

Title of policy / procedure / function / project / decision:

Home Assistance Policy 2018-2022

Evidence based equality analysis – can include documents, quotes, and web links for photos and videos

Main aims, purpose and outcomes and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation:

Aim and background to the Home Assistance Policy:

Cheshire West and Chester Council is committed to improving the quality of private sector housing in the borough, particularly for vulnerable and elderly households. We want to assist home owners living in poor housing conditions who are finding it difficult to maintain or improve their property, to enable residents with disabilities to live independently in their homes for longer, and to increase the supply of good quality private rented accommodation.

There are a number of ways in which we can help. A variety of loans and grants are available from the Council's Private Sector Housing Team, in certain circumstances. The Council's Home Assistance Policy sets out the financial help available to home owners, private sector tenants, and their landlords, to improve property condition and to provide disabled adaptations for residents.

Lead officers:

Colin Hargreaves, Financial Programme Officer
Allan Batty, Private Rented Sector Housing Policy Officer

Stakeholders:

Residents, Home Assistance Hub, Occupational Therapy Team, Adult Social Care Teams, Children's Services, Regulatory Services and West Cheshire Homes

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do

While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about outcomes

Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas below, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a **positive, negative or neutral impact**, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a **high, medium or low assessment**. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Target group / area	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)			Low risk – Some may not be aware of the financial support available. To address this, agency staff will be provided with promotional materials.
Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)		Disabled Facilities Grants are mandatory, available across all tenures, including mobile homes, and play a significant role in reducing inequalities experienced by disabled residents. A full home safety check is also carried out in	

		respect of all applications and applicants are advised of any remedial works required and are sign posted to other forms of assistance.	
Gender			Low Risk - This Policy will benefit both men and women but the benefit for women will be more pronounced as women generally live longer and tend to head more single parent households. For these reasons, women are also more likely to experience poor housing conditions and require assistance from the measures included in this Policy.
Gender reassignment			Low Risk – Staff need to be aware of potential issues such as homophobia and transphobia which can have a negative impact on the resident. To help address this, all frontline staff are experienced officers and receive regular equality and diversity training.
Religion and belief			Low Risk - The loans offered under this Policy are in the form of equity share loans which do not incur interest.
Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)			Low Risk – Staff need to be aware of potential issues such as homophobia and hate crime which can have a negative

			impact on the resident. To help address this, all frontline staff are experienced local government officers and have received refresher equality and diversity training.
Age (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs)			Low Risk – 19% of the budget allocation for Disabled Facilities Grants was spent on adapting the homes of disabled children or young people in 2016/17.
Rural communities			Medium Risk - Customers living in rural areas may be less aware of the assistance available and may find access to advice more difficult. The highest percentage of non-decent housing is in rural areas of the borough. There are also a higher proportion of residents living in Park Homes in rural areas. Many occupants may be vulnerable and living in fuel poverty. They are currently only eligible to apply for Disabled Facilities Grants under this Policy.
Areas of deprivation			Low Risk - The areas of deprivation in the borough experience higher levels of non-decent housing, particularly in pre 1919 housing stock. The focus of this Policy is to improve housing conditions in such areas.

Human rights		It is a basic human right to live in a home that meets a person`s housing need. The range of financial assistance that is available to those who meet the necessary criteria has a positive impact in achieving this basic human right.	
Health and wellbeing (consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services)			High Risk – There are high levels of disrepair particularly in properties that contain vulnerable households. To help address this, this Policy seeks to tackle the above through the offer of a range of financial assistance to assist in property improvements and also to enable disabled residents to live as independently as possible in their own homes.
Procurement/partnership (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)			Low Risk – In relation to the carrying out of improvement works as part of the Disability Facilities Grant, all works are carried out by the Home Assistance Hub. Staff working for the Home Assistance Hub receive regular Equality and Diversity training.

Evidence (see guidance note for details of what to include here):

The Council commissioned a Stock Condition Survey back in 2013 which detailed the condition of the private housing stock as well as the links to health, wellbeing and fuel poverty with the main evidence being as follows:

- 9,313 dwellings (7.5%) exhibit Category 1 hazards within the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- 16,133 dwellings (13.0%) are in disrepair
- 693 dwellings (0.6%) lack modern facilities and services
- 5,863 dwellings (4.7%) fail to provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.
- The link between housing conditions and vulnerability continues to be important as figures show the proportion of vulnerable households living in non-Decent homes has increased from 25.6% in 2010 to 28.0% in 2013.
- Overall, the total number of overall private housing stock households in fuel poverty are 16,601 or 13.7%.
- 38.3% of vulnerable households are deemed to be in fuel poverty.
- 20,366 households (16.9%) stated that at least one family member was affected by a long-term illness or disability. The most common complaints were heart/circulatory problems, respiratory illness, and mobility impairments.
- 15,227 households (74.8%) affected by a long-term illness/disability made a surgery visit to their local GP.
- 4,551 households (22.3%) attended hospital as an in-patient while a further 12,027 households (59.1%) made use of hospital outpatient facilities.

Action plan:

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
Race and ethnicity – Ensure that support agencies are aware of the financial assistance measures detailed in the Policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a range of promotional materials that promote the various types of financial assistance measures. • Ensure wide distribution of publicity material, available in a variety of formats. • Link into relevant customer/community groups. 	Low	That all groups are aware of the range of financial assistance measures that are available.	Capital Programme Officer Policy Officer	Nov 2018

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
Gender – Ensure that all genders are aware of financial assistance measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all frontline staff receive regular equality and diversity training 	Low	All genders are aware of the range of financial assistance measures that are available.	Capital Programme Officer Home Assistance Hub	Nov 2018
Gender reassignment – Staff training on gender reassignment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that staff recognise the needs of the gender reassignment community. Ensure wide distribution of publicity material, available in a variety of formats. 	Low	Staff are fully aware of the needs of the gender reassignment community.	Regulatory Services Team Home Assistance Hub	Nov 2018
Sexual orientation – Staff training on sexual orientation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that staff recognise the differing views on sexual orientation. 	Low	Staff are fully aware of potential issues such as homophobia.	Regulatory Services Team Home Assistance Hub	Nov 2018
Age – Continued promotion of financial measures to young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively promote the range of financial measures to Children`s Services staff. 	Low	Young people are aware of the range of financial assistance measures available.	Capital Programme Officer Home Assistance Hub	Nov 2018
Areas of deprivation – Carry out awareness campaign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted campaign in areas of high deprivation. 	Low	Levels of disrepair are addressed in areas of high deprivation.	Home Assistance Hub Regulatory Services Team	Nov 2018
Health and wellbeing – 38% of vulnerable households live in poor housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff from statutory agencies are told about the range of financial measures available to vulnerable households. 	High	Vulnerable households living in poor housing have better access to financial assistance measures.	Home Assistance Hub Regulatory Services	Nov 2018

Sign off	
Lead officer:	<i>Allan Batty</i>
Approved by Head of Service:	
Moderation and/or Scrutiny	
Date:	
Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in one year, medium impact - review in two years, low impact in three years)	

Please forward the completed Equality Analysis to the Equality and Diversity Managers for publishing on the Council's website