

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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Procurement and award of a contract for energy efficiency works to Council homes

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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n/a

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

The Council is procuring a contract to deliver a rolling programme of energy efficiency upgrades to its housing stock, with the objective of improving all council homes rated (Energy Performance Certificate) EPC Band D or below to at least Band C. This will be achieved through measures including:

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|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insulation of walls and lofts• Replacement windows and doors (where required)• A small proportion of low carbon heating installations• Improved mechanical ventilation |
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The programme is funded through a dedicated annual Housing Revenue Account (HRA) allocation of £3.8 million, with additional grant support from the Government's *Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund (Wave 3)*.

The anticipated outcomes are to:

- Improve residents' thermal comfort
- Reduce energy costs and alleviate fuel poverty
- Lower carbon emissions from the housing stock
- Improve building condition and mitigate risks of damp and mould
- Support better health and wellbeing outcomes

4. Responsible Team and Group

Energy and Retrofit Team, in Economy and Place Group

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 will be affected by this work. Leaseholders living in blocks owned by Cambridge City Council may also be affected by this work.

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:

N/a

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

It is due to go to Cabinet on June 24th 2025.

It is noted that similar energy efficiency works have previously been delivered through earlier phases and existing contracts. A contract is currently in place and is due to conclude in March 2026. However, this Equality Impact Assessment is the first produced specifically for this programme.

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?

[“Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics in England”, 2025 \(2024 data\) by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero \(DESNZ\)](#)

[“Fuel Poverty, Cold Homes and Health Inequalities in the UK” Institute of Health Equity](#). This paper has helped to identify the particular groups at most risk of fuel poverty and the adverse affects of cold and damp homes, used to provide information for question 10.

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 proposed programme is expected to deliver a positive impact for residents across age groups by improving the thermal efficiency and condition of council homes. This will support better health outcomes and reduce the burden of fuel poverty.

- Older people are one of the groups most at risk of experiencing adverse health impacts of cold homes, and homes with damp and mould. They are also most sensitive to disruption during building works. Pre-works surveys will assess individual support needs and, where necessary, adaptations can be made to the delivery process (e.g. offering optimal programming of works to suit individual needs).
- Households with dependent children are statistically more likely to be in fuel poverty. Children’s developing organs make them more susceptible to the effects of cold homes, including asthma and other respiratory conditions. Damp, mould and fluctuating temperatures can also affect children’s ability to concentrate and thrive.

- Babies living in colder environments require higher caloric intake and are more susceptible to illness. Improvements in insulation and heating will directly benefit infant health and wellbeing.

(b) Disability

The programme is expected to have a positive impact on disabled residents and those living with long-term health conditions by reducing exposure to cold, damp and poorly ventilated housing, which are known to exacerbate many physical and mental health conditions. Issues relating to damp and mould can have a disproportionately negative impact on people with some disabilities, especially where this relates to respiratory conditions. The programme will have a particularly positive impact for in these cases

- Households home to people living with chronic illness and disability are statistically more likely to be in fuel poverty, as they are more likely to experience low income, and their condition or impairment might mean they have increased energy demand and that they might need to spend longer periods spent at home.
- Some disabled residents rely on electrically powered medical equipment. Ensuring that homes are more energy efficient will help reduce the operational cost of these essential supports and improve resilience in periods of energy price volatility.
- Retrofit and energy efficiency works may pose short-term challenges for disabled people—particularly those with noise sensitivities, mobility impairments or mental health conditions. Pre-works surveys will assess individual support needs and, where necessary, adaptations can be made to the delivery process (e.g. offering optimal programming of works to suit individual needs).
- It is essential that energy efficiency works do not interfere with existing adaptations (e.g. grab rails, ramps, stairlifts) or create new barriers.

(c) Gender reassignment

No impact has been identified specific to this protected characteristic group.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

No impact has been identified specific to this protected characteristic group.

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

The programme is anticipated to have a positive impact on pregnant individuals and those with newborns or young infants, by improving internal thermal comfort and reducing exposure to cold, damp, and mould-prone environments.

- Pregnant people, their unborn babies and those who have recently given birth, who may have weakened immune systems, are at greater risk of the adverse impacts of cold and damp homes.
- Babies and young children are particularly sensitive to low temperatures, requiring more calories to maintain body heat, and are more susceptible to conditions such as bronchiolitis, asthma and low weight gain. Warmer, well-ventilated homes will help mitigate these risks.
- Pregnant individuals and households with infants may experience higher levels of stress or discomfort during construction activities involving noise, dust, or temporary loss of heating or hot water which will be taken into consideration following pre-works surveys and when planning works.

(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 proposed programme is expected to have a broadly positive impact across ethnic groups, with a particularly beneficial effect for those disproportionately affected by fuel poverty and substandard housing conditions, leading to damp and mould.

- Whilst the council does not currently hold data on ethnic groups most likely to experience fuel poverty in Cambridge, national data indicates that households with a ‘Black household reference person’ (HRP) continue to experience the highest levels of fuel poverty, while White British households tend to have the lowest. (Note that the council will be undertaking a large-scale survey of its tenants to find out more about them so will have greater information on who is most likely to experience fuel poverty and issues with damp and mould in its own housing stock.)
- According to national data, refugees, asylum seekers and Traveller populations are also identified as one of the groups at particular risk of cold homes.
- Language barriers may also limit engagement or understanding of works, and therefore the resident liaison officers should hold specific training on inclusive engagement. The Council has an interpretation and translation contract if the provider of this particular contract is unable to offer this support

(g) Religion or belief

No impact has been identified specific to this protected characteristic group.

(h) Sex

No impact has been identified specific to this protected characteristic group.

(i) Sexual orientation

No impact has been identified specific to this protected characteristic group.

(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).**

While social housing is typically more energy efficient than the private rented sector, Government data shows that 54.5% of social rented homes rated EPC Band D–G are fuel poor. By definition, homes rated EPC A–C are not fuel poor, regardless of income.

This programme directly targets homes rated EPC D or below, upgrading them to at least Band C, and is therefore expected to deliver significant benefits for low-income and fuel-poor households.

Many residents may face overlapping disadvantage due to multiple protected characteristics—such as race, disability, and low income. Single parent households, particularly lone mothers, consistently face the highest rates of fuel poverty.

In mixed-tenure blocks, where leaseholders or private owners do not participate, council tenants may be unable to benefit from the full scope of works. However, some measures may be classified as improvements rather than repairs and are therefore not automatically chargeable to leaseholders.

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 EqlA accordingly.)

To realise the full benefit of the upgrades, residents will need clear guidance on how to use new features—such as maintaining ventilation systems in order to avoid future condensation issues, managing insulation, and operating low-carbon heating differently from traditional gas boilers to avoid increased running costs.

The Council will need to ensure there is a communication plan in place to ensure that residents are fully informed about new installations and equipment in their homes, and that the information is accessible and easy to understand by all end users.

12. Do you have any additional comments?

N/a

13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Negin Ghorbani, Retrofit Manager, Economy and Place Group

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted: Helen Crowther, Equity and Community Power Manager

Date of EqlA sign off: 11th June 2025

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: Following project pre-surveys, estimated April 2026

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: Monday 16th June 2025

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