the range of support needs in their local area is being met. It can also be used by Administering Authorities working together to co-ordinate services*

regionally. The ODPM uses the data to report nationally on access to Supporting People services.

The profile of people accessing Tenancy Support is as follows:

	April 2005 – March 2006	%	April 2006 – July 2006	%
<b>AGE BANDS</b>				
- 16	0	0.0	0	0.0
16 - 17	1	0.5	0	0.0
18 - 25	19	9.4	5	7.4
26 - 49	109	53.7	34	50.0
50 - 54	20	9.9	4	5.9
55 - 59	17	8.4	5	7.4
60 - 64	9	4.4	3	4.4
65 - 74	17	8.4	12	17.6
75 - 84	9	4.4	3	4.4
85 - 94	1	0.5	1	1.5
95 -	0	0.0	0	0.0
MISSING	1	0.5	1	1.5
<b>GENDER</b>				
Male	80	39.4	27	39.7
Female	122	60.1	41	60.3
MISSING	1	0.5	0	0.0
<b>ETHNIC ORIGIN</b>				
White British	82	40.4	21	30.9
White Irish	5	2.5	3	4.4
White Other	7	3.4	0	0.0
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	4	2.0	1	1.5
Mixed White and Black African	1	0.5	1	1.5
Mixed White and Asian	1	0.5	0	0.0
Mixed Other	4	2.0	0	0.0
Asian/ Asian British Indian	3	1.5	0	0.0
Asian/ Asian British Pakistani	2	1.0	2	2.9
Asian/ Asian British Bangladeshi	61	30.0	22	32.4
Asian/ Asian British Other	1	0.5	0	0.0
Black/ Black British Caribbean	12	5.9	6	8.8
Black/ Black British African	12	5.9	6	8.8
Black/ Black British Other	1	0.5	1	1.5
Chinese	2	1.0	1	1.5
Other	2	1.0	1	1.5
REFUSED	2	1.0	3	4.4
MISSING	1	0.5	0	0.0
<b>PHYSICAL OR SENSORY DISABILITY</b>	29	14.3	10	14.7



## **Service User Satisfaction Results**

*The latest satisfaction survey (July 2006, based on a sample of 50 service users) produced the following results.*

*Total 'Non-BME' who are satisfied 100%*

*Total 'BME' who are satisfied with 96%*

*Total 'Ethnic Origin – Bangladeshi' who are satisfied 100%*

*All interviews carried out by our independent User Involvement Co-ordinator (volunteer).*

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.

*To complement the above data, the service is establishing a process to monitor satisfaction at the point of case closure.*

*The service is in the process of establishing systems for the monitoring of religious belief and sexual orientation.*

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.

*Each quarter fifty service users are surveyed for satisfaction (by independent interview) and are encouraged to give feedback on specific aspects of the service. Feedback is collated and taken to the Tenancy Support Steering Group, a diverse group of service users and ex-service users. This mechanism enables the service to monitor and improve fair access procedures in order to meet the needs of the community. For example, in the June and September meetings, the group has discussed publicity, eligibility criteria and the assessment process.*

*The service has monitored membership of the steering group to ensure that it broadly represents all parts of the community. For example, interpreters are present to be inclusive of those who do not speak English, transport is provided for people with mobility problems. People who do not wish to attend the meetings can contribute one to one prior to the meeting.*

## **C: Your Policy or Function**

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

*The purpose of the Tenancy Support Service is to provide a complimentary support service to the Housing Management provision provided by Council and Housing Associations within the borough. The service works with vulnerable adult tenants (16+), providing floating support with the ultimate objective of enabling each individual to manage their tenancy and live both independently and successfully within the community.*

*The service aims to:*

- *Enable service users to live independently*
- *Ensure support plans reflect needs and are developed with the service user*
- *Engage each service user as an individual, focusing on needs and aspirations*
- *Meet diverse needs and provide fair access and opportunity*
- *Provide support in partnership with other agencies*
- *Engage with service users in service development via multiple user involvement mechanisms*
- *Engage with partners to continuously improve and provide quality support*
- *Maintain service delivery within Quality Assessment Framework Level A*

*The Tenancy Support Service is complimentary to other statutory and non-statutory services. Individuals are at times sign-posted or referred on to more appropriate floating support services in the borough. Individuals are also referred to statutory teams such as Elders, CMHT or Vulnerable Adults. Similarly, statutory services can refer individuals to the Tenancy Support Service, where there is a need to help an individual establish independent living.*

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

*The service works to make a significant contribution to the Supporting People (SP) vision as stated in the five-year strategy. This being that SP funded services will work to deliver accessible, high quality and needs led services that promote choice, independence, social inclusion and enable individuals to live successfully within the community.*

*Of the five key priorities stated within the SP strategy, the success of the Tenancy Support Team (TST) is meeting priorities as follows:*

1. *TST is focussed on having a positive impact in the life of every vulnerable resident who accepts support. This is being delivered by equipping each Tenancy Support Officer with the skills to enable people. The service is also in the process of implementing outcome management software with the intention of obtaining objective data. This will give the service a tool to measure and assess a service user's quality of life, enabling soft outcomes and progression towards independence to be monitored.*

2. *TST strives to ensure that it meets the needs of diversity with the community, and works to ensure equality of access. As with all service processes this is about continuous progression. As TST learns more about diversity within the borough, it develops to reflect the ever-changing needs of the community.*

*For example, with the assistance of feedback from service users, TST has implemented multiple referral mechanisms to meet needs at first contact. The service has implemented multi-lingual telephone/ face to face referrals for tenants who require assistance and advocacy, and 'safe referrals' received through the LBTH web-site, for tenants who may be at risk if they receive mail from a support agency. Regarding access by non-English speaker, there are nine community languages within the team, supplemented by the council's professional interpretation and translation service. Any communication needs are recorded at first contact, the point of referral.*

*Access to the service is also examined through agency feedback. Having visited over one hundred agencies since 2004, the service is starting a process of revisiting*

*the same in order to seek feedback on publicity, eligibility criteria and the assessment process. Agencies are being asked to comment on any operational procedure (or staff member) in terms of perceived good or bad practice.*

*Specific focus is also placed on those agencies who work with the borough's most hard-to reach people. For example agencies such as NAFAS – a targeted drug service primarily for the Bangladeshi/ Muslim community, Bangladesh Welfare Assoc. and the Working Well Trust – mental health support projects for the Bangladeshi community.*

*3. TST has initiated and agreed voluntary agreements with other LBTH floating support services to work towards a consistent approach to delivering local strategic priorities. For example, an agreement exists between TST and Housing Link to ensure effective partnership working for service users with mental health need, and clarity around the eligibility criteria of the two services.*

*4. TST ensures that the provision of its support services is high quality and value for money. It aims to maintain delivery of service at level A of the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework (QAF), but also to ensure that it maximises both hard and soft outcomes for each service user. The QAF is the national Supporting People standard for operational procedures that need to be in place relating to fair access.*

*5. Over the last twelve months TST has implemented a comprehensive programme of service user involvement (SUI) to facilitate feedback regarding both the service and the overall Supporting People Strategy. The SUI Programme ensures that service users can say what they think in order that their feedback can improve service delivery. The SUI Programme builds confidence and enables service users to see how they can positively contribute to the community.*

*For example, the service has recently completed a series of feedback interviews on the assessment process (including the assessment tool). The results of this are being given consideration by Tenancy Support's Steering Group, and also the Assessment Focus Group.*

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

*All procedures are documented and are sufficient to enable staff to carry out their tasks to a standard that meets Level A of the Quality Assessment Framework.*

*Also, staff will be trained in issues relating to policies and standards that affect fair access. For example, team members will be involved in facilitating workshops on Customer Promise, Equalities and Diversity and the new Core Values framework.*

*All service standards and procedures have been written in a simplified format for service users, together with information regarding specialist agencies. This is known as the Service Guide and is sent to all prospective service users at first point of contact. For example, the appeals and complaints procedures are described within the Service Guide. The Service Guide is currently being rewritten in consultation with the Steering Group.*

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



*The service aims to ensure that all case closures are based on objective criteria, and with this in mind the service is working on a more comprehensive written definition of the criteria for case closure.*

5 Who are the main stakeholders of the policy?

*Service users, and Supporting People as the commissioning/ funding body.*

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

*One of the key aims of the service is to contribute to the identified priority of the Community Plan, that being to make Tower Hamlets a better place for 'Living Well - improving housing, health and social care and promoting healthy living'. TST is directly in line with the strategic aim to promote independence through the provision of effective support in the community, and to protect and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults. For example, the service achieves valuable outcomes for tenants who have approached the service due to their requirement for a home that is safe and meets their needs.*

*The aims and objectives of the Tenancy Support Team are compatible with many local borough strategies. These include the local Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008, Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2002-2005, Mental Health Strategy, Crime & Drugs Strategy 2005-8.*

*The achievements of the Tenancy Support Service have contributed to objectives that underpin the Homelessness Strategy 2003-8. Most notable is the services central role in interventions to support those most at risk of homelessness or re-homelessness. The team adopts values that are crucial to this objective, that being to enable each service user to build positive life structures, to meet their financial responsibilities, to engage with appropriate health care, to develop strong positive social networks and secure positive occupational activities. Each Tenancy Support Officer receives specific training in the skills needed to support individuals in this process. This being a process of enhancing the capacity of individuals to take control.*

*The objectives and achievement of the service also make a significant contribution to the Mental Health Strategy. To date 20% of service users are within the Primary Client Group 'Mental Health' and each is supported and enabled in their quest to build positive life structures in order to live independently and successfully. In addition to TST support, each is introduced to appropriate specialist agencies in order that the individual gains emotional resilience, self-esteem and coping skills. This prevents further loss to quality of life or the deterioration of the condition and admission to statutory acute mental health services.*

*The objectives and achievement of the service also make a significant contribution to Crime and Drugs Strategy 2005-8. To date 10% of service users are within the combined Primary Client Groups 'Alcohol Problems' and 'Drug Problems'. Each is supported and enabled in their quest to build positive life structures, to live independently and successfully within the community. Each is invited to access harm reduction or treatment services. The support of people in programmes helps to reduce rates of re-offending by helping to ensure retention in treatment, which also contributes to the objectives of the Criminal Justice Intervention Programme.*

*Overall the achievements of the Tenancy Support Service contribute positively to many strategies defined by LBTH directorates. However the main success relates to*

*the Homelessness Strategy. The service enables individuals to live independently and prevents the deterioration of circumstances which lead to homelessness.*

- 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?

*Access to the service is governed by an assessment process which is detailed in the TST Assessment Procedure and assisted by the Assessment Tool. The procedures are adhered to, in order that objectivity is maintained.*

- 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 is not shared.*

*However fair access to Tenancy Support is subject to those front line services (e.g. Local Housing Offices and Housing Associations) that publicise or refer to the Tenancy Support Service. With this in mind, the service has worked to establish multiple flexible referral routes, to ensure that any tenant has easy access routes from which to choose.*



## 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	X			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
Men	X			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>

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

Race	Positive	Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)	Neutral	Reason

<b>Asian</b> (including Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Other Asian Background – please specify_____)	X			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes &amp; languages are catered for. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
<b>Black</b> (including Caribbean, Somali, Other African, Other black background – please specify_____)	X			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes &amp; languages are catered for. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
<b>White</b> (including English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Other white background – please specify_____)	X			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes &amp; languages are catered for. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
<b>Mixed Dual heritage</b> (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Other mixed background - please specify_____)	X			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes &amp; languages are catered for. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
<b>Other</b> (please specify)				

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

<b>Disability</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Reason</b>

	X			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes, including home and hospital visits. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
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d) Identify the potential impact of the policy on different age groups:

<b>Age Group (specify, for example younger, older etc)</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Reason</b>
	X			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>

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

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<b>Lesbian</b>	X			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
<b>Gay Men</b>	X			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>

<b>Bisexual</b>	<b>X</b>			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
<b>Heterosexual</b>	<b>X</b>			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>

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

<b>Religious/Faith groups (specify)</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<b>Buddhist</b>	<b>X</b>			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
<b>Christian</b>	<b>X</b>			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
<b>Hindu</b>	<b>X</b>			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
<b>Jewish</b>	<b>X</b>			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
<b>Muslim</b>	<b>X</b>			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>

<b>Sikh</b>	<b>X</b>			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>
<b>Other (please specify)</b>	<b>X</b>			<i>Referral to the service is via several easy access routes. Eligibility is determined by objective criteria.</i>

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.

Race:

Gender:

Disability:

Age:

Sexual Orientation:

Religious/Faith groups:

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

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



## Action Plan

Recommendation	Key activity	Progress milestones	Officer Responsible	Progress
<p><i>In April '06 the service implemented a focus group to scrutinise procedures - in order to ensure that the assessment process is consistent and effective.</i></p>	<p><i>Form a working group of the TST Deputy Manager and two Tenancy Support Officers (to meet no less than once every six weeks) to focus on this objective.</i></p> <p><i>Collect feedback, especially service user feedback regarding the existing assessment procedures.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure referral processing is effective, fair and consistent.</i></p> <p><i>Establish objective criteria for case closure.</i></p> <p><i>Revise procedures in line with agreed improvements.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure all staff are trained and are working with revised procedures.</i></p>	<p><i>1. Sept '06 – A minimum of 4 focus meetings complete. Minutes &amp; documented recommendations submitted to TST Manager.</i></p> <p><i>2. Sept '06 – Lead Officer to present summary recommendations to Steering Group.</i></p> <p><i>3.. Oct '06 – Lead Officer and service managers to agree and document changes.</i></p> <p><i>4. Nov '06 – Lead Officer and service managers to implement and monitor changes.</i></p>	<p><i>Mick Lerpiniere</i></p>	<p><i>Milestone 1 - complete.</i></p> <p><i>Milestone 2 to complete by 19.09.06</i></p>
<p><i>In April '06 the service implemented a focus group in order to that the borough's most hard-to-reach tenants</i></p>	<p><i>Form a working group of three Tenancy Support Officers (to meet no less than once every six weeks) to focus on this objective.</i></p>	<p><i>1. Sept '06 – A minimum of 4 focus meetings complete. Minutes &amp; documented recommendations submitted to</i></p>	<p><i>James Weaver</i></p>	<p><i>Milestone 1 - complete.</i></p> <p><i>Milestone 2</i></p>

<p><i>receive fair access to the service.</i></p>	<p><i>Collect feedback regarding the existing Fair Access procedures, especially relating to the use of interpreters.</i></p> <p><i>Mystery shoppers to be involved.</i></p> <p><i>Assign agencies to individual staff - to promote effective communications with specialist agencies who work with 'hard-to-reach' tenants.</i></p> <p><i>Revise procedures in line with agreed improvements.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure all staff are trained and are working with revised procedures.</i></p>	<p><i>TST Manager.</i></p> <p><i>2. Sept '06 – Lead Officer to present summary recommendations to Steering Group.</i></p> <p><i>3. Oct '06 – Lead Officer and service managers to agree and document changes.</i></p> <p><i>4. Nov '06 – Lead Officer and service managers to implement and monitor changes.</i></p>		<p><i>to complete by 19.09.06</i></p>
<p><i>Establish systems for the monitoring of religious belief and sexual orientation.</i></p>	<p><i>Record religious belief and sexual orientation as part of the assessment process.</i></p> <p><i>Revise procedures in line with agreed improvements.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure all staff are trained and are working with revised procedures.</i></p>	<p><i>1. Sept '06 – Assessment Tool revised, Assessment Procedures revised</i></p> <p><i>2. October - Collate initial belief/ sexual orientation statistics.</i></p>	<p><i>Mike Allred</i></p>	<p><i>Milestone 1 to complete by 15.09.06</i></p>

<p><i>Establish systems for the monitoring of satisfaction at point of case closure.</i></p>	<p><i>Record overall satisfaction as part of the case closure questionnaire.</i></p> <p><i>Revise procedures in line with agreed improvements.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure all staff are trained and are working with revised procedures.</i></p>	<p><i>1. Sept '06 – Case Closure Form Revised Procedures revised</i></p> <p><i>2. October '06 - Collate case closure satisfaction results relating to ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.</i></p>	<p><i>Mike Allred</i></p>	<p><i>Milestone 1 to complete by 15.09.06</i></p>
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