

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment

Completing an Equality Impact Assessment will help you to think about what impact your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service may have on people that live in, work in or visit Cambridge, as well as on City Council staff.



The template is easy to use. You do not need to have specialist equalities knowledge to complete it. It asks you to make judgements based on evidence and experience. There are guidance notes on the intranet to help you. You can also get advice from Suzanne Goff, Strategy Officer on 01223 457174 or email suzanne.goff@cambridge.gov.uk or from any member of the Joint Equalities Group.

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service:

Empty Homes Loans Scheme

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

Introducing a scheme to provide interest free Loans to owner of long term empty homes in Cambridge.

Improvement

Residents who are impacted negatively by the effects of empty homes in their neighbourhood will benefit from empty homes being brought back into use through the loan scheme. Similarly people who are seeking accommodation within the City will

Benefit from the increase of affordable homes resulting from empty homes being brought back into use. This will be a valuable option to the Housing Advice Service in preventing homelessness, reducing housing need & enabling Cambridge City Council to discharge its duties to accepted homeless applicants through the private sector. The benefits of empty homes will also benefit where they access incentives set out in the policy.

New loan

The Empty Homes Loan will be available to owners of empty homes in Cambridge city to enable them to bring their properties up to decent homes standard through remedying hazards which have been unidentified through the Housing Act 2004, an EPC rating of D and above and the creation of affordable homes within the city. Under the terms of the loan the property must be let as affordable housing through a non for profit organisation (for a minimum of 2 years) This is currently through Cambridge City Councils Town Hall Letting. The loan is to be repaid within the five years and a charge will be registered on the property. No interest will be charged. A breach in conditions may result in early repayment needing to be made.

The conditions and loan agreement will be predetermined and form part of the loan offer.

Reasons for change:

To incentivise owners of properties to return them to occupation. This was considered essential under the Strategy 2016-2019 to increase the supply of affordable residential accommodation in the City. Many properties have remained empty for long periods and have fallen into a state of disrepair and neglect which requires a significant financial outlay.

As well as providing additional accommodation in a growing city the loan will also help to tackle and correct long term neglected property which are a wasted resource. Empty properties can lead to problems with anti-social behaviour, fly tipping and squatting. Bringing properties back into use can both help to improve an area and for people having to live near a property which maybe having a negative impact on their home.

Objectives

This policy will assist Cambridge City Council in working to address the issue of empty properties within the City, to maximise the potential of empty homes within Cambridge City and increase the availability of affordable housing, to improve neighbourhoods and reduce the risk of associated crime.

In assessing the need for a loan scheme the following data was used

Data

Record of Empty Homes taken from Council Tax figures as of 01/10/2016 of homes which have been empty for over 6 months (Internal Document)

M3 Records (Internal Document)

Strategic Housing Key facts June 2016

<http://live.drupal.intranet.ccc.local/sites/default/files/documents/13%20Key%20Facts%20June%20FINAL.pdf>

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

Communications

The empty homes loan will be widely publicised, the Empty Homes Officer will make contact with empty owners to encourage them to apply for the new loan if required.

All communication regarding the loan schemes will utilise the Councillors website, social media and information points throughout Cambridge City.

Consultations

Timetable –

Town Hall Lettings, Local Social Housing Providers

Town Hall Lettings responded positively to the loan scheme

3. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)

Residents

Visitors

Staff

A specific client group or groups (please state):

4. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this? (Please tick)

New

Revised

Existing

5. Responsible directorate and service

Directorate:

Service: Environmental Services

6. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

No

Yes (please give details):

Town Hall Letting, Jimmy's Supported Housing, Legal Services

7. Potential impact

Please list and explain how this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could **positively** or **negatively** affect individuals from the following equalities groups.

When answering this question, please think about:

- The results of relevant consultation that you or others have completed (for example with residents, people that work in or visit Cambridge, service users, staff or partner organisations).
- Complaints information.
- Performance information.
- Information about people using your service (for example whether people from certain equalities groups use the service more or less than others).
- Inspection results.
- Comparisons with other organisations.
- The implementation of your piece of work (don't just assess what you think the impact will be after you have completed your work, but also think about what steps you might have to take to make sure that the implementation of your work does not negatively impact on people from a particular equality group).
- The relevant premises involved.
- Your communications.
- National research (local information is not always available, particularly for some equalities groups, so use national research to provide evidence for your conclusions).

(a) Age (any group of people of a particular age, including younger and older people – in particular, please consider any safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults)

The loan process is not restricted to any age group, the affordable homes created will not be restricted to any age group..

(b) Disability (including people with a physical impairment, sensory impairment, learning disability, mental health problem or other condition which has an impact on their daily life)

The loan scheme is not restricted; the creation of affordable homes will not be restricted and will have a positive effect on available housing.

(c) Gender

There is no gender implications created by the implementation of this loan scheme

(d) Pregnancy and maternity

There are no pregnancy or maternity implications. The Empty Homes Loan will have a positive impact by increasing affordable housing options within the City.

(e) Transgender (including gender re-assignment)

Will have a positive impact by increasing affordable housing options within the City.

(f) Marriage and Civil Partnership

Joint applications may be made for a loan when a property is in joint ownership.

(g) Race or Ethnicity

The Empty Homes Loan will have a positive impact by increasing affordable housing options within the City.

(h) Religion or Belief

No impact

(i) Sexual Orientation

Civil Partnership Joint application for loans

Will have a positive impact by increasing affordable housing options within the City.

(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 (please state):

The loans will not lead to inequality but will have a positive effect through improving homes..

8. If you have any additional comments please add them here

Cambridge is a diverse multi-cultural city with a growing population. The lack of affordable homes often means that even the worst properties can be let; this can be evidenced through complaints received by Environmental Services. The City contains relatively high levels of empty homes a conservative estimate is put at 328 properties although it is likely there will be further properties that are yet to be unidentified. Many of these properties are in poor condition and face little prospect of being brought back to a habitable standard without the Council's intervention. The loan scheme will help incentivise empty home owners to carry out essential works but also lead to the introduction of affordable homes within the city as a condition of borrowing. The loans will be interest free and must be repaid within a predetermined period.

9. Conclusions and Next Steps

- If you have not identified any negative impacts, please sign off this form.
- If you have identified potential negative actions, you must complete the action plan at the end of this document to set out how you propose to mitigate the impact. If you do not feel that the potential negative impact can be mitigated, you must complete question 8 to explain why that is the case.
- If there is insufficient evidence to say whether or not there is likely to be a negative impact, please complete the action plan setting out what additional information you need to gather to complete the assessment.

All completed Equality Impact Assessments must be emailed to Suzanne Goff, Strategy Officer, who will arrange for it to be published on the City Council's website.
Email suzanne.goff@cambridge.gov.uk

10. Sign off

Name and job title of assessment lead officer: Danae Evans EHPO/Claire Adelizzi
Environmental Health Officer

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:
Phillip Winter-Project Officer-Environmental Services
Robin Ray-Residential Team Manager-Environmental Services
Heather Rigby- Principal Property Lawyer-3C Shared Services-Legal Practice
James McWilliams-Housing Advice Partnerships Manager-Customer & Community Services
Dominic Lamch-Landlord Liaison Officer-Customer & Community Services
Barry Griffiths-Jimmys Supported Housing Project
Cllr Kevin Price-Executive Councillor for Housing
Date of completion:

Date of next review of the assessment:

Action Plan- (Not Applicable)

Equality Impact Assessment title:

Date of completion:

Equality Group	Age
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Disability
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Gender
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Pregnancy and Maternity
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Transgender
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Marriage and Civil Partnership
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Race or Ethnicity
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Religion or Belief
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Sexual Orientation
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Other factors that may lead to inequality	
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
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