

Equalities Impact Assessment

Housing Strategy

Housing Needs and Strategy, Homes and Neighbourhoods Directorate

The Housing Strategy is a corporately-adopted strategy which will be delivered primarily by the Homes and Neighbourhoods and the Environment Directorate alongside partners including Partners for Improvement in Islington, Tenant Management Organisations and Housing Associations, voluntary sector organisations and other council departments.

It is aligned with related strategies, policies and plans for which separate EQIAs have been carried out, including the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and our Housing Allocation Scheme.

The Council's vision is to make Islington a fairer place and we want to challenge inequality in every capacity available to us, taking advantage of our position as an employer, strategic leader and as a service provider or commissioner.

The pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on many disadvantaged groups and residents in many ways including affecting employment, health and education. Islington has a relatively high proportion of social housing and those in social housing are more likely to be on a low income, though increasingly households in the private rented sector are struggling, as wages have not kept up with the cost of living. Both social and private sector tenants who have moved to Universal Credit have seen increased levels of debt, which may put their tenancies at risk. Council research supports findings nationally that certain groups are more likely to have disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 such as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, the elderly including those shielding, young people particularly those living in large households, and those with mental health conditions. We have worked hard to support those affected, ensuring they receive the support they need and the adoption of this strategy will not reduce the support provided to those impacted by COVID-19.

This impact assessment provides a general picture of the equality issues that are relevant to the strategy. Homes and Neighbourhoods continue to engage with residents and service users and seek their views to inform the action plan that supports this strategy and ensure that equality considerations remain at the forefront of our work to deliver our five housing priorities.

2. Resident Profile

The Strategy covers all housing tenures across Islington.

- Council tenants and leaseholders living on estates and in street properties including overcrowded families, people with disabilities and their carers, care leavers and elderly people.
 - Private renters
 - Homeless households and rough sleepers (set out in a separate Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan)
 - Housing association tenants and leaseholders.
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We have used data from our housing management system to inform this EQIA and where data is not available, we have assumed that our resident profile broadly matches the borough profile. The Environment Directorate have also assumed that the profile of private renters matches the borough profile. The borough data has been taken from the State of Equalities in Islington Annual Report 2021 and Challenging Inequality reports which have used nationally available and London-wide data to update 2011 census data.

3. Equality impacts

A fairer Islington means that everyone has a decent, secure and genuinely affordable place to call home. No negative impacts on any equality characteristics are anticipated through the adoption of this strategy.

As a public authority we must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires us to have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who do not

While carrying out these legal requirements, the council is committed to going above and beyond our public sector equality duty through the Challenging Inequality programme which also focuses on socio-economic disadvantage.

Characteristic	Impact of the strategy
<p>Age (older people)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People aged over 65 and over living in Islington make up 9% of the resident population and over the next ten years in Islington, the highest rate of population growth will be amongst the older population. • 13% of council tenants and 12% of council leaseholders are over 65. 	<p>Positive impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We build homes that can adapt to changing needs e.g. Lifetime Home Standard, HAPPI Homes. • Older Persons and Complex Cases Specialist role supports this tenant group, sponsoring dementia awareness. • Work with Single Homeless Project to enable a smooth transition from hospital to home. • Improve seasonal health through the SHINE network. • Provide Disabled Facilities Grants to help people live independently. • Identify and tackle economic abuse across tenant population.
<p>Age (younger people)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28% of children under 16 live in low income households – ranking 10th highest in the country. • Young people have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. 	<p>Positive impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through our new build development, we improve green spaces and playgrounds for all residents. • Our mediation service works to reduce homelessness caused by family and friend exclusions, and private sector tenancy

	<p>terminations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We provide employment opportunities, through the council’s iWork and partner organisations and through the new build and property services apprenticeship schemes. • Provide welfare, benefit, housing and debt advice to tenants at risk of falling into arrears or losing their tenancies. • Our overcrowding scheme helps people to downsize in order to release existing social housing which can be let to overcrowded families. • Investment in the House Project as a permanent service in Islington supporting care leavers to live independently in their own home, with a network of peer support.
<p>Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The estimated number of Islington residents with a disability in 2021 is 36,656 or 15% of the population. • There are 21,447 adults in Islington living with GP diagnosed depression. There are 3,886 people in Islington living with a serious mental illness, the second highest prevalence of serious mental illness in London. 	<p>Positive impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate fire safety advice and evacuation plans effectively to our vulnerable residents. • We continue to explore available data on the connection between health, including mental health, and homelessness and rough sleeping.
<p>Gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The borough has an almost even split by gender which is reflected. There is a limited amount of local and national data in relation to trans people. • There has been a long and sustained increase in domestic violence, which affects all genders: 73% of female victims were aged between 18 – 44 years, with nearly a third of all victims aged between 25 – 34 years residential female population. • Men are also the victims of domestic violence and abuse and just over a fifth (22%) of domestic offences in Islington in 2016 involved a female perpetrator. • There is an over representation of victims from Black Asian and other Ethnic Groups compared to the residential population. 	<p>Positive impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work across Homes and Neighbourhoods Directorate with the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) to improve our support offer. • Work to support vulnerable perpetrators of anti-social behaviour through intensive support. • As a council we recognise and respect the diversity of trans experience and will proactively work to advance equality of opportunity and experience for trans residents and trans staff.
<p>BAME</p>	<p>Positive impact</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than half (44%) of Islington residents are estimated to be “White British” in 2021, compared to 38% in Greater London, 32% of residents were in Black Asian and other Ethnic Groups. • The proportion of black housing applicants is disproportionate to the general population in the borough, 33% compared to 13% respectively. In 2019/20, more than half of the statutorily homeless population in Islington was of Black Asian and other Ethnic Groups (62%), compared to 38% of a White ethnicity. • NRPF worked with 149 households in 2021 up from 61 in 2019 when the team worked with 61 households. • Islington, 61% of young people cautioned or sentenced by Youth Offending Teams in the year ending March 2018 were of BAME ethnicity. In comparison, 38% of offenders were of white ethnicity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct, targeted engagement with communities, such as those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds e.g. through the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Forum. • Continued support and case resolution for families who have NRPF. • The Housing Ambassador Programme is undertaking live work to understand and address inequality across the housing service, identifying improvements to promote equality.
<p>Sexual orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2017 the Office for National Statistics estimated that 3.3% of the total population of Islington identified themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual. • LGBT groups are over represented among homeless households. • Young LGBT under 26 are more likely to attempt suicide and to self-harm than the rest of the population. Research indicates that this is closely correlated with experiences of bullying by peers, in family settings and in school as well as negative experiences of coming out. 	<p>Positive impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority 4 of this strategy is set out in detail in our related Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which makes a commitment to enhance our existing mediation service to reduce homelessness caused by family and friend exclusion, which will prove beneficial to young people who identify as LGBT+ who, as evidence suggests, are likely to face familiar rejection, abuse or violence. • Our specialist services support victims of domestic abuse from the LGBT community.
<p>Religion or belief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51% of Islington’s population reported a religious affiliation in 2018, compared to 63% in 2013 	<p>Neutral / positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the strategy will not be targeted as being exclusively for people of any particular religion, belief or faith, it is expected to have a neutral impact. • Our range of partners include various religious and faith groups who make a positive contribution, through their work with us, to mitigate the impacts of homelessness and housing need and to work to with the diverse community on our estates and neighbourhoods.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We work to tackle hate crime on our estates.
<p>Socio-economic disadvantage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Islington is now the 6th deprived local authority in London (it was 5th in 2015). 	<p>Positive impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We provide employment opportunities, through the council's iWork and partner organisations and through the new build and property services apprenticeship schemes. Provide welfare, benefit, housing and debt advice to tenants at risk of falling into arrears or losing their tenancies. We invest in our estate landscape through programmes and improvements such as gardening schemes, investment in our community centres and green and open spaces.

- We do not anticipate a disproportionate impact on the characteristics of marriage and civil partnership or pregnancy.

4. Safeguarding and Human Rights impacts

There are no safeguarding risks for children or vulnerable adults or potential human right breaches that may occur as a result of adoption of this Housing Strategy.

5. Action

How will you respond to the impacts that you have identified in sections 3 and 4, or address any gaps in data or information?

For more information on identifying actions that will limit the negative impact of the policy for protected groups see the [guidance](#).

Action	Responsible person or team	Deadline
Continued participation in We Are Islington (WAI), a service bringing together a range of organisations under a single umbrella of support.	We Are Islington	Ongoing
Develop our resident engagement and consultation approaches to gain feedback into our services including with people on the housing waiting list and with local people including young people and resident groups.	Housing Strategic Business Planning and Investment / all housing departments	Ongoing / in accordance with new regulations
Establish an evidence base of approaches and failed preventions to better understand the issues, such as ethnicity and gender.	Housing Needs	Ongoing

Improve collection of the vulnerability codes (disability data) for council tenants and create data dashboard with public health to better understand the tenant population and meet their needs.	Homes and Neighbourhoods	Ongoing
Conduct annual Equality Impact Assessments relating to lettings, the Housing Register and our homelessness work.	Housing Needs	Annual
Explore options and business models for older people in Islington including extra-care and residential care.	Housing Strategy	Ongoing
Embed the Housing Service Ambassadors programme to introduce opportunity for this staff group to take a deep dive into equality and diversity issues and make recommendations for improvement to our Senior Management Team.	All housing departments	Ongoing
The upcoming legal requirements to categorise victims of domestic abuse as vulnerable will be reflected in our allocation policy.	Housing Needs	As legislation is implemented
Adopt the Property Licensing Scheme to improve conditions for all tenants renting private accommodation including flats, houses and shared houses across the borough.	Environment Directorate	Autumn 2021

Please send the completed RIA to equalites@islington.gov.uk and also make it publicly available online along with the relevant policy or service change.

This Resident Impact Assessment has been completed in accordance with the guidance and using appropriate evidence.

Staff member completing this form:

Signed: Ruth Peacocke

Date: 26/05/2021

Head of Service or higher:

Signed: Hannah Bowman

Date: 28/5/21