

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
Community Alarms Service Review

2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)
Link can be added once committee report published.

3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?
A recommendation is being made to the Housing Scrutiny Committee to cease the community alarms service. Full details of the proposals can be found in the Committee report. If the recommendations are approved, we will ensure that all of our customers are contacted to make them aware of the decision, and to begin working with them and our other partners to ensure they are aware of what their options are. These could be: 1. Transferring to another provider, including the County Council who we would be working closely with.

1. Transferring to another provider, including the County Council who we would be working closely with.

2. Deciding they do not need an alarm anymore and stopping the service.

At all stages of the process, we will make sure that the choices the individual has are clear, and that they are supported with their decision. Where we identify that people do not have capacity to make this decision, we will work with their friends and families, and any other support networks, including the County Council, to make best interest decisions.

4. Responsible service

Housing 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):

**Current Community Alarms customers living within the City (438 as of 3.5.22)
1 x FTE staff member who operates the service.**

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)

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes' please provide details below:

If the recommendations are accepted, we would be working closely with Cambridgeshire County Council's alarms service to transfer those customers who chose, over to their service. We would also work closely with our monitoring centre provider, Tunstall Healthcare (UK) Ltd, to ensure customers are transferred over smoothly.

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 in June 22.

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?

At this stage, we have not consulted directly with our customers, as this decision is based on financial and operational impacts for the City Council, however if the decision is made to go ahead we will consult with each customer individually to assess the impact of the change on them, and work to support them based on their own needs in order to go through this process.

Communication will take place initially via letter, and then via phone or face to face depending on customers preference and needs.

I have used the data that we collect from our customers when they first sign up to our service in order to assess the potential impacts on each category that we collect data on.

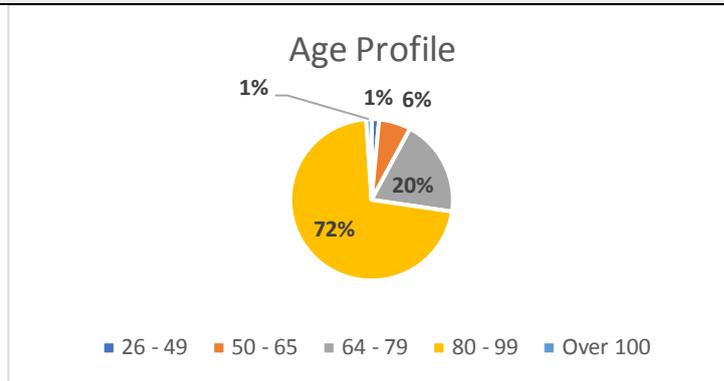
I have used online research to find other alarm providers in order to look at cost comparisons.

I have had an initial conversation with Cambridgeshire County Council about how we would manage the process for all customers, as there will be an impact on each individual. If the decision is made by HSC to progress with this project, we will work closely with them to communicate with our customers.

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



The above chart shows the age profile of the community alarms customers as of Jan 2022. 93% of our customers are aged 64+, so this decision will affect mainly older people as they represent the greatest number in terms of customer base. However, all of our customers will be affected by the proposed change and we will communicate with them individually to identify any specific needs, no matter what their age.

(b) Disability

Monitoring data about our customers in Jan 22 states that 22% of our customers consider themselves to have a sight impairment, 55% consider themselves to have a hearing impairment, 15% consider themselves to have a speech impediment, 95% consider themselves to have a physical disability, and 17% told us that they had a form of learning disability or mental health illness.

Using this data, we will be able to ensure that our communication and the support that we provide individuals through this process is suited to their individual needs.

(c) Gender reassignment

We do not collect information on gender reassignment from our customers and so are not aware of how many customers this affects, however given the nature of the proposal we do not anticipate any adverse effects on this group of individuals. All of our customers will be affected by the proposed change and we will communicate with them individually to identify any specific needs.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

We do not collect information on marital status from our customer and so do not have data about this on record. Anecdotally however, we are aware that the majority of our customers are single and living alone, hence the reason for an alarm in the first place. As with all of our customers, we will work with individuals to make sure that they have a new arrangement in place if they wish to, before removing our alarm, so that there is no period where they are unable to make contact with a response centre.

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

We do not collect information on marriage/maternity status from our customer and so are not aware of how many customers this affects, however given the age profile of the customer group, and the nature of the proposal, we do not anticipate any adverse effects on this group of individuals. All of our customers will be affected by the proposed change and we will communicate with them individually to identify any specific needs.

The staff member affected by the proposal is not currently on maternity leave or pregnant.

(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.

Data from January 2022 shows that 80% of our customers identify as British (including Northern Irish, Welsh and Scottish). Other nationalities disclosed were American, French, German, Greek, Polish, Iranian, Italian, Jordanian, South African, West Indian, Spanish, Ugandan, Zimbabwean.

As part of our assessments when a new customer joins the service, we ask all of our customers about their communication preferences and any language barriers in order to provide an effective service to them. These will be taken into account when we consult with individuals about the changes to the service, for example by using translation services.

(g) Religion or belief

We do not collect information on religion or belief from our customer and so are not aware of how many customers this affects, however given the nature of the proposal we do not anticipate any adverse effects on this group of individuals. All of our customers will be affected by the proposed change and we will communicate with them individually to identify any specific needs.

(h) Sex

Our latest monitoring data from Jan 2022 shows that 64% of our customers identify as female, around 35.5% identify as male, and under 0.5% identify as transgender. This data suggests that the decision will have a higher general impact on females, however all of our customers will be affected by the proposed change, and we will communicate with them individually to identify any specific needs.

(i) Sexual orientation

Monitoring data from 2022 indicates that 95% of our customers told us they are heterosexual. 5% told us that they were homosexual. None of our customers told us that they had any other sexual orientation or declined to disclose. However, all of our customers will be affected by the proposed change and we will communicate with them individually to identify any specific needs.

(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**
- **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).**

Cambridge City Council currently charges £3.42 (ex VAT) per week for its alarm service. All of our customers have an individual contract with us and pay us directly. The County Council currently charge £5 per week for their equivalent service. It is the City Council's intention to seek an

agreement with the County Council to keep the customers that we transfer to them on our current rate. Initial conversations with the County have indicated that they would be willing to consider this with us, although it should be noted that we will have no formal way of insisting that this happens, as customers that transfer will have new contracts directly with the County Council which the City Council will have no control over. This may therefore affect customers who are on lower incomes.

If existing customers decide they do not want to transfer to the County Councils alarms service, but still want to have an alarm, we will offer to support them to find an alternative provider. Online research shows that there are a variety of providers who can provide an alarm at a similar price point to the City Council. For example Lifeline 24 offer an alarm for £3 per week ([Lifeline24 | Personal Alarm Service for the Elderly | 32p a day](#)) and Careline can provide a similar thing for £3.21 per week ([Lifeline Alarms - Pendant Alarms for the Elderly - Careline365](#)).

As noted in the committee report, the reason for the review of the service is that it has consistently not been meeting it's income targets. This means that even if Cambridge City Council were to continue to deliver the alarms service, we would be looking to review our charges to make the service viable, which would be likely to lead to an increase.

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.)

If the committee report is approved, we will then form a working group who will take this project forward. They will produce an action plan which will include reviewing the EQIA at each meeting (likely to be monthly) where any new impacts will be discussed and a plan put in place to mitigate them. These meetings will continue right through to when the last customer has been supported, which we currently anticipate will be March 2023.

12. Do you have any additional comments?

No.

13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Laura Adcock, Housing Services Manager, Housing Support and Performance.

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted: David Greening, Head of Housing. Teresa Hurrell, Independent Living Supervisor.

Date of EqIA sign off: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: July 2022

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: tbc once HSC report is published.

All EqIAs need to be sent to Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at helen.crowther@cambridge.gov.uk.