

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.

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service
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Pledge to Support the Resettlement of Refugees

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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Our commitment to refugees - Cambridge City Council

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

To update the Council's pledge to resettle refugees for 2025 to 2030, including the provision of a minimum of 4 properties per year outside of the current Lettings Policy. This will enable the council to continue resettlement work in this time of heightened need.

4. Responsible Team and Group

Community Safety, Communities Group

5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick all that apply)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residents <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff
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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):

Refugees and asylum-seeking people in Cambridge, primarily those on the following schemes:

- **UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS)** – a global scheme managed by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. UKRS replaced the Syrian specific resettlement schemes.
- **Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP)** - managed by the UK government, resettling Afghan citizens that worked for the UK government in Afghanistan and their families.
- **Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)** - managed by the UK government, to resettle people at risk in Afghanistan since the Taliban take over, i.e. human rights campaigners.
- **Ukraine Schemes** – schemes managed by the UK government for Homes for Ukraine (host/guest sponsorship), Family visa scheme (a family member acting as the sponsor), Ukraine Extension scheme (extending the leave to remain of Ukrainians already in the UK when the war broke out) and Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme. Both Family Visa and Ukraine Extension Scheme ended on 19 February 2024 and 16 May 2024 respectively.
- **Hong Kong British National Overseas (BNO)** – enables BNO status holders and their children (both over and under 18 years old) to resettle in the UK.
- **National Asylum Dispersal** – temporary accommodation across the country to house asylum seekers. Nationally, 52% of initial decisions and 48% of appeals result in refugee status or humanitarian protection¹.

6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Major change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor change
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¹ [Top facts from the latest statistics on refugees and people seeking asylum - Refugee Council](#)

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:

Housing Advice
City Homes
Housing Development Agency

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

Housing Scrutiny Committee, March 2025. Papers are published here: [Agenda for Housing Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 11th March, 2025, 5.30 pm - Cambridge Council](#)

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?

Over the last 5 years Cambridge City Council have successfully supported 915 newly arrived refugees to resettle in Cambridge and the surrounding areas. The majority of refugees resettled are from Ukraine and Afghanistan.

Cambridge is a highly diverse community with a long history of supporting individuals from these backgrounds, which should be celebrated and continued.

The following research has been used to inform and identify equalities impacts for the resettlement pledge

[2016 – Refugee in Cambridge Report](#)

[2022 – Going Full Circle Report](#)

[2024 – Education for Late Arrivals Report](#)

2024 – Cambridge Refugee Needs Assessment:

In November 2024 Cambridge City Council's Resettlement Team held a series of needs assessment workshops with refugees, asylum seekers and local services to inform our resettlement offer. Key feedback included:

- Resettlement journey was smoother once people were in settled accommodation
- Support from the council, local organisations and friends improved their resettlement journey
- Children faced challenges accessing school places

- Longer waiting lists for ESOL, and barriers to ESOL access for women
- Inconsistencies between services people can access depending on what resettlement scheme they have travelled on – due to the specifics of central government funding and resettlement requirements.

[2025 – Treat Us Like Humans Report](#)

If the 2025- 2030 pledge commitment is agreed it will enable the council to build of the strengths of the current resettlement model and address the challenges and barriers experience by asylum seekers and refugees.

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

In-house resettlement casework support, commissioned/ grant funded initiatives to support resettlement will be available to all age groups.

Properties obtained for refugees are matched to the family size and need, including accessibility needs.

The majority of refugees who require secure housing as part of their resettlement to Cambridge are families, on average 2 parents and 3 – 4 children. Many refugees will be placed in hotel or contingency accommodation before accessing secure accommodation. Often they may have been placed in multiple different short-term accommodation by the Home Office. Provision of secure housing provides stability for children to maintain education and enables families to integrate into their local area.

Resettlement caseworkers have relevant DBS checks and safeguarding training for both adults and children.

Resettlement support includes obtaining school places for children, access to English classes and employment support for adults, support accessing welfare benefits including pension credit for adults of state pension age.

(b) Disability

[The Mental Health of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in the UK](#) report highlights how Asylum seekers and refugees are at particular risk of mental health problems. These may develop because of their experiences in their countries of origin, during their journeys, or after they arrive in the UK.

Refugees and asylum seekers are often placed in hotel or other contingency accommodation before obtaining secure accommodation which contributes to feelings of dehumanisation.

The provision of secure housing through council housing and enabling access to the private rental sector, provides refugees with housing stability, which supports them in rebuilding their lives.

Properties obtained for refugees are matched to the family size and need, including accessibility needs.

The resettlement support provided by the council through both in house and commissioned/grant funded work includes wellbeing support to help address the trauma refugees and asylum seekers experience. Resettlement support also includes support to access primary and secondary health care, education (including SEND education), adult social care and welfare benefits including Personal Independence Payments.

(c) Gender reassignment

There is limited data on trans and non-binary refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. Transgender refugees and asylum seekers are often visible in their gender nonconformity and therefore particularly vulnerable to violence and persecution ([Cerezo 2014](#)).

In-house resettlement casework support, commissioned/ grant funded initiatives to support resettlement will be available to trans and non-binary refugees and asylum seekers.

All Council staff are required to undertake the council's Equality and Diversity training. Funded providers are required to provide information on how they comply with the Equality Act.

The resettlement support provided by the council through both in house and commissioned/grant funded work includes wellbeing support to help address the trauma refugees and asylum seekers experience.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

The majority of refugees arriving via the ACRS, ARAP and UKRS schemes who require secure housing to access safety in the UK are from family groups where the adult parents are married. The provision of secure housing through council housing and enabling access to the private rental sector, provides refugees with housing stability, which supports them in rebuilding their lives.

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

Refugees and asylum seekers may be pregnant or new mothers whilst receiving resettlement support. Support provision includes enabling parents to access relevant health services such as maternity care.

The provision of secure housing through council housing and enabling access to the private rental sector, provides refugees with housing stability, which supports them in rebuilding their lives. Properties obtained for refugees are matched to the family size and need.

(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.

The majority of refugees and asylum seekers are from ethnically minoritised communities.

The in-house service provides both culturally competent and language specific support to clients.

The in-house services, commissioned/grant funded initiatives delivered to achieve the pledge contribute to a building of social cohesion and support those who are often more at risk of prejudice and racism.

Should the pledge not be agreed, staff redundancies would need to be considered as there would be less refugees requiring resettlement support and therefore less funding from government. This would disproportionately impact staff from minority backgrounds.

Should the pledge not be agreed those on the Homes for Ukraine scheme would continue to arrive in the city as arrivals are determined by residents acting as hosts. This would create a discrepancy between the Council’s support for refugees from Ukraine and refugees from other parts of the world.

(g) Religion or belief

Clients' culture and faith is taken into consideration accommodating them in Cambridge. This includes facilities suitable for their needs where at all possible, for example access to culturally appropriate food. Support provided is specifically designed to ensure these needs are understood through training and cultural, linguistic and religious awareness.

(h) Sex

[The 2012 report from the Refugee Council](#) highlights that a significant proportion of women refugees and asylum seekers have experienced violence, poverty and have complex health needs.

In-house resettlement support and grant funded projects provide access to women's centred and specific support i.e. women's health and wellbeing sessions.

Women are also more take on the role as primary care giver to their children, particularly Ukrainian women whose husbands are conscripted in Ukraine. This can often make it harder for women to access ESOL classes. The Council funds and arranges a range of ESOL provision, including online provision addressing barriers to ESOL access.

(i) Sexual orientation

[In 2022, 2% of asylum claims in the UK \(1,334 claims\) included sexual orientation as part of the basis for the claim \(LGB asylum applications\).](#) There is limited data on sexual orientation data for those arriving via UKRS, ARAP, ACRS, BNO and Ukraine visa routes to the UK.

In-house resettlement casework support, commissioned/ grant funded initiatives to support resettlement will be available to LGBTQIA+ clients.

All Council staff are required to undertake the council's Equality and Diversity training. Funded providers are required to provide information on how they comply with the Equality Act.

(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_159kt25q).**

Low-income:

Refugees are more likely to be on low-incomes particularly at the point they first receive refugee status and move into settled accommodation. Support work provided by both in-house and commissioned services includes support with access to bank accounts, welfare benefits, income maximisation support and employment.

As per central government requirements those that arrive via the UKRS, ARAP, ACRS and Homes for Ukraine scheme are provided with initial subsistence payments to bridge the gap between their arrival and access to welfare benefits.

Refugee families are disproportionately affected by the benefit cap and the two-child limit, particularly those with larger family sizes. Exemptions to the benefit cap do not include refugees, recently granted status or otherwise.

In-house and funded services include tailored employment support, which in-turn addresses the benefit cap and helps alleviate refugees from poverty.

Intersectionality:

Support provided to refugees embraces the broadness of the concept of intersectionality, providing a person-centred approach to meet the individuals needs in a holistic way. For example, providing trauma informed, linguistic and culturally relevant support to with a Personal Independent Payment application for a refugee who has a disability.

Care experience:

Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children are supported by Cambridgeshire County Council. Through the resettlement funding the Council has an in-house team of housing advisors focussing specifically on the homelessness needs of refugees and migrants. This would include providing housing advice and support to refugee care-leavers.

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.)

The Resettlement service has key KPIs and outcome measures for in-house and funded provision. We will review these metrics considering equalities impacts of these (i.e difference in outcomes or access to ESOL and employment between men and women) and review the inclusivity and accessibility of service provision accordingly. This review will also use feedback from the Needs Assessment undertaken in 2024.

12. Do you have any additional comments?

N/A

13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Keryn Jalli, Community Safety Manager

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted: Nathan Chapman, Asylum and Refugee Project Manager, and Helen Crowther, Equality & Anti-Poverty Officer

Date of EqIA sign off: 24/02/2025

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: 07/02/2026

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: 27/02/2025

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