| Notes of Equalities Impact Assessment |
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# Equality impact assessment form

**Please use this form to record your findings, proposed actions, equality objectives and targets.  Use the guidance notes to help you do the assessment or contact the Equality Standard Project Manager if you need some advice**

**About the policy, practice, service or function you are assessing**

Name of policy, practice, service or function: **Private Sector Empty Homes Strategy 2011 - 2014**

Assessment team leader name: **Ian Fullagar**

Date of assessment: **13th July 2011**

Department responsible:    **Younger Adults and Housing**                      Service Area: **Empty Homes Service**

Members of assessment team:

| Name | Position | Area of expertise | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ian Fullagar | Head of Strategic Housing | Housing Strategy | |
| Martin Brown | Housing Initiatives Manager | Private Sector Housing | |
| Henry Cipcer | Housing Projects Manager | Private Sector Housing | |
| Tony Briggs | Empty Homes Manager | Private Sector Housing | |
| Jeremy Mason | Housing Strategy Officer | Housing Strategy | |

| Question | Response/ findings |
|---|---|
| What are the main aims and objectives or purpose of the policy, practice, service or function that you are assessing? | To set the blueprint for the City Council's actions to return vacant private sector properties to the useful housing stock.<br><br>To reduce the waste of empty homes and increase housing supply and choice |

| | To tackle neighbourhood blight, antisocial behaviour and criminal activity associated with, or exacerbated by, the presence of empty properties |
|---|---|
| Who implements, carries out or delivers the policy, practice, service or function? Please state where this is more than one person, team, department, or body – and include any outside organisations who deliver under procurement arrangements | The strategy is carried out by the Empty Homes Service primarily, but considerable partnership working is undertaken, both internally with departments such as Council Tax, Electoral Roll and Legal Services, and also externally with statutory bodies such as the Police and Fire and rescue services, as well as Government bodies such as the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and Communities and Local Government (CLG) |
| **Question** | **Response/ findings** |
| Who is affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered? Such as, who are the external and internal customers, groups, or communities? | All equality groups are included within the strategy. The community, who consider that empty properties contribute to environmental degradation and antisocial behaviour Persons in housing need during a time of high, and increasing, housing need. Residents of neighbouring properties |
| What outcomes do we want to achieve, why and for whom? For example, what do you want to be providing, how well, what changes or improvements, and what should the benefits be for customers, groups or communities? | Positive outcomes in relation to the provision of accessible housing, improvements to local communities through reduced ASB, crime etc as empty homes are refurbished and reoccupied |

| Question | Response/ findings |
|---|---|
| What existing or previous inspections of the policy, practice, service or function are there?  For example, Best Value Inspections, policy reviews, research into the effects of a policy or practice.<br><br>What did they tell you? | Reviews of wider Housing Strategy identified need for more effective partnership working to reduce the number of long term empty dwellings |

## Identifying potential equality issues and factors

| Question | Response/ findings |
|---|---|
| What do you already know about the equality impact or need?  For example, from research, feedback, consultation or any performance monitoring | A proportionately larger number of empty properties tend to be located in more deprived areas of the City.  These areas tend to have a higher BME population, both in regard to property owners and occupants. |

| Question | Response/ findings |
|---|---|
| Is there any evidence of higher or lower take up under the policy or practice, or of the service or function for any particular groups?   For example, who uses the service, who doesn't and why not? | Where enforcement measures are undertaken, and considering the likelihood as outlined above, that the properties are more likely to be owned by ethnic minorities, we have to be mindful that this could lead to accusations of bias.<br><br>Procedures are in place that attempt to facilitate reoccupation of the property – we need to ensure these procedures clearly demonstrate fair treatment to all. |
| Have there been any important demographic changes or trends locally? For example is the population changing, and if so, how and what might that mean for the service or function? | Economic uncertainty, job losses etc have seen an increase in the number of people losing their homes and a general stagnation of the housing market.  This has led to a larger number of properties being left empty for longer periods as they have not sold or are being left empty by a property owner until such time as the housing market recovers.  Owners also do not want to risk property damage from tenants. |

| | Demography is changing through:<br><br>More single households<br>Aging population<br>Cultural and ethnic diversity through migration<br><br>These factors all put pressure on available housing resources and demonstrating the need reoccupy existing properties that are currently not part of the beneficial housing stock. |
|---|---|
| **Question** | **Response/ findings** |
| Is there an indication that any of the policies or practices involved with the service or function creates particular problems or difficulties for any groups of customers or communities? | Gender: No issues<br><br>Disability: There is an ongoing need for accessible homes. This work can be connected with properties in poor condition that are being refurbished to a standard.<br><br>Age: Elderly people may suffer a higher than average sense of risk and the fear of crime where there are empty properties in their neighbourhood<br><br>Race: From a National perspective, empty properties tend to be concentrated in the central areas of our cities which are also the areas of higher BME population where historically, there is much more intensive empty property work.<br>Arboretum/Normanton Wards have higher than average concentration of BME groups, and a higher than average level of vacant dwellings.<br><br>Deprived areas: (See above for race)<br><br>Sexual orientation: No issues |
| What information or data exists?  For example, statistics, customer feedback, complaints, research, monitoring – who keeps it and can you get hold of it? | Empty homes data from council tax dept and electoral roll, GIS mapping of empty homes available through Hi4EM and HCA, HCA empty homes toolkit.  BVPI64 and successive targets. |

| Question | Response/ findings |
|----------|--------------------|
| Does any equality or diversity objectives already exist?  If so, what are they and what is current performance like against them? | Equality and Diversity plan, national indicators |
| Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people in the community, or particular groups or communities? | Positive – improving the community, providing additional housing, encouraging outside investment, reducing urban decline and blight, increasing housing choice<br><br>Those subject to the enforcement action may view the impact as negative, particularly where statutory enforcement procedures such as CPO are used against them. |

# Collecting the information and data about how the policy, practice, service or function, impacts on communities

Please record your information and data in this table and think about:

- what information or data you will need
- using both quantitative and qualitative data
- making sure that where possible there is information that allows all perspectives to be considered
- identifying any gaps in the information/ data and what it can tell you

| Data or information | When and how was it collected? | Where is it from? | What does it tell you?  You need to consider all six equality strands where you can | Gaps in information |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Customer feedback and complaints | Feedback tends to be from owners of neighbouring properties, rather than the empty home | Owners of neighbouring properties | High levels of satisfaction where previously problematic properties are returned to the useful housing stock | Limited data on sexuality, religion and belief |
| Consultation and community | Consolidation of wider housing | | | |

| Data or information | When and how was it collected? | Where is it from? | What does it tell you? You need to consider all six equality strands where you can | Gaps in information |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| involvement | strategy consulted on in 2010 | | | |
| Performance information including Best Value | Reported on quarterly | Recording outputs including reoccupied properties | Monitoring takes place on a number of performance indicators, including those required by government and those developed locally. | Very limited data on sexuality or religion/belief |
| Take up and usage data | | | | |
| Comparative information or data where no local information | Local information collected on state of housing market, affordability of housing, supply of housing | Strategic Housing Market Assessment study 2007 | | |
| Census, national or regional statistics | Increased diversity in towns and cities nationally | | Derby's population reflects national trends in migration, diversity and age profile | |
| Access audits or assessments such as DDA assessments | N/A | | | |
| Workforce profile | | | Underrepresentation of some ethnic | Lack of monitoring of |

| Data or information | When and how was it collected? | Where is it from? | What does it tell you?  You need to consider all six equality strands where you can | Gaps in information |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | groups | sexuality and religion/belief |
| Where service delivered under procurement arrangements – workforce profile for deliverers | N/A | | | |
| Monitoring and scrutiny outcomes | N/A | | | |

# Analysing the information and data and setting equality objectives and targets

Please give your detailed findings in this table

| Service or function | Policy or practice | Findings | Which groups are affected and how | Whose needs are not being met and how? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strategic Housing | Empty Homes Strategy | Not all equality strands being monitored currently | No monitoring for sexuality and religion and belief | Action: investigate options for adding these aspects to existing monitoring framework |
| | Empty Homes Strategy | Not all documentation includes information regarding translation services | Groups whose first language is not English | Action: Comprehensively publicise the availability of translation service |
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| | | | | |

**Objectives - process, impact or outcome based**

Please give your proposed objectives/ targets in this table

| Objective/Target: | Number of empty properties returned to occupation or demolished |
|---|---|
| Specific | √ |
| Measurable | √ |
| Achievable | √ |
| Relevant | √ |
| Timed | √ |

| Objective/Target: | Number of compulsory purchases delivered |
|---|---|

| Specific | √ |
|---|---|
| Measurable | √ |
| Achievable | √ |
| Relevant | √ |
| Timed | √ |

# Monitoring and reviewing - incorporating into performance management

Please summarise your objectives and targets in this table with your proposed monitoring and reporting arrangements

| Objective | Planned action | Target performance | | | Responsible lead officer | Reporting cycle, for example, quarterly |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | | |
| Number of empty properties returned to occupation or demolished | | *125* | | | *T Briggs* | *Quarterly* |
| Number of compulsory purchases delivered | | *8* | | | *M Brown* | *Monthly* |
| | | | | | | |