

Swindon Borough Council and NHS Swindon Diversity Impact Assessment for the Affordable Housing Development Programme

1 What's it about?

Refer to equality duties

What's it there for? What's it set up to deliver? What's the proposed change? What do you want to achieve?

The Cabinet gave approval for the Housing Department to bid for Affordable Housing grant, this enables the Housing Department to build new Affordable Rented housing for people in housing need in Swindon.

New Affordable Rent properties will be built, to meet the Pledges 7, 8 and 9. Funding is currently available for 125 properties.

What potential is there to meet the equality duties?

There is significant potential in this programme to improve housing outcomes for many people, including people who fall under prescribed groups in the legislation.

What equality benefits does it create? (for people, organisation etc...)

There are well proven links between housing and health so the provision of new housing designed to have better access, be more flexible for different life stages and easier to keep warm will create significant benefits.

Specific housing will be targeted to groups with disabilities to enable a better quality offer of social housing regardless of background. To support this the new homes will all be allocated under the Swindon Borough Council Allocations Policy, which has its own equality impact assessment.

What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

Concerns have been raised about the affordability of the new units, since they are to be Affordable Rent properties. This means that rather than the usual Social Rent the rents will be set at 80% of market rents. The impact of this is mitigated however by 2 things, Swindon's comparatively low rent levels and the added fuel efficiency of new build properties.

The proposed Affordable Rent for a 2 bed property will be £101 per week, compared to £82.83 for a Social Rented property. This means that the household will be liable for an additional £944.84 per annum. Offsetting this somewhat though is the potential impact of lower fuel costs in new-build homes. A property built to standard building regulations will be between 68 – 86% cheaper to run compared to the average existing property. The average fuel bill is approximately £1500, so the reduced fuel bill can conceivably offset the increased rent.

For the lowest income households, being in receipt of benefits means that they are not affected because the rent is entirely covered by housing benefit.

To further mitigate this the Local Lettings Plan will include an assessment of applicant's ability to afford the new rent.

2 Who's it for?

Refer to equality groups

Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?

Specific groups are housed by the Council including:

- Frail elderly
- High risk offenders
- Homeless people
- Older people
- People escaping from domestic abuse
- People with a substance misuse problem
- People with learning disabilities
- People with mental health problems
- People with physical disabilities and sensory impairments
- Single people with support needs
- Teenage parents
- Young people at risk (16-25 year olds)
- People with HIV / Aids
- Travellers
- Refugees

Statutory and voluntary partners also benefit from a good supply of quality affordable housing. The principal partners would be impacted upon by either a reduction in number or quality of housing provision in the following areas:

- Housing Costs
- Homelessness
- Health services costs
- Social services costs
- Crime costs
- Charitable costs

What do you know about them (evidence)?

SBC has 556 Households (that have an Active application), or 17%, that we can identify having either one or more persons in that household who have a disability.

HOUSING REGISTER: ACTIVE APPLICANTS BY ETHNIC ORIGIN
As at November 2015

	% of applicants	Swindon Pop'n (census 2011)		Number of applicants	%
Asian or Asian British	2.6	6.4	↓		
Bangladeshi				15	0.5
Pakistani				13	0.4
Indian				64	2.0
Chinese				3	0.1
Black or Black British	4.5	1.4	↑		
African				91	2.9
Caribbean				27	0.9
Other Black				23	0.7
Mixed Backgrounds	2.0	2.0	↔		
White and Asian Mixed				12	0.4
White and Black African				4	0.1

White and Black Caribbean			30	0.9
Other Mixed Background			18	0.6
White British	80.7	84.6	↓	
White British			2557	80.7
White Groups other than White British	5.1	5.2	↔	
White Irish			31	1.0
White Italian			13	0.4
White Polish			53	1.7
Irish Traveller			1	0.0
Gypsy			4	0.1
Any other White			60	1.9
Other Ethnic groups	0.8	0.4	↔	
Other Ethnic Group			26	0.8
Not disclosed			84	2.7
Total:			<u>3168</u>	<u>100</u>

Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service?

People from abroad with no recourse to public funds are unable to access this service.

Do you know why?

Legislation prevents us from assisting them.

3 Impact

Refer to dimensions of equality and equality groups
 Show consideration of: age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation
 and if appropriate: financial economic status, homelessness, political view

Is there any potential or real issue which will stop some groups or people getting involved?
 (adverse impact)

Consultations take place on all developments, which give communities the opportunity to have their say on proposed developments. Some people may prefer not to attend, but provision is made for people to view and comment on developments without attending events. Ward Councillors are also consulted, and can provide a broad feedback on behalf of their constituents.

Is that reasonable? Can it be justified or mitigated?

The difficulty some people have in getting involved has been considered and reasonable steps taken to mitigate that.

How will this service be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)

The properties will all be allocated through Choice Based Lettings, which is delivered to a diverse group of people.

Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?

The new buildings will take advantage of new technologies to deliver affordable and comfortable living, community and work spaces. For example residential units will include high efficiency heating systems (condensing boilers), high insulation values and offer significant fuel cost savings.

What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

We consult with each community prior to applying for Planning Permission, and before designs are finalised in order to allow community feedback to influence design.

4 So what?

[Link to business planning process](#)

What changes have you identified?

We have identified the need for more specialist housing for people with care needs, and a proportion of the programme will meet that need group.

What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?

The programme is kept under review, with an ongoing programme of consultation.

When will this be reviewed?

Ongoing, with regular reporting to the Member Asset Management Group

How will success be measured?

Success will be the delivery of the identified sites, in particular meeting Pledges 7, 8 and 9.

For the record

Name of person leading this DIA: James Graham	Date completed: 6/6/16
Names of people involved in consideration of impact	
Name of director signing DIA: Michael Ash	Date signed

Strategic Planning Framework - Diversity Impact Assessments

1 What's it about?

refer to equality duties

- What is it there for? What is it set up to deliver? What is the proposed change? What do you want to achieve?
- What potential is there to meet the equality duties?
- What equality benefits does it create?
- What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

2 Who's it for?

refer to equality groups

- Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?
- What do you know about them (evidence)?
- Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service?
- Do you know why?

3 Impact

refer to dimensions and equality groups

- Is there any potential or real issue which will stop some groups or people getting involved? (adverse impact)
- Is that reasonable? Can it be justified or mitigated?
- How will this service be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)
- Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?
- What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

4 So what?

- What changes have you identified?
- What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?
- When will this be reviewed?
- How will success be measured?
- Who is signing this off/taking responsibility?

Considerations

Our equality duties

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advance equality of opportunity
3. Foster good relations

In the areas of age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation.

Extended by SBC policy to include: financial or economic status, homelessness, political view.

Dimensions of equality

How will the service affect the life chances of different groups?
Consider how the service will impact

1. **Life expectancy**
2. **Physical security:** e.g. freedom from violence and physical and sexual abuse.
3. **Health and well-being:** e.g. access to high quality healthcare.
4. **Education:** e.g. being able to be creative, to acquire skills and qualifications, and having access to training and life-long learning.
5. **Standard of living:** e.g. being able to live with independence and security; and covering nutrition, clothing, housing, warmth, utilities, social services and transport.
6. **Productive and valued activities:** e.g. access to employment, a positive experience in the workplace, work/life balance, being able to care for others.
7. **Individual, family and social life:** e.g. self-development, having independence and equality in relationships and marriage.
8. **Participation, influence and voice:** e.g. participation in decision-making and democratic life.
9. **Identity, expression and self-respect:** e.g. freedom of belief and religion.
10. **Legal security:** e.g. equality and non-discrimination before the law and equal treatment within the criminal justice system.