

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This tool helps the Council ensure that we fulfil legal obligations of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Guidance on how to complete this tool can be found on the Cambridge City Council intranet. For specific questions on the tool email Helen Crowther Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at equalities@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223 457046.

Once you have drafted the EqIA please send this to equalities@cambridge.gov.uk for checking. For advice on consulting on equality impacts, please contact Graham Saint, Strategy Officer, (graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk or 01223 457044).

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service
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Storage in Communal Areas – Zero Tolerance Policy / Fire Safety in Communal Areas Policy
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2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)
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Click here to enter text.

3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

The main changes within the revised policy are:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Change of title to ‘Fire Safety in Communal Areas Policy’● Inclusion of latest legislation● Providing greater clarity around the aims and purpose of the policy |
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- Giving clear guidance on landlord and residents responsibilities
- Making explicit the revised timescales for the removal of items in communal areas:

“7.5. Items deemed as posing a significant fire risk will be removed immediately, or as a last resort within 24 hours.

7.6. Any other items will be issued with a 5 working days’ notice to be removed. If they are not removed within 5 working days of the notice, the council will remove them without any further notice.”

Full details of the proposed changes can be found in the Committee report.

Changes in the policy reflect the new requirements to meet legal health and safety requirements in respect of communal areas, which have expanded with recent legislation e.g., the Fire Safety Act 2021 and Building Safety Act 2022. We anticipate this will lead to greater resident safety across all groups.

4. Responsible Team and Group

City Homes (Communities) and Streets and Open Spaces (City Services)

5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

(Please tick all that apply)

- Residents
- Visitors
- Staff

Please state any specific client group or groups (e.g. City Council tenants, tourists, people who work in the city but do not live here):

- Cambridge City Council tenants, leaseholders and members of the household
- Cambridge City Council staff and contractors within Housing Services and Streets and Open Space

6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this?

- New
- Major change
- Minor change

7. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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If 'Yes' please provide details below:

8. Has the report on your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service gone to Committee? If so, which one?

Due to go to Housing Scrutiny Committee on 17th September 2024

9. What research methods/ evidence have you used in order to identify equality impacts of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

We have engaged with our elected tenant and leaseholder representatives for their input on the proposed changes.

We have researched other social housing providers approaches to fire safety and items stored/left in communal areas in order to compare and gather good practice.

We have used the data that we currently hold in our tenancy management database in order to assess the potential impacts on protected characteristics that we have data on.

Belonging to a protected characteristic group in the first place does not necessarily place individuals at risk.

However certain groups of people with protected characteristics may be at higher risk of fire and/or may be more vulnerable in the event of fire and evacuation. Changes in the policy sets out to mitigate these fire risks.

10. Potential impacts

For each category below, please explain if the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could have a positive/ negative impact or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is. Consider impacts on service users, visitors and staff members separately.

(a) Age - Please also consider any safeguarding issues for children and adults at risk

As of 15th August 2024:

Age Band	All Tenants	%
16-24	1,171	12.32%
25-34	72	0.76%
35-44	3,550	37.34%
45-54	191	2.01%
55-64	2,920	30.71%
65-74	168	1.77%
75-84	721	7.58%
85+	362	3.81%
UNKNOWN	353	3.71%
	9,508	

The above table shows the age profile of our tenants, most are aged 35-44, with a high proportion aged 55-64.

Changes to the policy seeks to improve the safety and living conditions of all residents.

Very young and older residents may be more vulnerable in the event of fire and any subsequent evacuation especially due to reduced mobility. Hence, the policy changes may positively impact these age groups in particular as it will help reduce fire risk.

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(b) Disability

Our tenancy management system does not hold any comprehensive data on disability. In our 2020 satisfaction survey of tenants 48% of respondents identified as having a disability.

Disability and mobility issues can increase a person’s vulnerability to fire. Those with a mobility or visual impairment are more vulnerable in the event of fire and any subsequent evacuation. We anticipate that the changes to this policy will positively impact these residents as it will help reduce the occurrence of items that may cause fire or would obstruct safe evacuation.

We will ensure support is available to residents who may have learning difficulties with understanding the policy or accessing information about fire safety. This policy can be made available in different formats for residents, such as easy read, where required. We will work with residents to ensure that any changes resulting from the policy are communicated effectively.

Changes to the policy could pose a barrier for disabled residents who are unable to store their mobility scooter in their home. The Disability and Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 states that it is unlawful to discriminate against a disabled person and that appropriate facilities must be provided, where feasible to overcome any barriers. The Council has processes in place to mitigate this by providing on request suitable facilities for a disabled resident who is unable to store their scooter in their home. In addition, through the Estate Improvement Scheme the Council has recently increased our provision of storage and charging facilities for mobility scooters across estates, where appropriate.

(c) Gender reassignment

Changes to the policy will have no anticipated impact.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

Changes to the policy will have no anticipated impact.

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

Whilst we don't have any reliable data on pregnancy or maternity within our resident base, we anticipate that the changes to the policy will have a positive impact to this group as the risk factors associated with pregnancy and maternity (such as reduced mobility) will be reduced by improved fire safety measures.

(f) Race – Note that the protected characteristic 'race' refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

As of 15th August 2024:

Ethnicity	All	%
ANY OTHER ETHNIC BACKGROUND	147	1.55%
ASIAN BRITISH - Bangladeshi	186	1.96%
ASIAN BRITISH - Indian	44	0.46%
ASIAN BRITISH - Other	85	0.89%
ASIAN BRITISH - Pakistani	37	0.39%
BLACK BRITISH - African	94	0.99%
BLACK BRITISH - Caribbean	72	0.76%
BLACK BRITISH - Other	37	0.39%
CHINESE	39	0.41%
Gypsy & Traveller - Other	1	0.01%
MIXED - Other	79	0.83%
MIXED - White/Asian	33	0.35%
MIXED - White /Black African	22	0.23%
MIXED - White/Black Caribbean	36	0.38%
Refused	26	0.27%
Unknown	3,235	34.02%
WHITE - British	4,462	46.93%
WHITE - Gypsy/Roma	3	0.03%
WHITE - Irish	57	0.60%
WHITE - Other	810	8.52%
WHITE - Traveller of Irish Heritage	3	0.03%
	9,508	

Our data on ethnicity, and languages spoken is not comprehensive. However, we know that some ethnicities have lower levels of trust in public services than others and as such may be less likely to engage in communications about policy changes. This can have an adverse impact on fire safety for these groups.

Residents whose second language is English, may not be able to understand information on fire safety as easily as those who speak English as a first language. Their knowledge of services and how to access these may also be reduced.

This policy, and fire safety information, can be made available in different languages where necessary, we can also offer interpretation services. We will work with residents to ensure that any changes resulting from the policy are communicated effectively.

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(g) Religion or belief

Changes to the policy will have no anticipated impact.

(h) Sex

As of 15th August 2024:

Gender?	All Tenants	%
Male	3,898	41.00%
Female	5,610	59.00%
	9,508	

The majority of our tenants are female, so we anticipate that this will have a positive impact on women especially, due to having positive impact for all tenants.

(i) Sexual orientation

Changes to the policy will have no anticipated impact.

(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular, please consider the impact of any changes on:

- **Low-income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty.**
- **People of any age with care experience – this refers to individuals who spent part of their childhood in the care system due to situations beyond their control, primarily arising from abuse and neglect within their families. The term “Care experience” is a description of a definition in law, it includes anyone that had the state as its corporate parent by virtue of a care order in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and amendments.**
- **Groups who have more than one protected characteristic that taken together create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. (Here you are being asked to consider intersectionality, and for more information see: https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/1_I59kt25q).**

Changes to the policy are designed to adhere to the highest standards of fire safety and other health and safety standards, including compliance with current regulation – this is anticipated to have a positive impact across all groups

11. Action plan – New equality impacts will be identified in different stages throughout the planning and implementation stages of changes to your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service. How will you monitor these going forward? Also, how will you ensure that any potential negative impacts of the changes will be mitigated? (Please include dates where possible for when you will update this EqIA accordingly.)

Impacts will be monitored at next policy review date.

12. Do you have any additional comments?

N/A

13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Kate Grigg

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:
Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer

Date of EqlA sign off: September 2024

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: September 2027

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: September 2024

All EqlAs need to be sent to the Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at equalities@cambridge.gov.uk